



# COMPLEMENTARY THERAPY AWARDS 2018

## How to create a winning entry:

Some ideas and tips to help you on the road to success

Entering an award can help you to raise your profile, define your achievements and highlight how your therapy plays its part in boosting health and well-being. Here, we offer some hints and tips to help you along the road to success.

The Chamberlain Dunn team behind the new Complementary Therapy awards are themselves award winners and, with years of awards experience behind us, we know a thing or two about what makes a winning entry.

### Step one: choose your project

Entering an award takes time and energy (plus a small financial commitment) so it's worth pausing before you start to make sure you are maximising your chances.

If you are working on more than one project that might be worthy of an award, ask yourself and those you work with, these key questions before you begin:

1. Is the project that's engaging us at the moment the right one to enter?
2. Do we have enough evidence of outcomes?
3. Do we have an older project which we have forgotten about because it's running along nicely, but which has now got lots of data about outcomes?

That older project may just be the right one to run with.

### Step two: choose the category

Think carefully about the award category you enter. Some categories are likely to be more popular than others, so think about how your project might fit into one that is less obvious. The number of entries that different categories receive varies widely so you stand a better chance of being shortlisted in one that is likely to receive fewer entries.

Read through the details of all the categories where your project would be eligible. Take a close look at the criteria and the submission questions to ensure your project fits and has the evidence required.

You may enter as many categories as you like, but not with the same project.

If a colleague or someone more senior needs to sign off the entry, get their approval (and help) as soon as possible. It would be a shame to have done all the initial groundwork to enter an award, only to then miss the entry deadline because you need someone else's approval or involvement.

Think about the work involved and, with colleagues, plot a timeline so you don't leave it all until the last minute. Remember to build in time for a review once the almost final draft is produced.

## Step three: get writing

Answer the questions carefully, sticking to the word counts. Give brief and clear examples of the 'what' and 'how' in the way you approached the project. Give clear evidence and examples of how you have measured the impact of your work and what you consider 'success' to be.

We ask for a 50 word summary of your project. Spend time polishing this up and get it as succinct and punchy as you can. It must of course accurately summarise your work, but it is also a sales pitch that should get the reader engaged straight off.

The title is important too. It should be brief enough to work as a title but clear enough to capture what the project is all about. Beware of puns and ambiguity.

Thoroughly check your entry form before submission, and ask a colleague to take a look too.

And remember you can enter as many projects into the awards programme as you like.

**Don't forget to call us if you have a query 020 8334 4500.**

## How to make your entry stand out

**Remember that by the time the judges get to reading your entry, they may have already sifted through dozens of others, so make yours stand out.**

- 🌀 First impressions count: so make an instant impact with the 50 word summary and the title
- 🌀 Tell a good story: write your project summary as though you are writing a really good story. The beginning should set out the objectives clearly. The middle should explain the strategy, and the end should reveal the results.
- 🌀 Keep it simple: as many judges say, "less is sometimes more". Avoid jargon and flowery language. Check for typos, grammatical mistakes and spelling.
- 🌀 Stick to the truth: don't exaggerate or include spurious claims that you won't be able to qualify if asked by the judges.
- 🌀 Involve the whole team: make the entry a joint effort which will often produce a better, more comprehensive summary, as well as making the story more interesting.
- 🌀 Use patient feedback to bring your story alive
- 🌀 Be ruthless when redrafting: once you've written your rough draft submission, read it over several times and cut out superfluous information. This will make it much clearer. It's also a good idea to get someone who hasn't been directly involved to cast their fresh eyes over it to double-check clarity.

## Step 4: you've been shortlisted!

This means you are one of three or four in your category that the shortlisters have selected to appear before the judging panel. So you are a finalist and will be mentioned at the ceremony, but you haven't won yet.

Pause for a moment or two and think about how you can turn a shortlisted entry into a winning entry. Enlist the help of a co-presenter if you can.

