

itv

HEAD

FIRST

award

Briefing Pack

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award

Contents

1

A Bit Of Context...

2-3

Competition & Prize Fund

4

Our 2024 Winner

5

Dates For Your Diary

6

How It Works?

7-9

What Are The Judges Looking For?

10-11

Wellbeing Research

A Bit Of Context...

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award

The Why

ITV has been encouraging the nation to take action to support their mental health since 2019.

Over the past 7 years, our social purpose initiative “**Britain Get Talking**” has inspired the nation to have over **200 million** conversations to improve their mental wellbeing. We want to build on this brilliant foundation and broaden the reach of this message by encouraging our advertising community to join us through this competition.



Competition & Prize Fund

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award

itv **HEAD** **FIRST** *award*

We launched the **ITV Head First Award** in 2023 to encourage advertisers to join us in shining a spotlight on mental wellbeing and inspiring positive action.

Competition & Prize Fund

The award offers **£1 million airtime prize** for a brand who best responds to the creative brief to encourage the nation to take action to support their mental wellbeing.

Entries will open **WEDNESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2025.**




Our 2024 Winner

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award

A PRESCRIPTION FOR NATURE

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award

Our 2024
Winner



**A Prescription
For Nature**

GET YOURS AT [WWF.ORG.UK](https://www.wwf.org.uk) | REFILLS: 00

Take 20 MINUTES outside ONCE A DAY
to reduce stress and boost mood.

DAILY DOSE OF NATURE

PRESCRIBER Dr Panda

WHEN WE RESTORE NATURE, NATURE RESTORES US.



Dates For Your Diary

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award

Competition Timeline



**ENTRIES
OPEN**

**WEDNESDAY
17TH SEPTEMBER 2025**



**ENTRIES
CLOSE**

**TUESDAY
3RD FEBRUARY 2026**



**SHORTLIST
ANNOUNCED**

**WEDNESDAY
25TH MARCH 2026**



**PITCH
DAY**

**WEDNESDAY
22ND APRIL 2026**



**WINNER
ANNOUNCED**

**WEDNESDAY
13TH MAY 2026**



**CAMPAIGN
ON AIR**

**SATURDAY
10TH OCTOBER 2026**

How It Works

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award

Entry Process

There are two stages in the judging process:

STAGE 1

Please submit a **2-page PDF***, **max 800 words**, which must include all the of the following elements:

- Your **script**
- Your **insight** and **campaign idea**
- Your **target audience**
- Why you believe your brand can have a **positive impact on mental wellbeing**
- The **results** you believe your campaign will have

*The entry can be submitted by either a brand, media agency or creative agency via the entry link on our [website](#).

Following the closing date, the shortlisting panel will establish a shortlist of campaigns who will then progress to the second stage of the award competition.

STAGE 2

If your campaign idea is shortlisted you will be given one month from the shortlist announcement on 25th March 2026 to develop an in-person pitch.

Each brand will have a maximum of **20 minutes** to pitch, followed by **10 minutes** of questions from the judges. The pitches will be held in **London**, in front of the main judging panel.

The judging panel will be encouraged to discuss each pitch, considering all the criteria, before making their decision on who to award the prize to via a sealed entry form.

You can download the full terms & conditions for this competition by clicking [here](#). If you have any questions please contact us on itvmedia@itv.com.

What Are The Judges Looking For?

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award

How To Make Your Campaign Shine

THE JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR THE FOLLOWING:

1

Ideas that create positive lasting change for people's mental wellbeing

The creative should focus on a particular aspect of mental wellbeing encouraging positive and preventive action.

The outcome of the advert should be to seek real behavioural change that improves mental wellbeing and is underpinned by a strong evidence base.

The degree to which mental wellbeing is brought to the forefront of the campaign will be a key criterion.

2

A compelling and memorable creative concept

Your creative idea should be presented in a way that is simple for the judges to understand, so they have a clear picture of what the TV advert will look like and the message it will deliver to the audience.

