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## Northumbria academic shortlisted in the British Forces in Business Awards 2025

[Professor Matt Kiernan](#), Director of [The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research at Northumbria University](#) has been shortlisted for 'Inspiration of the Year' in the British Forces in Business Awards 2025.

The awards, now in its eighth year, are designed to celebrate the talented veterans in business who have transitioned from military service to high-value civilian careers.

Since its inception in 2018, the Awards have recognised over 2,000 veterans

and reservists, drawing in thousands of business leaders to flagship ceremonies in London, Glasgow and Washington D.C. The events have become a cornerstone in the veteran employment landscape and a catalyst for improving the narrative around military-to-civilian transition.

Professor Kiernan who served in the Royal Navy as the Head of Mental Health Nursing, a Specialist Nurse Advisor for Mental Health and the Defence Specialist Nurse Advisor (Mental Health) before taking up his appointment as a Senior Research Fellow at the Academic Department for Defence Nursing has focused his work on care delivery and the psychological effects of basic training on individuals.

He is now the Director of The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research at Northumbria University and leads on a range of research projects focusing on veterans and military families.

Speaking on his nomination, Professor Kiernan said: “It’s an absolute honour to be shortlisted in the British Forces in Business Awards. These awards recognise some really talented individuals who have made a huge contribution to driving forward our veterans’ futures so to be recognised alongside them is an incredible feeling.

“The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research works extremely hard to meet the needs of our veterans and their families by driving collaboration between research and practice and our achievements are testament to all of those who work so hard to drive our work forward.”

Speaking on Professor Kiernan’s nomination, Professor Dianne Ford, Pro-Vice Chancellor for the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences said: “Matt’s leadership in developing The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research has firmly placed Northumbria at the heart of impactful research making a real difference to veterans and their families. This nomination is well-deserved recognition of both Matt’s outstanding contribution and the high regard in which he’s held across the military veterans’ research and support community.”

The unveiling of this year’s finalists follows another record-breaking round of nominations, reflecting growing recognition of the veteran talent pool as a key driver of innovation, leadership and resilience. The vast breadth of organisations represented on the shortlist demonstrates the Armed Force

community's exceptional contributions across the economy.

The winners will be revealed at the world's largest celebration of veterans in second careers, the British Forces in Business Awards gala ceremony, on 26 June 2025 at the Grosvenor House London, Park Lane.

Air Marshal Steve Shell (Retd), CEO of SSAFA, official charity partner of the Awards, said: "With commemorations recently to mark VE Day 80, we've seen the high regard the military community continues – rightly – to be held in. This esteem extends to celebrating achievement once people return to civilian life and for those in the Reserves, and there are few better examples of this than the Forces in Business Awards, which highlight the absolute best that the partnership of Armed Forces community and business offer.

"Those nominated for the Awards have made a successful transition from the Armed Forces and act as role models for others and therefore deserve our praise. SSAFA – 140 years old this year – is a trusted source of support for when the Forces family needs help, and we're extremely proud to again be the official charity partner of these Awards."

This year's celebration will be presented by ITV News anchor Nina Hossain, who will host the awards ceremony and introduce a stellar lineup of live entertainment and guest speakers including General Sir Peter Wall, former head of the British Army.

Ben Rossi, founder of the global Forces in Business Awards series, said: "The British Forces in Business Awards have become a beacon for exceptional talent, showing that supporting the Armed Forces community is not just good ethics – it's smart business. The calibre of this year's nominations has been nothing short of extraordinary, and the stories behind them prove just how impactful veterans can be in every corner of our economy.

"Supporting the transition of service members into meaningful second careers isn't a charitable cause, a PR exercise or a CSR box-tick. It's a proven strategy for unlocking and accessing exceptional talent. This year's finalists are not only high achievers – they are powerful role models for others treading the same daunting path that they once did."

Find out more about Professor Matt Kiernan's research on [Northumbria's](#)

[website](#).

## **Notes to Editors:**

### **About the Forces in Business Awards**

The Forces in Business Awards is the world's largest business celebration of the Armed Forces community. Taking place in London, Glasgow and Washington DC, the awards provide a much-needed platform for showcasing the veteran talent pool, increasing visibility of role models for service leavers and recognising the employers that support current and former members of the Armed Forces. The prestigious events promote the exceptional value that military-gained skills and values add to all sectors of the economy.

<http://forcesinbusiness.com>

### **About The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research at Northumbria University**

The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research is a multi-disciplinary team that conducts translational research in the Armed Forces Community covering health and social care, public health, psychology, social policy, human geography and nursing. The team work to facilitate collaboration across the armed forces sector and work with a variety of organisations including government, local authorities, the NHS and third sector to improve the lives of those they support. Find out more about the hub's work by [visiting their web pages](#).

### **About SSAFA the Armed Forces charity**

SSAFA the Armed Forces charity supports the person behind the uniform; any time they need us, in any way they need us, for as long as they need us. Every year, SSAFA helps more than 73,000 people from the Forces family get on their feet; those currently serving, reserves, veterans and their families. Support is there for people at any stage in their military career; from the youngest recruit to the oldest veteran – no one's service is ever forgotten. We give hope, help and personal support for as long as it takes to get that person's life back to where they want it to be.

<http://www.ssafa.org.uk>

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Find out more about us at [www.northumbria.ac.uk](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk)

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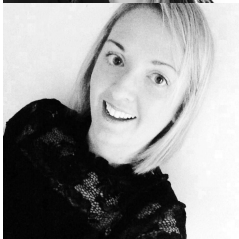


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