

# 2024 Entry Guidelines (Dec 23)

## *A word from the Managing Director of The Radio Academy*

*Launching the Radio Academy ARIAS 2024, the first awards of my tenure as Managing Director, I feel honoured to invite you to join in a celebration with your audio and radio peers from across our broad and growing community.*



*Every day we pour energy, creativity and collaboration into creating the best audio experiences for our listeners. The Radio Academy ARIAS mark a special moment to pause, reflect and celebrate our achievements and impact.*

*We are proud in the UK to be global leaders in audio and radio talent and storytelling. I can't wait to showcase those stories that really shine, reaching not just nationally and beyond, but deep into our own local communities.*

*Thank you.*

*Aradhna Tayal Leach*

## *A word from the Chair of Judges*

*Dear fellow audio professionals,*

*The year rolls round and once again, as we approach the end of 2023, it's time for you to dig out that special programme or podcast and submit it in the hope of gaining ARIAS recognition, as we introduce the awards and rubrics for 2024.*



*As always, I urge you to read the rubrics carefully; even in categories where there appears to be no change, slight tweaks to the wording could trip you up if you aren't careful.*

*The one change to the categories themselves is to change "Best Sports Show" to "Best Sports Coverage" in order to emphasise, capture and reward the live nature of most of the output in this area of radio broadcasting. Crafted sports documentaries should now be entered in either of the two "Best Factual Programme" categories.*

*We've retained our pool categories - please check you are eligible to enter each award before submission.*

*Thanks - and good luck.*

*Phil Riley*

## General Information

Please read the following information carefully before entering. It contains some important changes from last year's entry requirements.

### 1. Qualifying Period

The qualifying period from which entered material (audio, video & online content) may be drawn is: 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023. All entries must have been first broadcast or first-published within these dates.

### 2a. Audio Guidelines: for most categories

The requirements are the same for all categories except the Breakfast Show categories (4, 9), the Station of the Year categories (24, 25, 26) and The Radio Times Moment of the Year (27):

- The maximum length of audio is 15 minutes.
- Audio can be either a continuous 15-minute excerpt from an individual show, or a 15-minute compilation of extracts.
- If the submission is a compilation, this should be of no more than ten unedited extracts from the show, but these can be taken from multiple editions of the show.
- In the interests of creating a standardised, level-playing field for entries, compilations should always be a simple playlist of unedited extracts, faded in and out from a moment of silence. Please do not use station imaging or FX to montage the extracts, as these can be confused for broadcast material.
- Extracts in the compilation should be pure editorial – recorded music, adverts and trails should be faded in and out.

up to  
  
 minutes

up to  
**10**  
 extracts

leave gaps  
  
 between clips

### 2b. Audio Guidelines: for Radio Times Moment of the Year

The winners in this category are chosen through a public vote hosted by Radio Times, and any Radio Academy Member can nominate a favourite moment of audio first broadcast or published during the qualifying period. Members must not nominate content which they have created themselves.

[Listen to previous winners here](#) for an indication of relevant audio moments for this category.

If an audio file featuring the specific moment is available, we ask that it be cut down to approx. 2mins in length. However, a nomination can instead include a link to a publicly available source (eg the a full programme, or a social media clip).

## 2c. Audio Guidelines: for Breakfast Show entries

For the Breakfast Show categories (4 and 9) your audio compilation can be up to 20 minutes long, and may contain up to 20 clips. It must feature at least 10 minutes from our specified day. The audio compilation should be in two clear sections, with clips from the specified day first, and clips from the rest of the year second.

The specified day for this year's Breakfast Show entries is as follows:

- Date 1 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2023 – The main date, which must be used if the regular team were presenting on that date.
- Date 2 – 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023 – The backup date, which should only be used if the regular team were absent on Date 1.
- Date 3 – 16<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023 – The final backup date, which should only be used in extremis, if the regular team were absent on both Dates 1 and 2.

If you want to enter a Weekend Breakfast show, you may use the nearest broadcast day to the specified date (i.e., the following Saturday if the show is a weekend breakfast show, or the following Sunday if it is a Sunday-only breakfast show).

