

# **Edinburgh Comedy Awards are back for 2024**

## **The biggest prize in comedy is back for another year at the Fringe.**

Live Comedy is now a large part of the Fringe programme in Edinburgh and the “Oscars of Comedy” will spotlight the next big thing on the comedy scene.

Nica Burns, CBE, is Director of the Edinburgh Comedy Awards and Donald Taffner Jr of DLT Entertainment is returning this year in the role of sponsor along with The Victoria Wood Foundation. Their support ensures that these prizes can continue, as the scheme was under threat last year due to lack of financial backing.

One prize is the DLT Entertainment Best Newcomer Award and the Donald and Eleanor Taffner Best Comedy Show, named after Mr Taffner’s parents.

The Victoria Wood Award is the new name for the spirit of the Fringe panel prize and celebrates the late comedy genius.

Nica Burns said: “Comedy has grown to a whopping 39% of the Fringe, showing nearly 20% growth in 20 years. In a year that the economics of taking a show to the Fringe are tougher than ever with accommodation costs going through the roof, comedians continue to make an enormous commitment to the development of their careers at the Fringe with all the possibilities that it offers. With audiences on budgets too, remember that every ticket you buy or every pound you put in the hat counts and is appreciated. Everyone going to the Edinburgh Fringe, whether performing or watching, is in their own way investing in the arts. Dear new government, please

take note!"

Donald Taffner, Jr., Chairman of DLT Entertainment UK Ltd, said: "The Edinburgh Comedy Awards play a vital role in the success of the Fringe by not only honouring excellence but also spotlighting the comedy industry as a whole. We look forward to our involvement with the Awards again while also honouring my parents who founded our company 61 years ago and always enjoyed helping people advance their careers in entertainment."

























## The Judging Panel

The carefully curated 2024 judging panel of seven industry experts are joined by three knowledgeable and avid comedy fans from the general public who are selected from an open

application process.

They are:

- **Nana Hughes:** Head of Scripted Comedy at ITV
- **Dominic Cavendish:** Theatre Critic at The Daily Telegraph
- **Liz Daramola:** Creator in Residence at Baby Cow Productions
- **Georgia Keating:** Producer at BBC Studios Comedy & Entertainment
- **Dominic Maxwell:** Comedy & Theatre Critic for The Times and The Sunday Times
- **Anya Ryan** Comedy & Theatre Critic at The Guardian, The Times, Time Out, The Stage
- **Darren Smith:** Creative Director at DLT Entertainment Ltd
- **Sam Anderson:** Public panellist
- **Jake Helliwell:** Public panellist
- **Beth Moon:** Public panellist

The Edinburgh Comedy Awards has a proven history of spotting comedy brilliance. Past winners have amassed 528 television writing credits, 44 directing credits and over 1,500 acting credits, and nominees have 534 writing credits, 72 directing credits and over 1,200 acting credits on screen. Best Newcomer nominee Alex Horne created the BAFTA award-winning TV series *Taskmaster*, which has had appearances from 36 winners and nominees across its 18 series.

Responsible for launching the careers of the UK's comedy elite, previous award winners include Stephen Fry, Steve Coogan, Lee Evans, Al Murray, Sarah Millican, Omid Djalili, Eddie Izzard, Tim Minchin, The League of

Gentlemen, Jenny Eclair and Frank Skinner. Founded in 1981, many award winners and nominees have gone on to have a significant impact on mainstream popular culture, going on to write, direct and act on screen, in some of the most iconic



television and film over the last four decades – including *Green Wing* and *Smack The Pony* (Victoria Pile), *Sherlock* (Mark Gatiss), *Alan Partridge* and *Philomena* (Steve Coogan), *Car Share* (Peter Kay), *The IT Crowd* (Richard Ayoade), *Benidorm* and *No.9* (Steve Pemberton), *Doctor Who* and her eponymous TV show (Catherine Tate), *W1A* (Sara Pascoe), *Chicken Run: Dawn of the Nugget* (Romesh Ranganathan), *Sex Education* (Hannah Gadsby), *Baby Reindeer* (Richard Gadd) and *Starstruck* (Rose Matafeo).