

Press release

Dr Jorge Català receives the 2026 SRUK/CERU Merit Award

- Dr Jorge Català, Reader in Spanish and Cultural History at Newcastle University, has been awarded the 2026 SRUK/CERU Merit Award, in recognition of his outstanding academic career, international research leadership, and sustained commitment to strengthening collaboration between Spain and the United Kingdom.
- The SRUK/CERU Merit Award recognises the career of a distinguished Spanish researcher based in the UK whose work has had a significant impact on research, innovation, and the wider society.
- The award will be formally presented at the XIII SRUK/CERU International Symposium on 27 June 2026, at University of Oxford, where Dr Català will deliver a plenary lecture.

London, 5 May 2026. The Society of Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom (SRUK/CERU) is pleased to announce that Dr Jorge Català is the recipient of the 2026 Merit Award for his internationally recognised contributions to Spanish and Latin American cultural studies, particularly in the fields of visual culture, comics studies, and memory studies. His research has played a key role in advancing the understanding of graphic narrative as a critical tool to examine historical memory, political crises, and cultural identity across the Spanish-speaking world.

Candidates for this award are nominated biennially by members of SRUK/CERU, shortlisted by the Society's Executive Committee and then voted again by all its members. Previous awardees include Prof Carmen Galan (University of Bristol), Prof Mercedes Maroto-Valer (Heriot Watt University), and Prof Sonia Contera (University of Oxford).



About the awardee

Dr Jorge Català has been a member of Newcastle University since 2010, where he is currently Reader in Spanish and Cultural History. Originally from Valencia, he has developed an internationally recognised research profile in contemporary Spanish and Latin American cultural production.

His work is characterised by a strong interdisciplinary approach, combining cultural analysis, visual studies, and memory studies. He has authored and co-authored numerous peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and edited volumes in leading international outlets, contributing to key debates in Hispanic studies and helping shape emerging fields such as comics studies within the Spanish-speaking context.

His monograph *Vanguardia y humorismo gráfico en crisis* (2015) offers a ground-breaking analysis of avant-garde graphic humour in Spain and Cuba, while his co-edited volume *Comics and Memory in Latin America* (2017) has contributed to establishing new interdisciplinary perspectives in the field. His latest publication, *Cómics y guerra* (2025), is a didactic guide aimed at secondary school students, exploring the relationship between war and comics through the lens of memory studies.

Research and international collaboration

Dr Jorge Català has played a leading role in major international research initiatives. He served as Co-Principal Investigator on the Marie Curie-RISE (Horizon 2020) project *Cultural Narratives of Crisis and Renewal* (2015-2018), coordinating a large network of 8 universities and 80 researchers from Europe and Latin America, focusing on the analysis of cultural production in these regions through the lens of crisis and renewal. He has been a co-investigator and UK representative in the COST Action iCon-MICS (2020-2024) and, more recently COsMICS (2025-2029), where he serves as a management committee member and work group leader. COsMICS pioneers an inter and multidisciplinary approach combining natural sciences, engineering and technology, medical and health sciences, agricultural sciences, social sciences, and humanities creating a comprehensive framework for promoting interdisciplinary and



multidisciplinary knowledge approaches in order to federate researchers, artists, professionals of both science and comic sector and cultural and social institutions. A defining feature of his career is his commitment to strengthening academic links between Spain and the UK. Through collaborative projects, research stays, and active participation in international networks, he has consistently contributed to fostering scientific exchange between both countries, as well as across Europe and Latin America.

Academic leadership and community engagement

In addition to his research achievements, Dr Jorge Català has demonstrated strong academic leadership. As Head of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies at Newcastle University (2021–2025), he played a key role in shaping the strategic direction of the discipline and supporting both colleagues and students.

He has also been actively involved in SRUK/CERU activities, particularly within the Northeast constituency, where he has contributed to organising events and supporting community initiatives.

Dr Català's work exemplifies the values of SRUK/CERU through its academic excellence, international reach, and commitment to collaboration between Spain and the United Kingdom.

Additional recognition

As part of this recognition, Dr Català will receive honorary membership of SRUK/CERU and will join the Scientific Advisory Board as a distinguished advisor.

Regarding this recognition, Jorge Català stated: "I am truly honoured to receive the SRUK/CERU Merit Award, and I would like to thank all SRUK/CERU members for making this society such an inclusive and inspiring space for interdisciplinary research and curiosity. I look forward to continuing to work alongside my colleagues in SRUK/CERU in the years to come!"



Carlos Soler Montes, President of SRUK/CERU, indicated that: “Dr Català’s award marks a significant milestone, as he becomes the first recipient of the SRUK/CERU Merit Award from the humanities. This recognition highlights the essential contribution of the humanities to research, innovation, and societal impact.”

Award ceremony

The award will be presented at the XIII SRUK/CERU International Symposium, to be held at the University of Oxford from 26 to 28 June 2026.

For more information about the symposium programme and to register, please visit: <https://symposium.sruk.org.uk/event-2026/>

Further information about Dr Català’s research and academic profile can be found on his institutional webpage: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/sml/our-people/profile/jorgecatala-carrasco.html>

