

Dr Alexy Karenowska wins University Public Engagement Award

Dr Alexy Karenowska, of the Department of Physics has won an Early Career Researcher award in this year's Vice-Chancellor's Public Engagement with Research Awards, which celebrate public engagement work across the University. The announcement was made at an awards ceremony at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History on 28 June hosted by Vice-Chancellor Professor Louise Richardson.

Dr Karenowska won her award for her work on a public science project focused on the documentation, preservation, and restoration of at-risk cultural heritage sites across the world.

Working with the likes of UNESCO and the Government of the United Arab Emirates, she developed the means to study, document and preserve heritage materials through optical, radio-frequency and X-ray based approaches and the application of 3D printing and machining technologies.

In 2016 Dr Karenowska led a team to create a 13 tonne replica of the Triumphal Arch from Syria's Palmyra site using a combination of photogrammetry-based 3D computer modelling and state-of-the-art 3D machining in stone. She managed the installation of this structure on Trafalgar and has overseen the installation of the same arch in New York, Dubai and Florence.

Approximately 2.1 Million people of all ages have visited the public installations and taken part in the supporting series of workshops and scientific educational programming. Dr Karenowska's work has also been featured on the front page of The Times, BBC Newsnight and been covered by print, radio and TV all over the world, reaching tens of millions.

The Vice-Chancellor's Public Engagement with Research Awards recognise and reward those at the University who undertake high-quality engagement activities and have contributed to building capacity in this area. Dr Karenowska was one of five Early Career Researcher winners at the awards.

Professor Louise Richardson, Vice-Chancellor says: "I have been deeply impressed by the quality of the public engagement with research projects submitted for this year's awards. The breadth and diversity of the activities taking place show how seriously the University takes its commitment to public engagement."

Professor Alison Woollard, the University's Academic Champion for Public Engagement with Research says: "Public engagement enriches both research and society and the University is committed to enabling our researchers to inspire, consult and collaborate with the public. I'm delighted that we are able to recognise and highlight the fantastic work our researchers are doing and hope these awards encourage more colleagues across the University to carry out their own public engagement with research."

About the awards

The Vice-Chancellor's Public Engagement with Research Awards recognise and reward those at the University who undertake high-quality engagement activities and have contributed to building capacity in this area. The awards are awarded in three categories – Early Career Researcher, Building Capacity and Projects. Entrants can be at any level in their career and activities of any scale are welcome.

Winning entries receive recognition for their achievements at the Vice-Chancellor's Public Engagement with Research Awards Ceremony that will take place on 28 June 2017. The Vice-Chancellor's prize will also be announced at the ceremony and receive a cash prize of £1,500.

Further information on Dr Karenowska's award

1) Researcher contacts

Dr Alexy Karenowska
EPSRC Research Fellow
Department of Physics
Email: alexy.karenowska@physics.ox.ac.uk
Tel: 07480198789

2) Media links

CNN

<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/04/19/architecture/palmyra-triumphal-arch-replica-london/index.html>

Radio Canada

<http://ici.radio-canada.ca/tele/decouverte/2016-2017/segments/reportage/13788/palmyre>

Das Erste

<http://www.daserste.de/information/wissen-kultur/w-wie-wissen/videos/die-sendung-vom-26-november-2016-100.html>

3) Project Case study

Dr Alexy Karenowska, Department of Physics

My research involves the study of the microwave, radio, and optical parts of the electromagnetic spectrum and its application.

Public Engagement with Research Activities

Since 2015, I have directed a public science project focused on the documentation, preservation, and restoration of at-risk cultural heritage sites across the world.

Working with the likes of UNESCO and the Government of the United Arab Emirates, I developed the means to study, document and preserve heritage materials through optical, radio-frequency and X-ray based approaches and the application of 3D printing and machining technologies.

In 2016 I led a team to create a 13 tonne replica of the Triumphal Arch from Syria's Palmyra site using a combination of photogrammetry-based 3D computer modelling and state-of-the-art 3D machining in stone. I managed the installation of this structure on Trafalgar Square which was unveiled to the public by the then Mayor of London, Boris Johnson. Since then I have overseen the installation of the same arch in New York, Dubai and Florence.

Outcomes & Impacts

Approximately 2.1 Million people of all ages have visited the public installations and taken part in the supporting series of workshops and scientific educational programming.

My work has also been featured on the front page of The Times, BBC Newsnight and been covered by print, radio and TV all over the world, reaching tens of millions.

Public responses show that the installations made visitors think differently about the relationship between science and culture; increased interest in science in young people and increased motivation among governments and other organisations in the use of cultural initiatives in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconciliation.

"The IDA's Arch of Triumph of Palmyra serves as a model for how, together, we will bring life back to Palmyra and restore the site as a message of peace against terrorism." Professor Dr. Maamoun Abdulkarim, Director-General of Antiquities and Museums, Syria

Funded by: Institute for Digital Archaeology [IDA] and the Dubai Future Foundation.