

BIG Biodiversity Challenge and Awards 2024

Biodiversity Champion Awards Entry Form

Welcome to the BIG Biodiversity Challenge and Awards! We invite you to nominate one person who has demonstrably gone the extra mile to enrich and enhance biodiversity.

Nominators will be asked to submit a short summary outlining the reasons why this person has been nominated and illustrating how they achieve the six key qualities needed to become a BIG Biodiversity Champion.

Key dates

- The deadline for entries is **Friday 24 May 2024 at 17:00**. Please complete and return the nomination form and supporting materials (high resolution images) to bigawards@ciria.org.
- The shortlist will be announced in **July 2024**; we will inform the primary contact for each successful entry.
- The shortlist will be invited to provide a short video about how they are championing biodiversity that prompted their nomination to the Challenge to be shared at the awards ceremony and more widely as part of our post-awards marketing campaign including via social media and on www.bigchallenge.info. The shortlist will not be judged on the video.
- The winners will be revealed at the in-person [awards ceremony](#) on **Wednesday 25 September 2024** (provisional date).

Entry guidelines

- Nominating candidates is free.
- Personal data is gathered in accordance with [CIRIA's privacy policy](#).
- Anyone can submit a nomination: the nominee, the employer (independent of or jointly with the nominee), or someone from another organisation.
- Entries should not be used to:
 - promote goods and services ([CIRIA](#) can encourage generic technology/processes but cannot accept registered trademarks in any submitted case study or illustrations) or
 - promote any political agenda
- In submitting your nomination, you understand that we will publish all submissions (including images) on www.bigchallenge.info and content may be shared elsewhere by [CIRIA](#). If you (or your nominee and their project partners) do not agree to this, please clearly state the restrictions that apply to your submission.

Biodiversity Champion awards categories

- Biodiversity Champion: Early career professional (up to five years in biodiversity-related work)
- Biodiversity Champion: Established professional (more than five years in biodiversity-related work)

Judging criteria

An independent panel of judges will review all nominations based on the following six key qualities to become a BIG Biodiversity Champion.

| Quality | Description |
|------------------------|--|
| Engaging | Someone who is inclusive, who communicates by listening as well as speaking |
| Inspiring | Someone who motivates others with honour, integrity, and courage |
| Enthusiastic | Someone who shares their enthusiasm about biodiversity with others, who perseveres and strives to achieve positive outcomes on projects |
| Creative | Someone who is prepared to seek solutions when faced with challenges, who looks for opportunities and innovative ways to overcome hurdles |
| Knowledgeable | Someone who understands their subject, who increases their knowledge and awareness as they progress, and disseminates that knowledge to others |
| Outcomes driven | Someone who demonstrates their positive biodiversity impacts |

If you have any queries about [BIG Biodiversity Challenge](#) or the entry process, please email bigawards@ciria.org.

Thank you for your interest in the [BIG Biodiversity Challenge and Awards 2024](#). Best of luck!


Biodiversity Champion Entry Form

1. Nominator details

Our primary contact throughout the awards cycle will be the person who made the submission. If you would prefer us to liaise with someone else after nominating, please inform bigawards@ciria.org.

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Name | Danielle Eccleshall-Johnson |
| Company | AtkinsRéalis |
| Job title | Principal Ecologist |
| Email address | Danielle.Eccleshall@atkinsrealis.com |

2. Nominee details

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Name | Laura Whitehead |
| Company | AtkinsRéalis |
| Job title | Ecologist |
| Email address | Laura.Whitehead@atkinsrealis.com |
| Headshot photo (low resolution) |  |

3. Awards category

| | |
|---|--|
| Awards category | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Early career professional Up to five years in biodiversity-related work <input type="checkbox"/> Established professional More than five years in biodiversity-related work |
| How many years in biodiversity-related work | Five years |
| Project(s) person is nominated for | Confidential project (we can ask for permission to provide the scheme name if required) |

4. Biodiversity Champion qualities

Describe how the nominee demonstrate the following criteria (50 words max each).

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Engaging | By working closely and collaborating with AtkinsRéalis' BNG experts and the external landscape architect team, who were less familiar with BNG, Laura created the approved project BNG assessment, which predicted a total net change of +455.45% habitat units and +194.53% hedgerow units. This was exceptionally well received by the client. |
| Inspiring | To meet the planning application submission deadline for the project, Laura had to enlist a colleague to help with the BNG assessment report. By working with said colleague, the deadline was successfully met. Laura also inspired the landscape team to amend design and client to approve the enhanced design. |
| Enthusiastic | Laura made several enhancement suggestions for the project including removal of invasive plants, selective thinning of dense bramble scrub and Spanish broom to create open grassland glades, additional planting of native plants, and installation of habitat features. These suggestions were accepted by the client and submitted with the planning application. |
| Creative | Laura identified that the landscape design specifications provided by the external landscape architect team did not directly translate into Biodiversity Metric habitat types. By using detailed species lists for proposed landscape planting, UKHab classification guides, and plant atlases, Laura was able to propose corresponding habitat types for the metric. |
| Knowledgeable | Due to this project, Laura was invited to the AtkinsRéalis Landscape/Ecology working group, which allowed Laura to knowledge share, contributing towards seamless collaboration of Landscape Architects and Ecologists. Laura has also dedicated time to improving her botanical ID, resulting in her exceeding expectations by achieving FISC4, higher than many colleagues. |
| Outcomes driven | Laura's technical input on the project allowed successful submission of the planning application and resulted in receipt of the following feedback from the internal project management team: 'you've submitted a really comprehensive, coordinated and attractive set of documents and the client team has been really impressed!'. |

5. Biodiversity Champion details

Summarise how this nominee has gone the extra mile to enrich and enhance biodiversity on this project, specifically addressing the judging criteria. (100 words max)

You may provide supporting evidence separately however this may not be considered during the judging process.

Laura surveyed the Site and authored the BNG assessment and report, including completion of Biodiversity Metric 3.0. Laura collaborated with the external landscape architect team and translated landscape design planting types into habitats recognised by the metric to complete the post-development BNG assessment and report, which supported the project's planning application. Laura suggested improvements and inspired the landscape team and client to adopt them. Due to Laura's input, the project would result in a predicated net gain of 3.39 habitat units and 1.03 hedgerow units, with a predicted total net change of +455.45% habitat units and +194.53% hedgerow units.