

AWA

asian women *of* achievement

In association with



NatWest

Recognising the extraordinary achievements of Asian women in Britain today



The Asian Women of Achievement Awards, founded by Pinky Lilani CBE DL in 1999, celebrate multicultural Britain and the contribution of diverse cultures and talents to UK society. We put on a platform, the phenomenal Asian women across the UK and across industries, who are making a valuable and important contribution to British life. The awards play a key role in redefining the contribution of Asian women; and informing a new, positive, pro-diversity debate.

ASIAN WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT

Winners 2018

10 May 2018, London: The Asian Women of Achievement Awards (AWA), in association with NatWest, announced the winners of the 2018 awards at a star-studded event in London last night in the presence of Her Royal Highness The Countess of Wessex, Her Grace The Duchess of Wellington, Tulip Siddiq MP, Baroness Amos, Director, SOAS University of London, Rachel Johnson, Journalist, Author, Lewis Lukens, Deputy Chief of Mission for the US Embassy in London, Jasmin Walia, actress & singer and actress Amrit Maghera.

The awards, now in their 19th year, celebrate the incredible achievements of Asian women and the contribution they make, both professionally and in their communities, across a vast range of industries and professions, from science, medicine and technology to sport, business and charity work.

From a powerful, dynamic ambassador for mental health reform to a human trafficking survivor who campaigns to raise awareness of the plight of North Korean women and the crimes against humanity they face, this year's list of winners features an incredibly diverse and exciting group of women. Despite their varied backgrounds, the winners are united by their shared ability to inspire; to be role models for the next generation, and their determination to drive positive change in their respective fields.

13 women were selected as category winners by a judging panel chaired by Sir Nicholas Young, Former CEO, British Red Cross. The full list of winners are:

2018 WINNERS

ARTS & CULTURE

Simone G. Malik, Artist

BUSINESS

Yasmin Waljee OBE, International Pro Bono Director, Hogan Lovells International

ENTREPRENEUR

Asma Khan, Restaurateur, Darjeeling Express

MEDIA

Balvinder Sidhu, Presenter and Journalist, ITV News Central

PROFESSIONS

Dr Farah Ahmed, Senior Manager, Exponent International

PUBLIC SERVICE

Dr Pooja Saini, Lecturer in Psychology, Liverpool John Moores University

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Dr Ishani Patel, Co-Founder/Primary Care Lead, Lantum

SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN

Kalbir Bains, Author

SPORT

Halima Khan, Founder and Director, Opening Boundaries

YOUNG ACHIEVER

Maya Ghazal, Volunteer Speaker, The Children's Society

Dr Jenny Tran, Medical Doctor, DPhil Candidate, University of Oxford

CHAIRMAN'S AWARD

Jihyun Park, North Korean Survivor and Women's Rights Advocate, Connect: NK

Yasmin Sheikh, Founder, Diverse Matters

Also highly commended by the judging panel this year were:

Sharmin Akter (Entrepreneur); Ayisha Malik (Arts & Culture); Alice Yu (Media); Varsha Jain Garg (Science & Technology); Jashu Vekaria (Professions); Kru Desai (Business); Hannah Jethwa (Young Achiever).

ASIAN WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT

Winners 2018

Simone G. Malik, Winner of the Arts & Culture Award

Simone left a steady career as a health officer to follow her passion as an artist. In just four years she has achieved phenomenal success and is one of the only female Asian painters in the UK. Her talent, her humility, kindness and her work to help vulnerable children made a significant impact on the judging panel.

Yasmin Waljee OBE, Winner of the Business Award

Yasmin is a human rights lawyer and Hogan Lovells' International Pro Bono Director. She is a force for change, doing everything she can to ensure justice is accessible to all, including domestic abuse and human trafficking survivors in the UK, and Yazidi women fleeing ISIS. She's also determined to change the legal profession so that it is more socially responsible and diverse.

Asma Khan, Winner of the Entrepreneur Award

The Entrepreneur Award goes to Asma Khan, Founder of Darjeeling Express, a buzzing restaurant in London. The judges were wowed by the far-reaching impact Asma has as a role model. In all that she does, she embodies the values of kindness and collaboration, leaving a legacy with her work that reaches far outside her own community.

Balvinder Sidhu, Winner of the Media Award

As an award-winning investigative journalist and presenter for ITV News Central, Balvinder stood out for the judges who were struck by the fearlessness with which she uncovers stories, and often taboo subjects, including mental health and the grooming and sexual exploitation of Asian girls by gangs. She's a woman of influence in British media and entertainment.

Dr Farah Ahmed, Winner of the Professions Award

Farah is currently Senior Manager at Exponent International and has an international reputation for her achievements in the field of X-ray micro-CT. She impressed the judges not only for being at the very top of her game, but for using her expertise to improve safety and to change the culture of opportunities available in science for women from ethnic minorities.