In order that fair comparisons can be made, no other dates are allowable for these categories. You will be asked to provide written confirmation if you are forced to use Dates 2 or 3.

## 2d. Audio Guidelines: for Station of the Year categories

For Station of the Year categories (24, 25, 26), your audio compilation can be up to 20 minutes long and may contain up to 20 clips.

- A UK Station is an Ofcom-licensed station that broadcasts either via AM/FM/DAB to a substantial proportion of the UK (over 60%).
- A UK Network is defined as a collection of local stations that share a common listener brand, a substantial proportion of their output (over 60% in a typical week), and which collectively via AM/FM/DAB (or via a national DAB sustaining service) cover over 60% of the UK. Stations in a network are not eligible to enter The John Myers Station of the Year Award (category 23).
- Content which is broadcast only on brand-extensions of a main parent station, should not be included in that station's entry for UK Station or Network of the Year. The brand-extension stations themselves can however be entered separately.
- Local stations which are affiliated to a brand, but which are under separate ownership to the brand itself and its network infrastructure, are not eligible to enter UK Station/Network (category 22) but are eligible to enter The John Myers Station of the Year Award (category 23).
- The Community Station of the Year and The John Myers Station of the Year Award (24, 25) are open to stations which target a specific geographical area which is less than 60% of the UK. A station cannot enter both of these categories.
- A Community Station is defined as any station demonstrably serving a specific geographical community (such as a town, city or county), or a community of interest. These may include stations broadcasting via Ofcom licenses or online.

### 3. Paired categories

Certain categories have been “paired” – these are clearly referenced in the rubrics. Pairing means the same audio content (or substantially the same audio content – defined as more than 30% of the entry) cannot be entered in both of the paired categories.

Different content (or different editions of the same programme or series) can however be entered in separate categories if eligible.

### 4. Videos and other supporting material

If your category invites you to submit additional material, please note:

- Please stick to the word limits. The system will truncate your text.
- If you're submitting supporting content URLs, do not send links that require a login otherwise this content may not be viewed by judges.
- If you want to submit a video, please provide a link rather than a media file. Note that only the first 2 minutes of any video will be watched.

### 5. Other Notes

- a. In addition to the pairing restrictions, no single piece of audio (or substantially similar piece of audio – defined as more than 30% of the entry) can be entered for more than two awards in total, and any similar entries from an individual station/show or series gaining short-list status in more than two categories will be checked for compliance.
- b. Entries should represent your best work, and you should make a critical choice about what to enter. If you decide to “hedge your bets” by entering multiple separate programmes for the same series (including “specials” and other ancillary output), which may effectively result in you competing against yourself for an award, the judges will exercise their discretion about which one of your entries to take forward. This rule does not apply to category 3 (Best News Coverage), category 6 (Best Sports Coverage) and category 13 (Best Factual - Single Programme) but will hold for all other programme-related categories.
- c. Judging in all but the Radio Times Moment of the Year is carried out in pools – the top three in each pool are put forward as ARIA Nominees in the relevant category.
  - Pool A is linear radio or podcast content commissioned or made by the BBC;
  - Pool B is linear radio or podcast content commissioned or made by Commercial Radio, Community Radio or other linear radio including online-only;
  - Pool C is content produced for publication as a podcast that doesn't fit into either Pool A or B. Pool C isn't relevant in all categories.
- d. Some of the rubrics require programmes to be from “regular and recurring series” to be eligible. As a (non-exhaustive) example, this might be a daily show that has run for at least 13 weeks, a weekly show that has run for at least three months, or a monthly show that has had at least ten episodes. Please indicate in the entry how this programme qualifies as regular and recurring.
- e. Interpretation of these Entry Guidelines shall be at the discretion of the Chair of Judges, who may make adjustments and clarifications as deemed necessary, and their decision is final.

