



VOLUNTEER MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Canberra Region

HONOURING EXCEPTIONAL VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

2026

NOMINATION GUIDE





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

VolunteeringACT acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the Canberra Region and recognises any other peoples or families with connection to this Country. We acknowledge and respect their vital ongoing contributions to the community and are committed to reconciliation. We will continue to walk alongside First Nations Peoples and embrace the traditions, stories, and wisdoms of the oldest continuing cultures in the world.

This document was created on Ngunnawal Country.

VolunteeringACT acknowledges volunteers of all ages, abilities, genders, and sexualities, and from all cultures. Their skills, expertise, and time are critical to delivering services and programs, and making Canberra a better place to live.

We also acknowledge the contribution of volunteer involving organisations that contribute to the health and wellbeing of our community.



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Accessibility support

VolunteeringACT is committed to making this nomination process accessible for everybody.

- To receive this guide in a larger print, contact our events team on 02 6251 4060.
- For free translation support, contact Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) at 131 450.
- For free support for people who are d/Deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech communication difficulties, contact the National Relay Service at 131 677 and then ask for 133 427.



Definitions

In this guide, we define the terms volunteer manager, nominator, and nominee as follows:

- **Nominator:** An individual or organisation who submits a nomination form for the awards.
- **Nominee:** A volunteer manager or volunteer management team who is put forward for the awards.
- **Volunteer manager:** An individual or team who manages, coordinates, or leads volunteers in the Canberra Region in a paid or unpaid capacity. Their roles and responsibilities include leading and managing volunteers, regardless of their position title in an organisation.
- **Canberra Region:** We consider the Canberra Region to be quite wide however, volunteers can be nominated from the south coast, Queanbeyan, Yass, Cooma, Goulburn, Wagga, Narooma etc to recognise their impact on our region.

Contact details

VolunteeringACT events team

- **Email:** events@volunteeringact.org.au
- **Phone:** 02 6251 4060
- **Mobile:** 0493 350 005
- **Support hours:** Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Key updates in 2026

- New award category introduced: Volunteer manager of the year – excellence in community impact
- Award categories provide a general guide for nominations, but the final award categories can expand based on the nominations received; the selection panel will make this decision.
- Awards are presented based on the quality and merit of the nominations received. If nominations for a particular category do not meet the required standard, the selection panel reserves the right not to present an award in that category.
- Self nominations are not accepted.
- Guidelines for nominee photographs have been updated.
- Responses to selection criteria for nominations can be submitted in audio/video format as well as in written form. If the responses are being submitted in audio/video format, key information must still be provided in writing via the nomination form which includes contact information for the nominee and nominator, nominee's photograph and consent to the terms and conditions.



ABOUT THE AWARDS

The Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards is an annual celebration for volunteer managers in the ACT and surrounding areas. This event elevates the profile of volunteer management as a profession.

Awards are presented to an individual volunteer manager or a volunteer management team whose leadership and inclusive practices have shaped and strengthened volunteer programs in an organisation and/or in the Canberra Region.

The Awards are held in recognition of International Volunteer Managers Day, celebrated annually on 5 November.



KEY DATES FOR 2026 AWARDS

- **Nominations open:** Tuesday 1 September 2026
- **Nominations close:** Tuesday, 6 October 2026
- **Awards ceremony:** Thursday 5 November 2026
(during Volunteer Leaders Seminar)

Important information for all nominators

- Volunteer managers or volunteer management teams who were nominated in previous years can be nominated again; however, they must be actively managing volunteers in the last 12 months.
- Nominations can be submitted for more than one volunteer manager and/or volunteer management team per organisation/group. Please submit a separate nomination form for each nominee.
- A nominee can be nominated for more than one award category. Please submit a separate nomination form for each category.
- The selection panel may consider a nomination for a different category if they deem it more appropriate. The winners will be announced at the award ceremony.
- All nominees for the Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards will receive a complimentary ticket to attend our Volunteer Leaders Seminar which will be held on Thursday 5 November 2026.
- Nominators have complimentary access to the Awards ceremony (over the lunch period during the Seminar) and can purchase a ticket to attend the Seminar if they wish from our website.
- All nominees (except award winners and highly commended recipients) will receive a certificate of recognition. These can be collected at the end of the ceremony from the registration desk.
- VolunteeringACT will not accept responsibility for lost, late, incomplete, or incorrectly submitted nominations. The nominations close 5pm, Tuesday, 6 October 2026.

