Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment

LSE Global School of Sustainability

Adeline Stuart-Watt Award:

Nomination and selection process for 2027 award

November 2026

Grantham Foundation for the Protection of the Environment

The Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment was established in 2008 at the London School of Economics and Political Science. The Institute brings together international expertise on economics, as well as finance, geography, the environment, international development and political economy to establish a world-leading centre for policy-relevant research, teaching and training in climate change and the environment. It is funded by the Grantham Foundation for the Protection of the Environment, which also funds the Grantham Institute – Climate Change and the Environment at Imperial College London.
www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute

The Adeline Stuart-Watt Award has been developed by Anna Beswick, Philippa Chandler, Peter Christoff, Candice Howarth, Sara Mehryar, Tom Overton Skinner and Elizabeth Robinson who together form the Award Organising Group. This Group is supported by the Grantham Research Institute's administration team and they thank Jo Miller for supporting the Organising Group and administering the Award.

The Award is also supported by the Z Zurich Foundation which provides generous financial support to fund the Award Prize.

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1. Purpose

This document provides context and describes the scope, nomination, and selection process for the Adeline Stuart-Watt Award.

2. About Adeline Stuart-Watt

Adeline Stuart-Watt was a Policy Fellow at the Grantham Research Institute (GRI) on Climate Change and the Environment at the London School of Economics and Political Science, until her untimely death. Prior to joining GRI Adeline advised on climate adaptation for the Victorian Government, Australia. She also worked as a lecturer and researcher in environmental and climate change policy at the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Adeline was extremely passionate about informing climate change adaptation and responses to climate risk and was an excellent knowledge broker between academics and policymakers. She established strong, trusting, supportive and collegiate working relationships with all her colleagues and was not afraid to ask difficult questions and to challenge ideas. The Award brings together Adeline's colleagues and friends from GRI and her work in Australia to commemorate, celebrate and continue her legacy.

3. The Adeline Stuart-Watt Award

The Adeline Stuart-Watt Award will recognise outstanding, policy-relevant contributions to the field of climate adaptation and resilience at the postgraduate university level.

The Award will champion and support the professional development of a female Masters Student who is motivated and committed to influencing climate adaptation within Government, communities and/or the private sector.

It includes a prize of £1,000, provided by the Z Zurich Foundation in recognition of Adeline's work as part of the Zurich Climate Resilience Alliance, and the opportunity to co-author a commentary to be published by the GRI.

The process by which the Award will be made includes:

Applications open: 3 November 2026
Applications close: 22 January 2027
Applications reviewed: February – April 2027
Panel meeting to discuss reviews and agree Award recipient: April 2027
Award winner announced: June 2027

4. Who is the Award for?

The Award is open to female Master's students who are studying topics related to climate change adaptation and resilience at UK universities and can demonstrate their motivation and commitment to supporting climate adaptation and resilience within Government, communities and/or the private sector.

5. How to apply

Heads of Department within UK universities are invited to nominate one female student to be considered for the award. The nomination should include the student's dissertation as well as a supporting statement. Nominations should be submitted to the Grantham Research Institute: gri@lse.ac.uk

For the 2027 Award, to be made in June 2027, Heads of department should nominate one student from the 2025 – 2026 academic year.

The student should have completed an Master's dissertation (or dissertation equivalent) over the last two academic years focused on a relevant climate adaptation topic. They should also have evidence of personal commitment and motivation for supporting climate adaptation and resilience in practice within Government, communities and/ or the private sector.

6. What is the award panel looking for?

The selection panel will consider a nominee's academic and research skills, their potential to influence climate adaptation and resilience in practice, and their personal actions and commitment to these matters.

i) Academic and research skills

The award nomination should include submission of a Masters dissertation or equivalent (7000 words minimum length) covering a topic relevant to climate adaptation and resilience. Topics could include but are not limited to: adaptation policy and governance, adaptation finance and economics, nature-based solutions, adaptation and international development, climate hazard modeling, climate risk, vulnerability and impact assessment, behaviors and communication, disaster risk and resilience, coastal change.

Dissertations should present innovative research questions and approaches, addressing challenging and underexplored topics in a unique way.

ii) Potential for significant impact in adaptation policy and practice

Dissertations should show potential for significant policy and practice impact, addressing timely challenges in climate change adaptation and resilience.

In addition, they may show promise for future improvement and contribution to adaptation knowledge even if they do not fully answer the research questions due to the novelty and complexity of their topic.

iii) Personal commitment to climate adaptation and resilience

The award application should include a personal statement (maximum 500 words) written by the nominated candidate, describing and providing evidence of their commitment to supporting government, communities and/ or the private sector to take action to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

This may include examples of professional or volunteer experience, participation in relevant group projects, or advocacy and communication efforts such as writing blogs, news articles, or using social media to address climate adaptation.

7. Evaluation criteria

The selection panel will use the following criteria in assessing the quality of the dissertation and personal statement:

- Relevance and contribution to climate adaptation and resilience knowledge – from dissertation
- Ambitious and challenging topics with potential for future research – from dissertation and personal statement
- Potential for policy and practical impact on climate adaptation and resilience – from dissertation
- Evidence of personal commitment to influencing progress on climate adaptation – from personal statement

The selection panel will include a mix of climate adaptation research and policy experts, drawn from GRI's extensive networks.

8. The winner will be awarded:

- £1,000 cash prize
- Certificates for winner and shortlisted nominations
- Opportunity to collaborate with the Climate Adaptation and Resilience team at GRI, to co-author a commentary relevant to their dissertation topic.
- Opportunity to present learning from their dissertation and/ or personal work to influence adaptation as part of an annual Adeline Talks event.