



Jane Hatfield Award 2026

1. Introduction

Jane Hatfield was a Trustee and then Chair of [The Institute for Voluntary Action Research](#) (IVAR) between 2006 to 2021. Jane was passionate about supporting the next generation of both researchers and activists and wanted to see IVAR become more proactive in this. IVAR Trustees have agreed to celebrate Jane's life and her contribution to IVAR with an annual award, targeted at young researchers from Black and racially minoritised communities.

The award and support offer that sits alongside it is provided by IVAR, in partnership with [The Ubele Initiative](#) ('Ubele'). The award links with Ubele's broader vision '*to empower Black and racially minoritised communities in the UK, to act as catalysts for social and economic change.*' We see the award as an exciting opportunity to enable young researchers from Black and racially minoritised backgrounds to lead and develop a piece of research of their choosing on topics or issues related to community, social action and social justice.

The Jane Hatfield Award is two grants of £6050, given on an annual basis to two teams of researchers (two to three people). Applications should show how the research will (directly or indirectly) help in strengthening the UK voluntary sector¹. For example, how it will generate insights that can contribute to creating a stronger voluntary sector workforce, expand thinking on particular topic or issue, or address specific challenges that voluntary sector organisations are trying to solve.

This is the fourth year we are running the Award. It is with thanks to Impact on Urban Health and City Bridge Foundation for funding the award.

For 2026, we are making two Awards of £6050 to support two separate pieces of research carried out by two teams.

You can read about last year's Award recipients and download their research here: <https://www.ivar.org.uk/jane-hatfield-award/>

¹ The focus aligns with IVAR's own charitable mission and research interests

2. The Award

The Award includes a grant of £6050 to cover the costs of carrying out the research. It will be up to the team of researchers to determine the breakdown of costs to be covered within this amount. However, an example of the costs it might cover are:

- Researchers' time (based on a day rate of around £250)
- Participants costs, e.g. vouchers in return for participating in a survey or interview
- Research materials, e.g. Zoom subscription costs to carry out online focus groups
- Travel costs and room hire – if conducting research in person

In addition to covering costs through the IVAR contribution, direct support and guidance will be provided by Ubele and IVAR.

IVAR and Ubele will also provide access to their own platforms, resources and networks to support with publication and dissemination of the research.

3. Recruitment and selection

We are particularly interested in receiving applications from young researchers (between 18 – 27yrs) from Black and racially minoritised communities. Candidates should have some experience of having previously conducted or been involved in a research project and are interested in strengthening these skills and pursuing a research topic of their own interest.

Criteria

Applications need to:

- Be from groups of two to three people, working together on a piece of research related to community and social action and/or social justice
- Be able to carry out and write-up the research within a six-month period (from the commencement date of the Award, which we expect to be April 2026)

Application process

The application process will be open from Tuesday 13th January to Monday 23rd February (5pm).

Finding a research team

If you are interested in applying but do not yet have a researcher partner or team (max 3 people), there is the option for us to run some short, online sessions where you can meet with other researchers to discuss your ideas and identify potential research partners/teammates. If this is something that you would find helpful, please get in touch with vanessa@ivar.org.uk and we will come back to you with further details.

It will be up to individuals to establish who they might share similar research interests with and follow up with potential research partners/teammates independently to discuss whether they wish to apply.

Submitting your application

Applicants are asked to provide, on paper or by video, the following:

- An outline of the research topic and how the research will (directly or indirectly) help in strengthening the UK voluntary sector
- Initial thoughts about methods and timeline
- An assessment of support needs
- Initial thoughts about possible outputs (eg. written report; podcast; infographic).

If applications are on paper, no more than two sides of A4 are required. If applications are by video, these should be no longer than 5 minutes.

Applications should be submitted to Vanessa Norris at vanessa@ivar.org.uk Please also address any queries about the Award to Vanessa who can pass these on to the relevant person within Ubele or IVAR.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an online interview (in their teams/partnership) at the start of March to present their research idea and plan.

Selection is being carried out jointly by IVAR and Ubele, with the aim of finalising and announcing the decision by mid-March 2026.

Appendix One: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the Jane Hatfield Award?