The judges will focus on the strength of the creative idea, its power as a TV execution and freshness of the creative approach.

You'll also be judged on the quality of your entry and the quality of your pitch if you make it through to the shortlist stage.

3

Creative strategy and campaign development

The judges would like to understand what **insight** led to the idea and how you developed the creative concept. Feel free to describe any research that informed your idea, including your rationale and evidence for your approach.

Tell us what **impact** you think your campaign will have on the audience. Bear in mind that ITV sits at the heart of **mainstream Britain** so we will be considering whether ITV and its audience provides an appropriate home for the idea and its messaging.

We'd also like to know who the **project team** is that will be working on the campaign and if the message aligns with your organisation's values.

4

Production

We will consider the **production feasibility** of your idea and execution and whether it is likely to pass all the legal and compliance requirements for on-air broadcast.

Since all production costs must be covered by the entrant, please reassure us that you are able to cover the costs, including any associated talent.

ITV reaches around 75% of the UK population each week, so your campaign will reach a very broad audience. Please reassure us that your organization is able to **meet the demand** that is likely to be generated by a significant TV campaign.

5

Advertisement & Amplification

The pitch creative should be for an on air spot advertisement that will launch exclusively on ITV.

To bring your idea to life, you can include additional amplification ideas around the launch spot, including different length of spot and how the campaign might live beyond the initial TV advert and across other platforms.

We will also be interested to hear about any tool kits, apps, content, charity links etc that your campaign might rely on for impact.

Meet The Judges



FARIMAH DARBYSHIRE
Director of External Affairs,
Mind Forward Alliance



KATE WATERS
Client Strategy &
Commercial Marketing
Director, ITV



DR. SARAH HUGHES
Chief Executive, Mind



SARAH HUNT
Head of Strategy
and Communications,
Social Purpose, ITV



DINO MYERS-LAMPTEY
Founder, The Barber Shop



MAISIE MCCABE
Editor, Campaign



LINDSEY CLAY
Chief Executive, Thinkbox



DR MATTHEW GOUL
Consultant Clinical
Psychologist, Global
Advisor on Psychological
Risk & Strategy, ITV



LAURA ROGERS
Executive Creative Director,
AMV BBDO



DANIEL MORRIS
ECD, The Or

Wellbeing Research

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award

Why Wellbeing?

ITV has produced and been the home to some of the **biggest mainstream wellbeing campaigns** of the past few decades. From Britain Get Talking to CALM's Missed Birthdays campaign.

This research was commissioned to **codify** what we at ITV have learnt about wellbeing from our audiences, campaigns and our research partners to **help brands talk about mental health better**.

What forces are impacting our mental health?

ECONOMIC

The cost of living

"The cost of living it is a major daily stress to survive financially, pay my bills and afford to eat healthy food. It hugely impacts my mental health and exacerbates my anxiety"

SKYE, 54, BRIGHTON

CULTURAL

Tech creep

"My phone takes me away from important things in my life. Social media itself plays against my wellbeing, you constantly see everyone at their best"

DAVID, 23, NI

PERSONAL

Crisis in confidence

"I would like to go out and meet new people or find an interest in common to join a group or club. But unlike when I was younger (and this side of covid for sure) I lack the confidence to do so"

DELYTH, 63, HARROGATE



3 Resonant Territories & How To Tap Into Them

1

NATURAL REJUVENATION

Leverage brit's belief in the healing power of nature for social good.

2

AN UNSPOKEN WEIGHT

Make the hidden reality of mental health struggles impossible to ignore.

3

DAILY PRESERVATION

Empower brits to find their own mindful moments.

PLEASE VISIT ITV MEDIA TO ACCESS THE FULL RESEARCH DECK.

**We look forward to receiving
your submissions to ITV's
Head First Award 2026.**

**Please click the buttons below to
access further competition information.**

BEST OF LUCK!

COMPETITION ENTRY

WELLBEING RESEARCH

COMPETITION T&Cs

itv
**HEAD
FIRST**
award