First put yourself in the judges' shoes: a whole day of listening to presentations. They could be doing 9 or even 12 during the day – that's hard work. So make their job a little easier:

- 🌀 You will of course be nervous – everyone who is shortlisted will feel the same. But find ways of turning nerves into adrenalin and energy; and rehearse endlessly so it looks effortless.
- 🌀 Be enthusiastic when you're presenting: show the judges why this project is so exciting.
- 🌀 Share the experience with a co-presenter and fully rehearse what you are each going to say – you are likely to be asked to speak for just 10 to 15 minutes and then answer questions from the judges for a further 15 minutes.
- 🌀 Look again at the criteria for your category as that is what the judges will be marking you on.
- 🌀 Make it as easy as possible for them to tick the boxes. Evidence of patient involvement needed? Tell them how you did it? Can the project be sustained? Tell them how it already has been and what's planned for the future.
- 🌀 If you are using Powerpoint, use it with care – the judges want to know what you have to say, not what a dab hand you are at it. Keep the slides clear and succinct. What matters is what you have to say and how you say it.
- 🌀 Don't worry too much about giving a pack to each of the judges, if you have one; they are very unlikely to have time to read it during their busy day.
- 🌀 But if you do have a patient information leaflet or something similar that will make instant impact, hand that out as a powerful bit of evidence. As long of course as you have co-produced it with the help of patients.
- 🌀 If you are asked to speak for no more than 15 minutes, that is what you must do. If you don't you will be cut off in mid-sentence perhaps when you haven't yet reached your carefully honed conclusion.
- 🌀 Chairs will be provided but it is always better to stand if possible when you are presenting – that gives you a chance to show off your body language which radiates enthusiasm, professionalism and winning qualities.... well, it does doesn't it?
- 🌀 Everyone has the preferred way of presenting – key notes, full script or something in between. Whatever your style, just make sure you don't read it word for word as the judges will find it hard to engage.
- 🌀 Think about what the judges might ask you and prepare the answers. Some like to end with a question, such as "why do you think you are the winner?" No time for false modesty here: rehearse a devastatingly good answer.

### Five most common criticisms that judges make:

1. Not enough supporting evidence
2. Too soon to judge success
3. Lack of awareness of the bigger picture
4. Lack of client involvement
5. Lack of awareness of the work of others in the field.

## And here are some of the actual things judges have said about winning entries:

- 🌸 “The team’s passion was amazing, they have lived and breathed this project. Their commitment was outstanding.
- 🌸 “We quickly realised the scale of the project’s impact - unforgettable patient stories.”
- 🌸 “Collaboration, collaboration, collaboration - this project crossed so many professional boundaries.”
- 🌸 “The team translated their vision into objectives at every level - and simply delivered.”
- 🌸 “The story of the project failures was gripping - a project team full of inspiring practitioners that just did not give up.

## Step 5: Waiting for the results

After shortlisting and the judging day, there’s an agonising few weeks when you are waiting for the results, announced at the celebratory lunch. Use the time to make the most of your status as a finalist – that’s a strong place to be. You might not be a winner yet but neither are you a runner-up.

If you are working with an organisation that has a communications team, brief them about your finalist status so that they can spread the word internally and to their external media contacts. Use your own media contacts, tell your professional organisation. Use the ‘I’ve been shortlisted’ logo on your emails. Get Tweeting or share on Facebook.

Two people from your project will be invited to the lunch, but you may want to buy extra tickets to bring other team members along. Be creative in thinking who might be willing to fund this.

## Step 6: the day arrives

All the finalists are special on awards day – they are listed in the Order of Ceremony, mentioned in the script and in the Winners’ Guide, published after the ceremony. So your project has gone public and your work has been recognised.

When you are announced as the winner, it’s a golden moment! Photographs are taken on the platform, colleagues are tweeting and all eyes are on you. Make sure your communications people back at work know and get a photo promptly. Ask the official photographer to take a photo of your whole team during the afterparty.

When the excitement has died down a bit, back at the ranch, talk to colleagues about how to further spread the word. Can your work be written up as a journal article? An experience piece for something like the Guardian’s *From the front line* feature? Conference or seminar presentations? Or keep it close to home in your local newspaper.

**Don’t wait to be asked, offer to write or present. After all you are a winner.**

**Congratulations!**

From the Chamberlain Dunn events team, April 2018