AWARD CATEGORIES

There are four prestigious award categories to recognise diverse forms of volunteer management.

EXCELLENCE IN BEST PRACTICE



This award recognises a volunteer manager who demonstrates exceptional skills in implementing the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement.

The nominee excels in volunteer recruitment, training, support, and recognition, creating programs that maximise both volunteer satisfaction and community impact through strategic planning and innovative approaches.

EXCELLENCE IN INCLUSION



This award recognises a volunteer manager who has made outstanding efforts to create safe, accessible, and inclusive volunteering opportunities in their programs/organisation.

The nominee demonstrates a strong commitment to removing barriers, advancing diversity, and ensuring that volunteers from all ages, abilities, genders, and sexualities and from all cultures can meaningfully participate and contribute to the organisation's goals.

EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY IMPACT



This award recognises a volunteer manager whose leadership and innovation have significantly enhanced community wellbeing through volunteer engagement.

The nominee demonstrates exceptional skills in supporting, inspiring, and creating meaningful opportunities that address community needs.

Further, they forge partnerships, celebrate diversity, and take a proactive and adaptive approach to volunteer leadership for the community.



VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT TEAM OF THE YEAR

This award recognises a collaborative volunteer management team that delivers exceptional volunteer programs. The nominated team demonstrates strong coordination, shared vision, and collective impact in supporting volunteers, with evidence of effective teamwork, communication, and innovative approaches that enhance overall volunteer satisfaction and organisational outcomes.



These award categories provide a general guide for nomination, but the final award categories can expand based on the nominations received; the selection panel will make this decision.

For example, if a nomination demonstrates a strong body of work, leadership, and impact in volunteer management that is not otherwise recognised, then an additional category may be considered by the selection panel.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Nominations are accepted for an individual volunteer manager or a volunteer management team that has made a notable contribution to the ACT and region.

This can include areas such as community work, sport, education, science, culture, arts, or the environment.

Nominees must be -

- managing, coordinating or leading volunteers in the Canberra Region in a paid or unpaid capacity, regardless of their position title in the group or the organisation
- actively involved in volunteer management in the last 12 months



SELECTION CRITERIA

There are two selection criteria to assess a nominee's work and its impact within an organisation and in the community at large.

- **Profile brief (up to 300 words):** Describe the nominee's roles and responsibilities. This can be within one or across several volunteering programs/organisations. The profile can include details about the size and scope of the volunteer program, how the nominee overcame specific challenges in the volunteering program, or how they developed opportunities to make programs more inclusive and accessible. Nominations should highlight the impact of the work in the organisation or community at large.
- **Demonstration of leadership and inclusion (up to 300 words):** Elaborate on the nominee's work and how they demonstrate leadership skills in volunteer management and advance inclusive practices in the volunteer program or organisation. This can also include examples of innovative approaches to reduce barriers to volunteer participation, mentoring provided to volunteers and/or other team members, or demonstration of a consistent best practice approach to volunteer management across the team.

NOMINATION PROCESS

To submit a nomination for the 2026 Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards, follow the steps below -



- Read the award category descriptions to identify which category best suits your nominee.
- Seek the nominee's consent. The nomination will not be accepted without the nominee's consent. Read the guidelines below to know more.
- Prepare responses to the selection criteria.
- The responses can be submitted in written or in audio/video format. Read the guidelines below to know more.
- Complete the nomination form available on our website.
 - If the response to selection criteria is submitted in written format, the nominator must complete the entire nomination form.
 - If the response to selection criteria is submitted in audio/video format, the nominator must still fill in relevant sections of the nomination form to provide contact information of the nominator and nominee and upload a nominee photograph.