## ARIAS 2024 Categories

<b>1</b>	Best New Presenter
<b>2</b>	Best New Radio Show
<b>3</b>	Best New Podcast
<b>4</b>	Best Speech Presenter
<b>5</b>	Best Speech Breakfast Show
<b>6</b>	Best News Coverage
<b>7</b>	Best Sports Coverage
<b>8</b>	Best Coverage of an Event
<b>9</b>	The Comedy Award
<b>10</b>	Best Music Breakfast Show
<b>11</b>	Best Music Entertainment Show
<b>12</b>	Best Specialist Music Show
<b>13</b>	Best Music Special
<b>14</b>	Best Factual – Single Programme
<b>15</b>	Best Factual – Series
<b>16</b>	Best Drama
<b>17</b>	Best Audiobook or Reading
<b>18</b>	Best Station Sound
<b>19</b>	Best Commercial Partnership
<b>20</b>	Best Local Show
<b>21</b>	The Impact Award
<b>22</b>	The Creative Innovation Award
<b>23</b>	The Grassroots Award
<b>24</b>	Community Station of the Year
<b>25</b>	The John Myers Station of the Year Award
<b>26</b>	UK Station or Network of the Year
<b>27</b>	Radio Times Moment of the Year (voted by the public)

NB. Award numbers are for reference purposes only, and do not indicate show running order

## 1. Best New Presenter

### Category rubric:

This award celebrates an individual presenter who represents an important new voice in radio/audio.

The judges will be looking for an outstanding new talent who dazzles with an unmatched combination of charisma, passion for the medium, determination to exploit its possibilities to their utmost potential, love for their audience and enthusiasm for the particular kind of show they present.

Entrants may be famous for working in other media (eg TV or film), but (while entrants may have made occasional radio or audio appearances before) their overall radio/audio exposure should not have been significant prior to this entry, and their true radio/audio breakthrough must have occurred during the qualifying period. Details of this should be clearly set out in the supporting statement.

This award is for a presenter's total body of work during the qualifying period, rather than for a specific project – for example, if they have worked for multiple audio outlets during this time, it would be appropriate to create a composite entry of their entire work, rather than to enter them multiple times to compete against themselves.

Entries from presenting duos are eligible, if the presenters are always paired together and all content is presented by them both.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio or streaming, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best New Radio Show.

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the presenter, programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 2. Best New Radio Show

### Category rubric:

This award is for the very best new radio show.

The judges will be looking for a level of innovation and fresh thinking either creating a brand-new programme or revolutionising an existing format. The winner will be a show whose undisputed brilliance has caused a buzz throughout the year, making others wish they had thought of it first!

This award is for the best brand-new show that launched during the qualifying period. Entries must be completely new shows, and must have been first broadcast (or substantially first-broadcast, meaning at least 70% of episodes broadcast) in the qualifying period.

The entry must have been part of a regular and recurring series (please see the notes on Page IV for a definition).

### Eligible platforms:

Entries in this category must be from linear radio – either broadcast on an Ofcom-licensed station or streamed on a linear online radio station.

Podcast-only series should not enter this category, and should instead enter Best New Podcast.

### Paired with:

Best New Presenter.

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme, target audience and the process of innovation that led to its creation

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

### 3. Best New Podcast

#### Category rubric:

This award celebrates the best new podcast to be launched this year.

Judges will be looking for podcasts that take full advantage of the medium, that are so fresh, funny, informative, entertaining or outrageous that they always leave listeners impatient for the next episode.

Important factors will include creativity in both the theme/concept for the series, as well as for the features, content and production within each show, and the way in which the podcast engages its target audience.

Entries in this category must have been first published (or substantially first-published, i.e. at least 70% of episodes published) in the qualifying period.

#### Eligible platforms:

All content must have been released as podcast-first. It may have received a later broadcast in full or in part, but this category should not be used to enter content which is contemporaneously broadcast and podcast. This is defined as transmission within seven days either side of the podcast release for a weekly series, and a month either side for less frequent series.

#### Paired with:

Best Factual Series  
Best Factual Single Programme

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

#### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience
- Link to the podcast's webpage

#### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)



## 4. Best Speech Presenter

### Category rubric:

This award celebrates presenter(s) who predominantly host speech-based shows (including broadcast radio and streamed and podcast audio). Qualifying entries will need to demonstrate an overall editorial output that is typically at least 50% speech-based.

The judges will be looking for someone who has range and depth, who regularly creates gripping audio, who has a natural way with conversation that effortlessly draws the audience in, and which may include the ability to conduct interviews that reveal something new through questions that others would never think to ask.

