Nystagmus Network launches essay competition 2026

Friday 12 December, 2025

Now in its third year, the Nystagmus Network is pleased to announce the launch of the Richard Wilson Essay Prize 2026, a competition to encourage budding researchers and students to investigate nystagmus.

In memory of Richard

Richard Wilson OBE served as Chair of Trustees of the Nystagmus Network from 2010 to 2019. During that time he introduced the very first Nystagmus Awareness Day, saw the charity's investment in nystagmus research top £1,000 per week, established an annual UK nystagmus research workshop and hosted the charity's first ever clinical training event.

Richard received his OBE from Her Majesty the Queen in the New Year's Honours of 2018. He sadly passed away in 2023 and is fondly remembered by us all.

Who can take part?

The competition is open to students of all levels, from undergraduate to post-doctorate, in the fields of Ophthalmology, Optometry, Orthoptics or a visual related science, currently studying or working at UK institutions.

Prizes

First prize: £500 and the opportunity to speak at the Nystagmus Network International Nystagmus Symposium 2026. Your cheque will be presented at a Nystagmus Network event.

Second Prize: £200

Third Prize: £100

Judges

The 2026 panel includes

- Dr Onyeka Amiebenomo, Senior Lecturer in Optometry, University of the West of England Bristol
- Mr Daniel Osborne, Research Orthoptist and NIHR Pre-Doctoral Fellow at University Hospital Southampton NHS FT

They will be supported in their decision making by Nystagmus Network trustees.

Essay Question for 2026

"How could AI change the way that nystagmus is diagnosed and treated?"

Judging criteria

For entries to be considered they must:

- demonstrate a significant level of understanding of current clinical practice for nystagmus in the UK
- pinpoint any key areas for development which AI could support
- identify how AI assisted research can expand clinical knowledge of nystagmus

Format

Essays to be a maximum of 3000 words in length (excluding any diagrams, graphs, references,

Media:



Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits :: Health :: Medical & Pharmaceutical ::

Related Keywords:

Nystagmus :: Essay :: Competition :: Research :: AI :: Prizes :: Diagnostics :: Treatment :: Vision :: Sight :: Eyes :: Ophthalmology :: Optometry :: Science :: Clinical ::

Scan Me:

bibliography).

Timeline

Applications open in December 2025. The deadline for submission is 30 June 2026.

Submission

Completed essays should be emailed to research@nystagmusnet.org clearly marked ‘Richard Wilson Essay Prize’ in the subject line. Entries must include the full name of the candidate, the UK institution where they are registered, their current level of study and their highest academic qualification to date.

Assets

Media Pack and announcement images are available.

Ends

Notes to editors

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Nystagmus is a serious, lifelong, incurable form of visual impairment where the eyes constantly move uncontrollably, affecting focus, depth perception and facial recognition. At least 1 in 1,000 babies are born with nystagmus. Many other people acquire nystagmus beyond infancy and into later life. Support is needed in the early years, at school, in employment and in everyday life.

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