Nominee consent

To nominate a volunteer manager or a volunteer management team for the awards, the nominator must ensure the nominee has consented to their nomination. We will confirm consent from the nominee via email. The nomination will not be accepted without the nominee's consent.

By submitting the nomination form, the nominator agrees they have the following permissions from the nominee:

- Nominee's consent to VolunteeringACT using their information and photograph for event promotion and our forthcoming projects.
- Nominee's confirmation there are no known or foreseeable legal, reputational, or other issues that may bring themselves, their nominating organisation, or VolunteeringACT into disrepute should they win an award.
- Nominee's agreement that should any legal, reputational, or other issues arise between the date of nomination and the awards ceremony that may bring themselves, the nominating organisation, or VolunteeringACT into disrepute, VolunteeringACT will be made aware of these issues as soon as possible and their nomination may be withdrawn.

Information required in the nomination form

1. Contact details of the nominator and nominee.
2. Select the award category for the nomination and provide the response to both selection criteria. The response can also be submitted as an audio/video file as per the guidelines below.
3. Optional - upload supporting documents such as letters of recommendation, blog posts, or media articles about the nominee's work, photographs of nominee's work or achievements.
4. Upload the nominee's photograph as per photograph guidelines below.
5. Accept the terms and conditions of the nomination, both as a nominator and on behalf of the nominee.

The nomination form is available on our website.

Audio/video guidelines

Responses to selection criteria for nominations can be submitted in audio/video format as well as in written form. However, key information on the written nomination form must be completed to provide contact information of the nominator and nominee, nominee's photograph and consent to the terms and conditions.

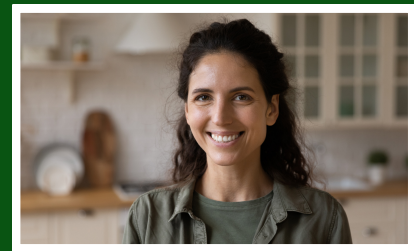
- Speak clearly. The selection panel will not evaluate your audio or visual skills; however, they must be able to clearly hear your responses to the nomination criteria in order to consider your nomination.
- Begin the recording with your name (nominator), name of the nominee, and the award category for which the nomination is being submitted.
- The nominator may speak naturally or read from notes.
- Clearly state the selection criteria question before answering it.
- Keep the audio or video file between 3 – 5 minutes overall. Provide a response to each selection criteria question in maximum 300 words or within two minute each.
- Record your audio and/or video in MP3 or MP4 formats. Use the nominee's name as the file name when uploading the file.

The nomination will not be accepted if all the information is not provided.

Photograph guidelines

- Ensure nominee photographs are clear and against a clean background.
- Avoid photographs from group lunches or cropped photographs from personal parties or public places such as restaurants.
- If you do not have a photo of your nominee at the time of submitting the nomination form, please upload the organisation logo as a placeholder and provide us with the nominee's photograph as soon as possible via email - events@volunteeringact.org.au.
- **Nominee photographs will be used -**
 - In the awards ceremony presentation
 - In overall communications and promotion of the event in media, on VolunteeringACT's social media, newsletters and website.

Example of good photographs



Example of not so useful photographs - hard to see nominee



TIPS FOR PROVIDING A SUCCESSFUL NOMINATION

The Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards are an excellent opportunity to recognise, acknowledge, and celebrate your volunteer managers for their exceptional contributions to our community.



Below are some tips to ensure your nomination stands out!

