Vietnam International Awards marks fifth anniversary with landmark honours

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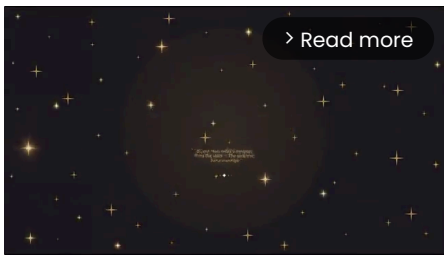
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Held under the theme Vietnam Forward: Vision – Impact – Alliance, VIAwards marked its fifth anniversary with a gala attended by 200 guests from 12 countries.

LONDON — Outstanding figures and organisations making positive contributions to Việt Nam have been recognised at the Vietnam International Awards (VIAwards) ceremony in London.

Held under the theme *Vietnam Forward: Vision – Impact – Alliance*, VIAwards on November 7 marked its fifth anniversary with a gala attended by 200 guests from 12 countries.

This year's awards featured several notable outcomes, including a rare tie in the Healthcare category, where two candidates received identical final scores, and dual recognition for Isabelle Müller, who was honoured in two categories for her individual achievements and the work of the LOAN Foundation, which she founded.



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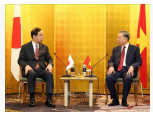
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Winners and organisers of Vietnam International Awards 2026 take a group photo. — Photos courtesy of VIAwards

Two candidates share Healthcare Award

One of the highlights of this year's ceremony was the decision to present the Healthcare Award to two candidates, reflecting the high quality and competitiveness of the nominations.

Professor Michelle Hermiston, Dean and Chief Scientific Officer of the College of Health Sciences at VinUniversity, and Katrin Kandel, Volunteer Chief Executive Officer and Board Member of Facing the World, were jointly honoured for their outstanding contributions to healthcare.

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Professor Michelle Hermiston, Dean and Chief Scientific Officer of the College of Health Sciences at VinUniversity, jointly receives the award for her outstanding contributions to healthcare.

Following two rigorous rounds of assessment, the candidates received identical final scores. Recognising the outstanding achievements and positive impact of their respective work, the judging panel agreed to honour both, demonstrating VIAwards' commitment to fairness, transparency and recognition of excellence.

The joint award also reflects the diverse international contributions to healthcare in Việt Nam, ranging from medical education and scientific research to support for specialised medical services and improvements in patient care.

Healthcare cooperation was also a key focus of VIAwards' fifth-anniversary programme, with a Healthcare Conference held at University College London (UCL). The conference brought together experts and practitioners to discuss healthcare investment and financing, cancer treatment, the responsible application of artificial intelligence in healthcare, and opportunities to strengthen cooperation between Việt Nam and the UK.

Dual recognition

Another highlight of VIAwards 2026 was the double recognition of Isabelle Müller, German-Vietnamese writer, illustrator, social activist and founder of the LOAN Foundation, through two separate awards.

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LOAN Stiftung (LOAN Foundation), an educational charity established by Müller, received the Education Award in recognition of its efforts to expand learning opportunities and improve living conditions for disadvantaged children in Việt Nam.



German-Vietnamese writer Isabelle Müller receives double recognitions - the Education Award and the People's Choice Award.

Meanwhile, Müller herself received the People's Choice Award, one of two new categories introduced to mark VIAwards' fifth anniversary. Decided through public voting, the award recognises her personal dedication, positive influence on the community and ability to inspire others through her social activities.

The two awards recognise different but closely connected aspects of her work: the achievements and impact of the LOAN Foundation as an organisation, and the vision and commitment of its founder.

The double recognition is particularly significant as VIAwards continues to expand its international reach, highlighting the contributions of not only Vietnamese individuals and organisations but also international figures and institutions making meaningful and lasting contributions to Việt Nam and its people.

New categories

The fifth-anniversary edition also marked a new development in VIAwards' award system with the introduction of two categories: Content Creator of the Year and People's Choice Award.

The Content Creator of the Year category recognises the growing role of digital content creators in shaping public discourse, connecting communities and reaching audiences internationally.

Meanwhile, the People's Choice Award gives the public an opportunity to participate directly in the recognition process by voting for individuals whose achievements and contributions resonate with, inspire and engage communities.

Johnny Dung Nguyen, representing VietQ Media, received the Content Creator of the Year Award, highlighting the increasingly prominent role of digital media and storytelling in connecting Vietnamese communities around the world.

Former British Ambassador honoured

The ceremony also presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to Warwick Morris OBE, former British Ambassador to Việt Nam and co-founder of the Việt Nam-UK Network.



VIAwards co-founders Nguyễn Như Thoại (left) and Hoàng Hà present the Lifetime Achievement Award to Warwick Morris OBE, former British Ambassador to Việt Nam and co-founder of the Việt Nam-UK Network.

The award recognised his diplomatic career and sustained efforts to promote Việt Nam-UK relations, particularly through bilateral cooperation, greater cultural understanding and people-to-people exchanges.

His recognition reaffirmed one of VIAwards' core objectives: not only celebrating Vietnamese achievements on the international stage but also

honouring individuals who have played an important role in building bridges between Việt Nam and the wider world.

Other distinguished guests included Đào Thị Hồng, Secretary at the Vietnamese Embassy in the UK; Professor Michael Mainelli, former Lord Mayor of the City of London and recipient of the 2025 VIAwards Lifetime Achievement Award; and Professor Sir Jonathan Van-Tam MBE, former Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England and member of the VIAwards Advisory Board.

Their presence underscored the international character of the programme and the importance of dialogue and cooperation in diplomacy, healthcare, business and community development.

Founded in the UK in 2022, VIAwards has gradually developed into an international platform recognising outstanding achievements, encouraging cooperation and strengthening connections between Việt Nam and the world.

This year, the awards received more than 140 applications, of which 95 from 15 countries met the eligibility requirements, reflecting their expanding international reach and the growing diversity of participants and fields represented.

Through 12 categories, VIAwards 2026 recognised outstanding achievements in healthcare, education, law, finance and business leadership, technology, innovation, architecture, arts, hospitality and community contributions.

Marking the fifth anniversary, VIAwards co-founder Hà said: “VIAwards is more than just an award; it is a journey to celebrate courage, creativity and compassion.

“By recognising individuals who are making a difference in society, we hope to inspire future generations of leaders who are proud of their roots, equipped with the courage and capabilities to shape the future, carry forward the values and contributions of previous generations, and work together towards a more connected and sustainable world.”

In addition to the awards ceremony, the fifth-anniversary gala featured artistic performances showcasing Vietnamese cultural identity and provided opportunities for networking among leaders, business people, academics, healthcare professionals, artists and philanthropists from various countries.

Charitable activities remained an important part of the programme, with live and silent auctions held to raise funds for community initiatives and social development projects. — OVN/VNS

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Editor-in-Chief of the Tiền Phong newspaper and head of the Miss Vietnam 2026 organising board, journalist Phùng Công Sưởng, stressed the contest's nearly four-decade record of honouring the beauty of Vietnamese women across generations.

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Pà Thẻn fire dancing ritual highlights ethnic cultural heritage in Tuyên Quang

The festival is organised to mark Việt Nam Cultural Day (November 24) and as part of activities celebrating the 2026 Great National Unity Day. It aims to raise public awareness and encourage greater community involvement in preserving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Pà Thẻn people.

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