Judges would not normally expect to see presenters known for their work at breakfast entered in this category. However, where presenters have broadened their output beyond breakfasts, a portfolio audio compilation entry, representing the full range of their work, including their breakfast output, can be submitted.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Speech Breakfast Show  
Best News Coverage.

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience (which must clearly state the typical percentage of speech-based content in the full-length editions of the programme)

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 5. Best Speech Breakfast Show

### Category rubric:

This award celebrates the best of speech-based weekday or weekend breakfast shows. Qualifying shows will need to demonstrate an overall editorial output that is typically at least 50% speech based.

The judges will be looking at every aspect of production and presentation to find a show that constantly creates unforgettable audio/radio moments, stopping listeners in their tracks and leaving them talking about the show (in person and online) for the rest of the day.

Content should be unexpected, stimulating, surprising, informative and magnetically engaging, and may even be provocative or emotionally charged on occasion.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any linear platform that broadcasts programmes at breakfast time.

### Paired with:

Best News Coverage  
Best Speech Presenter

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 20-minute audio compilation, which may contain up to 20 clips, but must feature at least 10 minutes from a date specified by The Radio Academy. The audio compilation should be in two clear sections, with clips from the specified day first, and clips from the rest of the year second. See general notes at the start of this guide.
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation, which must indicate which clips are from the specified day, and which are from the rest of the year.
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience (which must clearly state the typical percentage of speech-based content in the full-length editions of the programme)

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 6. Best News Coverage

### Category rubric:

This award recognises outstanding journalism. Submissions can include coverage of breaking news stories, ongoing coverage of news events, extended news bulletins, original journalism, either of an individual story or as a portfolio of work over the period, or a deeper investigation into a news story. Standalone news programmes and news sequences within programmes are also eligible.

Judges will be looking for entries that make sense of the news. Entries that deliver the very best journalism, told robustly, with authority and creativity.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Speech Breakfast Show  
Best Speech Presenter.

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories. In this category, coverage of separate news events by the same programme, station or news team can be entered independently of each other.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 7. Best Sports Coverage

### Category rubric:

This award recognises outstanding sports coverage that really knows how to draw listeners in to the sporting world. This may be through the power of commentary, analysis, conversation, debate, interactivity or sports journalism.

The judges will be looking for creativity, highly skilled, knowledgeable presenters and a programme that captivates, entertains and delivers for their audience.

Entries should be for coverage of sporting events and sports news. Crafted sports documentaries should be entered in the Best Factual categories. Coverage of special or one-off sporting events can be entered here or in Best Coverage of an Event (category 7), but not both.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Coverage of an Event

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories. In this category, coverage of separate sports events by the same programme, station or news team can be entered independently of each other.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 8. Best Coverage of an Event

### Category rubric:

This category is for the creative and clever coverage of a pre-planned and organised event. Typical examples might include a music concert, a state occasion or a sporting event – whether organised by the entrant themselves, or a third-party event.

Judges will be looking at the way in which entrants have used audio techniques to convey the sense of occasion, bringing the event to their listeners. Entries can be from any platform.

Coverage of news events and their immediate aftermath is specifically excluded from this category – although coverage of planned events in response to a news story will be allowed, as would coverage of an event which unexpectedly became a major news story.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Sports Coverage

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the project and its impact
- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 9. The Comedy Award

### Category rubric:

This award is for regular shows or one-off programmes, including speech-led light entertainment comedy programming, scripted comedy, live comedy, panel/quiz shows, on any platform, that makes listeners smile and laugh out loud.

Judges will be looking at both the individual elements of shows and the way in which those parts combine to amuse and entertain the listener.

Regular shows in this category are defined as having at least four individual episodes.

Shows that feature music may be entered into this category, as long as the comedic speech elements are the dominant content in the show.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Music Breakfast Show  
Best Music Entertainment Show

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 10. Best Music Breakfast Show

### Category rubric:

This award recognises outstanding music-based weekday or weekend breakfast shows. Qualifying shows will need to demonstrate an editorial output that is at least 40% music.

The judges will be looking at every aspect of production and presentation to find a show that's 'the complete package'. This will include infectious enthusiasm from the host(s) and innovative features and interaction.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any linear platform that broadcasts programmes at breakfast time.

