

PRESS RELEASE

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The Queer Student Awards: Celebrating talented young LGBTQ+ people 50 years after the first Pride in the U.K.

Young LGBTQ+ people, employers, schools, college, and universities in the U.K. can now submit nominations for the 2022 Queer Student Awards which opened for entries last week.

The awards recognise talented young LGBTQ+ people proudly leading in their lives and the communities around them. Young people like 'Queer Student of the Year' Jack Stokes, who was celebrated nationally last summer for using his own experiences of LGBTQ+ harassment and bullying to build a safe and inclusive community at Dudley College of Technology, West Midlands. Jack's story illustrated the importance of safe spaces where young LGBTQ+ people can support each other, and was one of several told of inspirational youths working hard to raise awareness of the issues still faced by the LGBTQ+ community in the workplace, on campus and in schools and colleges across the U.K. half a century since the first Pride march in the U.K.

"Despite progress that has been made towards achieving equality for the LGBTQ+ community over the last 50 years, it's clear that many remain poorly educated with hate crimes alone during the last twelve months, particularly towards transgender folks, increasing. It's no longer enough to just 'slap a rainbow' on a logo to show support for the many young LGBTQ+ people who feel vulnerable in the U.K. The Queer Student Awards provide a space for employers, schools, colleges and universities to demonstrate their commitment towards supporting and positively addressing adversities that LGBTQ+ youths experience every day - especially when it comes to navigating career options alongside concerns that their sexuality could act as a barrier to future success in the workplace". – Steve Keith, Founder, Queer Student Awards

Planning is underway for the 2022 celebration which will take place in-person at a venue in Manchester on Thursday 23rd June. Entries are judged by a panel of student recruitment and youth experts, queer influencers and young people from schools, colleges and universities across the U.K. Confirmed sponsors include Astra Zeneca, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, ICAEW, Not Going To Uni and the University of West London. A percentage of profits from the event will once again be passed to LGBTQ+ charity partner Diversity Role Models; supporting the awards for the second year after receiving £1,106.84 to support their work in classrooms across the U.K. last year.

'After a hugely successful inaugural year, which celebrated not only the winner but all the queer student nominees, we're delighted to be partnering with the QSAs for another year to acknowledge the achievements of queer students across the UK. It's hugely important to highlight queer students for their efforts and perseverance against a backdrop that can unfortunately see peers ridicule and attack their identities. These young queer students trailblaze the future and we couldn't be prouder to celebrate their work and who they are with these awards'. – Adam McCann, CEO, Diversity Role Models

Nominations are now open and will close on Friday 8th April 2022. Find out more at thequeerstudentawards.co.uk.

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