

Press Release

Stress Management Awards Winners Demonstrate Outstanding Contributions in Reducing Stress, Improving Mental Health & Wellbeing

Thursday 14th November 2024

The three winners of the International Stress Management Association's (ISMA^{UK}) inaugural Stress Management Awards were announced at ISMA^{UK}'s Global Online Stress & Wellbeing Summit on 6 November. The winners are: Ballyclare High School, Northern Ireland, with special mention of Dr Michelle Rainey (winner); Dr Elaine Smith, Creating Compassionate Workplaces (runner up); and Simon Collyer, Sailing Wellness and the Association of Pension & Benefits Claimants (runner up).

Ballyclare High School has a values-driven ethos. Relationships are built upon aspirant attitudes and teamwork where both participation and excellence are celebrated. The school focuses on what is best for the child and promoting personal endeavour in a caring environment of trust. Dr Michelle Rainey, Principal, commenting on the Award, said, *"Winning the award means we can celebrate all we do to champion wellbeing and promote the work of ISMA to ensure more organisations benefit from such a focus."*

At Creating Compassionate Workplaces, Dr Elaine Smith works with leaders to build resilience and help them lead with compassion, fostering empathy, connection and wellbeing in their workplaces. She runs corporate wellbeing workshops, leadership retreats, courses and consultations on wellbeing and resilience. On winning her award, Dr Smith said, *"Winning this award is incredibly important for me to reflect on what I have achieved, and to reach a wider audience so that I continue my mission to make work better for everyone."*

Simon Collyer is a social entrepreneur and sailor who founded Sailing Wellness as a 'blue health' project. It helps people with PTSD, mental health problems, and physical injuries. Using radio-controlled DragonFlite 95 sailboats, participants learn to sail in complete safety, while on land. Learning a new absorbing skill helps to break the cycle of rumination and inactivity following traumatic events or periods of depression. On winning his award, Simon said, *"This exciting award will help Sailing Wellness reach out as a mental health initiative to influencers and opinion formers and engage with those in genuine need who could benefit from our offer."*

The Stress Management Awards were launched by ISMA^{UK} to mark 50 years' dedication to reducing individual and workplace stress and advocating improved wellbeing, greater resilience and enhanced performance. The Awards were sponsored by PPWD, specialists in facilitating programmes that bridge non-technical skills from trauma management to wellbeing and leadership.

Carole Spiers, chair of ISMA^{UK}, said, "Following the success of the Awards in their first year, we are looking forward to running them again in 2025. Businesses, organisations and individuals that are dedicated to reducing stress in the workplace, improving mental health and enhancing employee wellbeing will be welcome to apply. These Awards offer a great opportunity for those who focus on stress reduction to be recognised for their work in this important area."

She continued, “The benefits of entering for ISMA^{UK}’s Stress Management Awards include demonstrating how much you value and appreciate your employees’ achievements, whilst recognising leadership and innovation; encouraging and improving morale and motivation; boosting productivity; and improving staff retention. Each of these can also assist in increasing profitability.”

Notes for Editors

- Details of the **ISMA^{UK} Stress Management Awards 2025** will be announced in the new year. For more information about the Awards, the judging panel, and this year’s winners, visit <https://isma.org.uk/stress-management-awards>.
 - **PPWD** specialises in the facilitation of programmes that bridge non-technical skills from trauma management to investigations, learning reviews, fair culture, wellbeing, and leadership. Their multi-award-winning Compassionate Safety approach generates safe environments that accommodate humans for being human. For more information visit <https://www.ppwd-consulting.co.uk/about/>.
 - **ISMA^{UK}’s Online Global Stress Summit 2025** will be held during International Stress Awareness Week, 3-7 November, on Stress Awareness Day, Wednesday 5 November. Further information will become available next year at <https://isma.org.uk/isma-international-stress-awareness-week>. Ticket holders can continue to see the 2024 Summit on catch-up until 31 December.
 - **The International Stress Management Association (ISMA^{UK})** is a registered charity and membership-based organisation. As the leading professional body for workplace and personal stress management, wellbeing and performance, they have been promoting sound knowledge and best practice in stress management, resilience, wellbeing and mental health for 50 years. ISMA^{UK} practitioners and consultants provide stress management services to individuals and businesses, assisting around 40,000 people who need professional help with stress-related issues every year. ISMA^{UK} endorses and uses the HSE guidelines for managing stress in the workplace. To find out more, visit www.isma.org.uk.
 - **Press Interviews**
- For all press and media enquiries please contact Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMAUK, for an immediate response on +44 (0) 77 688 78910 or at chair@isma.org.uk