

British Council awards ELT innovation

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The British Council celebrated innovation and excellence in global English language teaching with the annual ELTons award ceremony last week.

The ELTons 2014 celebrated innovation in the ELT industry

Presented by the BBC radio presenter and author Stuart Maconie and broadcast live around the world via the British Council website, the ELTons 2014 were organised into seven categories covering areas such as excellence in course innovation, digital innovation and new talent in writing.

Opening the ceremony, Anna Searle, Director of English Language at the British Council, said, “We are delighted to be celebrating the winners of the ELTons Awards 2014 and to be supporting and showcasing innovation in the ELT sector. The diverse range of winning projects and products being recognised here today certainly highlights the continued and exciting growth of the sector as a whole, as well as the important achievements happening within it.”

The winner of the Local Innovation award was PALS (Promoting Acceptance of Language Students), a scheme established by English language provider Country Cousins alongside the Devon Youth Service to recruit teenagers from the Ilfracombe area of the UK to integrate international language students into the community, described by the judges as “a worthy project that is very effective”.

Other winners during the evening included: the Disabled Access Friendly campaign by Katie Quatrano and Paul Shaw in the Innovation in Teacher Resources category for a set of ELT teacher resources that focus on raising awareness about mobility disability; the English for Medical Purposes resource Doctors Speak Up in the Digital Innovation category; and Dyslexia for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language by the Dystefl Project in the Excellence in Course Innovation prize – a professional development programme that aims to raise teachers’ awareness of the foreign language needs of dyslexic students.

Influential ELT writer and poet Michael Swan was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award, described as a name synonymous with “must-have texts” and “an influence on a generation of students”. Accepting the award, Swan praised the ELT industry for its willingness to share and its focus on quality.

“Now an important fixture in the ELT calendar, the ELTons Awards Ceremony provides a unique opportunity for ELT authors, publishers and practitioners from around the world to find out more about and celebrate the new ideas that will shape English language teaching in the years to come,” said Searle.

Applications for the awards are submitted online by the end of November and are then judged by an independent panel of ELT experts.