Jane Hatfield was a Trustee and then Chair of The Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR) between 2006 to 2021. Jane was passionate about supporting the next generation of both researchers and activists and wanted to see IVAR become more proactive in this. IVAR Trustees have agreed to celebrate Jane's life and her contribution to IVAR with an annual award, targeted at young researchers from Black and racially minoritised communities.

The award and support offer that sits alongside it is provided by IVAR, in partnership with [The Ubele Initiative](#) ('Ubele'). The award links with Ubele's broader vision '*to empower Black and racially minoritised communities in the UK, to act as catalysts for social and economic change.*' We see the award as an exciting opportunity to enable young researchers from Black and racially minoritised backgrounds to lead and develop a piece of research of their choosing on topics or issues related to community, social action and social justice.

The Jane Hatfield Award is a grant of £5,000, given on an annual basis to a team of researchers (two to three people). Applications should show how the research will (directly or indirectly) help in strengthening the UK voluntary sector². For example, how it will generate insights that can contribute to creating a stronger voluntary sector workforce, expand thinking on particular topic or issue, or address specific challenges that voluntary sector organisations are trying to solve.

2. What is IVAR and Ubele's motivation for running the Award?

IVAR and Ubele are passionate about supporting the next generation of researchers and activists, with a focus on young researchers from Black and racially minoritised communities. The award links with Ubele's broader vision '*to empower Black and racially minoritised communities in the UK, to act as catalysts for social and economic change.*'

We're really interested to see what happens when we start with an award and then leave the rest – defining the research question; shaping the design and research team – up to the individuals in receipt of the award to define.

3. What is the Award amount in 2026?

The amount of each Award is £5000, to be divided amongst the successful team (up to three individuals), for the delivery of their research project. It will be up to the team of researchers to determine the breakdown of costs to be covered within this amount. In 2026, we are making two Awards of £5000 to two teams.

² The focus aligns with IVAR's own charitable mission and research interests

In addition to covering costs through the IVAR contribution, direct support and guidance will be provided by Ubele and IVAR. The two organisations will also provide access to their own platforms, resources and networks to support with publication and dissemination of the research.

4. What are the criteria for applying?

We are particularly interested in receiving applications from young researchers (between 18 – 27yrs) from Black and racially minoritised communities. Candidates should have some experience of having previously conducted or been involved in a research project and are interested in strengthening these skills and pursuing a research topic of their own interest.

Applications need to:

- Be from groups of two to three people, working together on a piece of research related to community and social action and/or social justice
- Be able to carry out and write-up the research within a six-month period (from the date of the Award, which we expect to be in April 2026).

5. Who gets to choose/allocate the research questions and topics?

You do. It is up to applicants to decide on the research questions/topics they would like to focus on. Support and guidance will be available from Ubele during the application stage and throughout the Award, if groups would like support to help further shape their research question, methodology or delivery plan.

6. Who gets to choose/allocate the research teams?

You do. If you are interested in applying but do not yet have a researcher partner or team (max 3 people), we may run some online sessions (see briefing outline) where you can meet with other researchers to discuss your ideas and identify potential research partners/teammates. However, it is up to you to establish who you might share similar research interests with and form a research team (of up to three).

7. What kind of time commitment does this involve?

Research teams need to be able to carry out the research within a six-month period, between April 2026 to October 2026, including delivery of the final output, e.g. written report, podcast etc.

In terms of how teams divide their time during the six-month period, this will be for them to decide. Ubele and IVAR can provide additional support, if required, to help teams think through how to ensure their proposed research study is proportionate to the research budget available (£5000) and help them translate this into a work plan.

8. How do I apply?

Applicants are asked to provide, on paper or by video, the following:

- An outline of the research topic and how the research will (directly or indirectly) help in strengthening the UK voluntary sector
- Initial thoughts about methods and timeline

- An assessment of support needs
- Initial thoughts about possible outputs (eg. written report; podcast; infographic).

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Applications should be submitted to Vanessa Norris at vanessa@ivar.org.uk Please also address any queries about the Award to Vanessa who can pass these on to the relevant person within Ubele or IVAR.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an online interview (in their teams/partnership) at the end of November to present their research idea and plan.

Selection is being carried out jointly by IVAR and Ubele, with the aim of finalising and announcing the decision by mid-March 2026.