Dr Pooja Saini, Winner of the Public Service Award

Pooja works within Health Services Research at the University of Liverpool and her focus on mental health in the Asian community is challenging stereotypes and leading to ground-breaking solutions which will have a positive impact for decades to come. She is a powerful ambassador for mental health reform.

Dr Ishani Patel, Winner of the Science and Technology Award

There are three major strands to Ishani's career: she's a successful GP in Tower Hamlets; the Co-founder of technology engagement platform, Lantum, and Cancer Lead at the Transforming Cancer Services team. The technology engagement platform that she has developed and implemented in Tower Hamlets has the potential to transform the NHS and is already saving the NHS hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Kalbir Bains, Winner of the Social and Humanitarian Award

Kalbir suffers from dyslexia and it's testament to her commitment to encourage others that she has successfully published her book, *NOT Our Daughter! The True Story of a Daughter-in-law*. The judges praised Kalbir for the way in which she uses her work to transcend from victim to advocate for those suffering from domestic abuse, including forced marriage, girl abortions, and dowry abuse.

Halima Khan, Winner of the Sport Award

As the Founder of Opening Boundaries, Halima is an inspirational role model, focused on using sport as a force for good and to promote diversity and gender equality. The judges praised Halima for using sport to empower women, to influence a change of mindset and to challenge issues of gender-based violence in sport.

Maya Ghazal and Dr Jenny Tran, Winners of the Young Achiever Award

In 2015, 15 year old Maya arrived in England as a refugee. She could speak no English and was turned away from schools. Maya looked to The Children's Society for support. Now she helps the charity and others tackle the issues young refugees and migrants face. The judges believe she is a hero - sharing her story as a refugee and motivating with her voice, her smile and acts of kindness.

The joint winner of the Young Achiever Award is Jenny Tran. She's a medical doctor passionate about healthcare, education and community and also the founding Chair of CHASE, a not-for-profit health mentoring programme. She's working to overcome the chronic disease burden with diverse disciplines and skills - determined to help realise a health care system rather than a disease care system.

Jihyun Park and Yasmin Sheikh, Winners of the Chairman's Award

The judges were blown away by Jihyun. She is an exiled North Korean living in the UK and a survivor of forced marriage, human trafficking and sexual violence. In the words of the judges: "...her suffering is hard for us to contemplate at all. She has twice escaped from North Korea, enduring violence, imprisonment and many near-death experiences. Today, she shows immense courage, raising awareness of the plight of North Korean women and the crimes against humanity they face and, in doing so, she too faces danger every day."

Yasmin Sheikh suffered a spinal stroke at the age of 29. Whilst dealing with her own life-changing experience, she founded Diverse Matters, a training consultancy giving confidence to people from diverse backgrounds specializing in disability issues. The judges were wowed by the way in which she tackles disability and the innovative methods she uses to de-stigmatise views of disability, LGBT and ethnic minorities.



WHAT OUR CANDIDATES SAY

“The Asian Women Awards are a great opportunity to celebrate and shed light on women who have worked tirelessly, behind the scenes, in their chosen professions to reach great heights often having overcome many hurdles including those related to gender and ethnicity. On the night of the awards, each winner had a unique and inspiring story to share of their journey. It was a great honour to have been selected among such distinguished and accomplished women, and then to have been selected as the winner of the public service award.”

Dr Harjinder Kaur, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager and Gender Advisor, PWC,
Winner of the 2017 AWA Public Service Award

A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

The awards have led to the creation of numerous initiatives and projects designed to help women and improve opportunities for the next generation. The awards are not simply a night of recognition but a community and a programme of initiatives that offer the opportunity for candidates to meet like-minded women and build business contacts.

Our sister initiative, the Women of the Future Programme, enables opportunities through our Women of the Future Network and Women of the Future Ambassadors Programme.



IN ASSOCIATION WITH **M&G INVESTMENTS**

Women of the Future Network

An active network of high-achieving women bringing members together to share experiences and build their own networks. Our membership of over 1000, continues to grow each year with the inclusion of the AWA shortlisted candidates and Women of the Future Awards candidates.



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Women of the Future Ambassadors Programme

Connecting students with role models and strengthening the pipeline of talent among Britain’s younger women.

“We have been blown away by the range of applications received for this year’s Asian Women of Achievement Awards and I feel honoured and excited that we can shine a spotlight on the important work of our shortlisted candidates. From women working on the cutting edge of science and medicine to those who dedicate their lives to giving a voice to the voiceless, we can be truly proud of the positive impact these British-Asian women are making on the world today.”

Pinky Lilani CBE DL, Founder,
Asian Women of Achievement Awards

“NatWest is proud to be a part of the Asian Women of Achievement Awards for the seventh consecutive year. As always, the shortlist this year showcases the incredible contribution that Asian women are making in the UK today. My congratulations to all those that have been shortlisted, they are fantastic role models already achieving tremendous success in their fields.”

Les Matheson, Chief Executive,
Personal & Business Banking, RBS and NatWest