### Paired with:

The Comedy Award  
Best Music Entertainment Show

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content– defined as more than 5 minutes out of the 20 minutes allowed) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- ❑ 20-minute audio compilation, which may contain up to 20 clips, but must feature at least 10 minutes from a date specified by The Radio Academy. The audio compilation should be in two clear sections, with clips from the specified day first, and clips from the rest of the year second. See general notes at the start of this guide.
- ❑ Track-list guide to the audio compilation, which must indicate which clips are from the specified day, and which are from the rest of the year.
- ❑ 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience (which must clearly state the typical percentage of music in full-length editions of the programme)

### The entry may also provide:

- ❑ Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 11. Best Music Entertainment Show

### Category rubric:

This award recognises the year's most outstanding Music Entertainment Show, for a continuing programme strand, limited series, or one-off programme.

The judges will be looking for a show that perfectly balances a careful selection of mainstream programmed music (in keeping with the station's main output) alongside moments of pure entertainment. The show will be led by a presenter or presenters that demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of their audience and an innate understanding of how to craft the perfect entertainment product.

Breakfast Shows should not be entered in this category – these should be entered in the Best Music Breakfast show category instead.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

The Comedy Award  
Best Music Breakfast Show

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)



## 12. Best Specialist Music Show

### Category rubric:

This award will celebrate a recurring show, presenter or presenting team that lives, breathes, eats and sleeps the music to which it is devoted.

The judges will be looking at every aspect of the production, music curation and presentation, to find evidence of an incredibly in-depth knowledge of the genre, and a never-ending quest to bring that music to the audience in new ways on any platform.

The entry must have been part of a regular and recurring series (please see the notes on Page IV for a definition).

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Music Special

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 13. Best Music Special

### Category rubric:

This award will celebrate an individual one-off show or limited series that highlights one particular aspect of music for the audience.

Formats might include documentary, features, or music curation

The judges will be looking at every aspect of the production and presentation to find evidence of in-depth knowledge of the genre or a special reflection on the music contained in the show.

Content must be taken from a one-off show or a one-off limited series of less than 13 episodes. Episodes originally transmitted before 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 will count towards this 13 episode rule. Favourite episodes from a longer series should not be entered here.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Specialist Music Show

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 14. Best Factual Single Programme

### Category rubric:

This award will honour a one-off documentary which takes factual storytelling to a new level.

The judges will be looking for a combination of utterly compelling audio, remarkable access to untold stories (or untold aspects of familiar events) and beautifully-crafted narrative structure which transports the listeners into the heart of a story, giving them the sense that they're living through the action as it unfolds, moving from one location to the next as eye-witnesses to events.

The winning programme will have the ability to captivate listeners, keeping them gripped to the very last second by the need to know how the story ends.

A single programme is defined as being a complete factual story, entirely contained within one episode. Individual episodes from anthology documentary strands may be entered in this category, providing each episode is narratively self-contained. Do not enter an individual 'favourite episode' from a narrative documentary series in this category.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Factual Series  
Best New Podcast

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 15. Best Factual Series

### Category rubric:

This award will honour a documentary series which takes factual storytelling to a new level.

The judges will be looking for a combination of utterly compelling audio, remarkable access to untold stories (or untold aspects of familiar events) and beautifully-crafted multi-episode narrative structure which transports the listeners into the heart of a story, giving them the sense that they're living through the action as it unfolds, moving from one location to the next as eye-witnesses to events.

The winning series will have the ability to captivate listeners, keeping them gripped to the very last second by the need to know how the story ends. It will take advantage of the multi-episode format, to build suspense, structure the narrative and harness the power of long-form.

A series is defined as being a factual story told over two or more episodes, regardless of how they are scheduled or released. Entire anthology documentary strands should not be entered into this category.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Factual Single Programme  
Best New Podcast

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 16. Best Drama

### Category rubric:

This award pays tribute to the audio drama that best transported its audience to the heart of the action, immersing listeners in an unforgettable experience that lingers long in the memory.