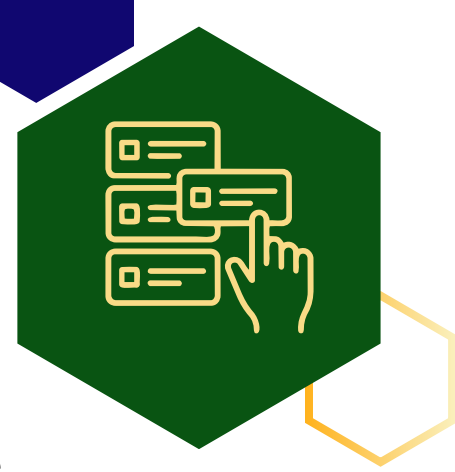
- Read the award category descriptions carefully to ensure you select the most appropriate category for your nominee.
- Consider your nominee's leadership and inclusive practices that have shaped and strengthened volunteer programs in the organisation and/or community at large over the past 12 months.
- Provide specific and measurable examples to demonstrate the impact of your nominee's efforts. Get help from your team members for examples/case studies to support the nomination.
- Start early! A persuasive nomination application takes time. Take time to collect examples from everyone to highlight what makes your nominee stand out.
- Remember the selection panel only has available the information you provide in the nomination - think about what someone who does not know your volunteer manager or volunteer management team might need to know or be impressed about.

SELECTION PROCESS

A selection panel is appointed to select the winners and highly commended for all award categories.

All panelists disclose existing and/or potential conflicts of interest. Panellists with a conflict of interest do not evaluate those nominations.

- The selection panel may consider nominations in a different category if they deem it more suitable for that category.
- Each award category will have one winner and up to two highly commended individuals/teams (depending on the number of nominations received for that category).





Nominees, winners and highly commended recipients of the 2025 Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards

TERMS & CONDITIONS

VolunteeringACT will abide by its privacy policy and the Privacy Act 1988 when handling all nominators' and nominees' information and photographs for the 2026 Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards.



The nominee and the nominator will each receive an email of acknowledgement and to ensure nominee consent to be nominated. Without consent, VolunteeringACT will not accept and withdraw the nomination. By submitting the nomination form, the nominator agrees to the listed terms and conditions.

As a nominator:

- You have received the nominee's consent to be nominated.
- You have followed your organisation's policies and procedures in putting forward this nominee for an award.
- You agree your organisation is not aware of any reason this nominee would bring themselves, your organisation, VolunteeringACT or the 2026 Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards into disrepute should they receive an award.
- You agree should there be any legal, reputational, or other issues that may bring themselves, their nominating organisation, or VolunteeringACT into disrepute that arise between the date of nomination and the awards ceremony that VolunteeringACT will be made aware of these issues as soon as possible and the nomination may be withdrawn.
- All information provided is accurate and true to your knowledge at the time of submission of the nomination.
- The nominee's photograph(s) are per the guidelines provided.
- Completed nominations must be submitted by 5pm, Tuesday, 6 October 2026 via the Microsoft Form on our website. VolunteeringACT will not accept responsibility for lost, late, incomplete, or incorrectly submitted nominations.

On behalf of the nominee:

- Nominees consent to VolunteeringACT using their information and photograph for event promotion and our forthcoming projects.
- Nominees confirm there are no known or foreseeable legal, reputational, or other issues that may bring themselves, their nominating organisation, or VolunteeringACT into disrepute should they win an award.
- Nominees agree that should any legal, reputational, or other issues arise between the date of nomination and the awards ceremony that may bring themselves, the nominating organisation, or VolunteeringACT into disrepute, VolunteeringACT will be made aware of these issues as soon as possible and their nomination may be withdrawn.

Disclaimer

Award winners are nominated by the Canberra Region community. When we consider the Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards, we examine a nominee's volunteer management contribution and do our best to ensure the recipients are of a suitable character.

We ask nominees and their nominator on behalf of their nominating organisations to confirm there are no legal, reputational, or other issues that may bring themselves, their nominating organisation, or VolunteeringACT into disrepute should a nominee win an award. We are not able to undertake police checks for all nominees or award recipients.

We understand that not all members of the community have the same experience with nominees as those who nominated them for recognition.

THANK YOU!

Thank you for your interest in the 2026 Volunteer Manager of the Year Awards!

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

- **Phone:** 02 6251 4060
- **Email:** events@volunteeringact.org.au
- **Website:** www.volunteeringact.org.au

VOLUNTEER MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Canberra Region

NOMINATE TODAY!