The judges will be looking for the perfect combination of stunning performances, inspirational scripting that takes full advantage of the medium, and flawless sound design that draws listeners into the story being told.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Audiobook or Reading

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 17. Best Audiobook or Reading

### Category rubric:

This award pays tribute to the audiobook or reading that best transposes the written word into an audio experience.

The judges will be looking for the perfect combination of stunning reading, an expertly edited script and flawless production that draws listeners into the story being told.

Audiobooks and Readings are defined as performances from primarily one narrator (without a cast of actors) and with limited additional audio production (e.g., soundscaping, music etc).

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Drama

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 18. Best Station Sound

### Category rubric:

This category is designed to recognise creative excellence in either a single execution or a campaign of editorial, imaging, promos/trailers that promote the station itself, a charity event, a community project or a promotion on behalf of a third-party client.

Judges will consider how well the audio communicates the station image, or a campaign's objectives, rewarding promotions that demonstrate outstanding creativity, innovation and impact on the audience.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Commercial Partnership

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 19. Best Commercial Partnership

### Category rubric:

This category recognises excellence in paid-for promotional partnerships. This could include advertising, sponsorship, or brand-funded programming.

Judges will be looking to reward entries that include compelling content and successfully address the needs or interests of the brand or partnership as well as the expectations of the audience.

Entries should be from a single campaign or partnership and can include both audio and activity that stretches beyond the broadcast, for example social media. Entries should relate to a paid-for partnership, and entries for a solus ad campaign without any editorial involvement by a broadcaster or podcast producer are not eligible.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Best Station Sound

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)



## 20. Best Local Show

### Category rubric:

This award is for the very best local radio show or local podcast.

Judges will be looking for more than just local news and place name mentions - they'll be expecting to feel a sense of place coming through the output, in a programme that is clearly rooted in the local community.

A local radio show is defined as one serving a specific geographical area such as a nation, county, borough, town or city, and whose appeal is firmly rooted in its relevance to the community it serves, and the audience it attracts.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

Grassroots Award  
The John Myers Station of the Year Award

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 21. The Impact Award

### Category rubric:

This category recognises radio and audio programming that's done something to make a difference to society. Winners in this category will embody the idea of radio as a force for good in the world, with output having made a significant impact in the lives of its listeners, and the lives of the community at large.

Examples might include awareness-raising, fundraising, campaigning, issues-based content, or programming that highlights incredible achievements.

The judges will be looking for powerful audio, that has an impact on the listener, but which also made a huge impact off-air. They will want to be overwhelmed with the response to the project, from people that heard it but also from people beyond; take your time to explain to them how lives were changed by your project.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

The Grassroots Award

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 22. The Creative Innovation Award

### Category rubric:

This category recognises the best formats, programme structures, and creative executions in audio and radio this year, that broke the conventions of their brand or station, and challenged the audience's expectations.

It is an opportunity to showcase ground-breaking new approaches to audio entertainment and storytelling, with content that amazes and inspires listeners, presented to them in ways they've never heard before.

The judges will be looking for unique ways of using the medium of audio to engage listeners, with programme concepts that stand out for their audacity to try something different.

Entries could include music programming, speech programming, drama, comedy, news or sport, or something uncategorisable. They don't need to be technically complex, but they should make the judges think: damn, I wish I'd thought of that.

This category is for audio content only, and shouldn't be used purely for technical/engineering innovation, or for supporting digital content.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 23. The Grassroots Award

### Category rubric:

This category is for any community-driven, grassroots, social action initiative, campaign, radio programme or podcast series that engages their audience in a positive, locally-focused way.

The judges will be seeking to reward compelling and powerful programming that has made an impact in, for example, fundraising, heightening public awareness and understanding of an issue, engaging local listeners, and/or inspiring change within a community.

This category is not intended for national broadcasters or platforms – it is designed to highlight excellence in small, local, homegrown and grassroots radio and audio production.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any platform, including broadcast radio, online radio, and podcasting.

### Paired with:

The Impact Award  
Best Local Show  
Community Station of the Year  
The John Myers Station of the Year Award

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

### The entry must include:

- 15-minute audio compilation
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 500 word supporting statement about the programme and target audience

### The entry may also provide:

- Up to 3 links to audience-facing digital content (social, video, press, website, etc)

## 24. Community Radio Station of the Year

### Category rubric:

This award is for the very best radio station that serves a local community or a community of interest, and whose output is predominantly made by volunteers.

Judges will be looking for more than just local news and place name mentions - they'll be expecting to feel a sense of place coming through the output, on a station that is clearly rooted in the local community or the community of interest it serves.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries can be from any station demonstrably serving a specific geographical community (such as a town, city or county), or a community of interest. These may include stations broadcasting via Ofcom licenses or online.

### Paired with:

The Grassroots award

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

Note: A station entering the Community Radio Station of the Year cannot also enter The John Myers Station of the Year Award.

### The entry must include:

- 20-minute audio compilation, comprised of no more than 20 clips. See general notes at the start of this guide.
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 1,500 word supporting statement - a PDF of up to 6 pages of A4, including both written and visual content

## 25. The John Myers Station of the Year Award

### Category rubric:

Named after the legendary pioneer of UK radio, this category is for a nation, region or local station that has captured the hearts and minds of its listeners and delivers day in, day out.

The judges will be looking for clear evidence of a station that knows its audience - serving and representing the tastes, needs and interests of all, in fresh and exciting ways, and engaging listeners in every aspect of output both online and offline.

While the audio will be the primary determining factor, judges will also consider consistency of programming and clarity of the station's purpose and feel.

Entrants in this category should very clearly serve a specific geographical area such as a nation, region, county, borough, city or town. The station's appeal should be firmly rooted in its relevance to the community it serves, and the audience it attracts.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries will be accepted from Ofcom-licensed stations which broadcast to a specific geographical area which is less than 60% of the UK.

Please read the notes in "General Information" to ensure your station qualifies.

### Paired with:

The Grassroots Award  
Best Local Show

The same audio content (or substantially the same audio content) cannot be entered in these paired categories.

Note: A station entering The John Myers Station of the Year Award cannot also enter Community Radio Station of the Year.

### The entry must include:

- 20-minute audio compilation, comprised of no more than 20 clips. See general notes at the start of this guide.
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 1,500 word supporting statement - a PDF of up to 6 pages of A4, including both written and visual content

## 26. UK Station or Network of the Year

### Category rubric:

This category celebrates the very best in UK radio and will go to the UK-wide station or network which has towered above its rivals over the last year.

Judges will be looking for entries that display excellence across their entire broadcast schedule and clearly demonstrate a strong sense of unified station identity that resonates with, and shows deep understanding of, the station's target audience with brilliant audio, inspiring production, and a genuine ability to connect with their listeners.

Judges will also take into account consistency of programming and clarity of the station's purpose and feel.

### Eligible platforms:

Entries will be accepted from Ofcom-licensed local radio stations or networks that broadcast on AM, FM or DAB to a substantial proportion of the UK (over 60%).

Please read the notes in "General Information" to ensure your station or network qualifies.

Content which is broadcast only on brand-extensions of a main parent station, should not be included in that station's entry for UK Station or Network of the Year. The brand-extension stations themselves can however be entered separately.

### Paired with:

Not paired with any other awards

### The entry must include:

- 20-minute audio compilation, comprised of no more than 20 clips. See general notes at the start of this guide.
- Track-list guide to the audio compilation
- 1,500 word supporting statement - a PDF of up to 6 pages of A4, including both written and visual content

## 27. The Radio Times Moment of the Year

### Category rubric:

As Radio Academy Members, you are invited to submit your nominations for the best moment of audio you've heard within the qualifying time period.

This doesn't necessarily have to be something you've produced yourself – this is a great opportunity to highlight an amazing piece of British radio or audio that you've loved, from anywhere in the sector.

Ideally this would be something that has made an impact and reached a wide audience.

The Radio Academy Trustees will create a shortlist of ten moments of the year, which will be put to a vote of the general public.

It is free to nominate for this category.

### Eligible platforms:

Nominations can be from any platform. They should have been broadcast on a UK-run radio station or published by a UK-based audio publisher.

### The entry must include:

- A name and brief description of the audio moment (100 words)
- The name of the producer and broadcaster
- A link to the audio, or an MP3 attachment