

# YARRA COMMUNITY AWARDS

2026



## Nomination Guidelines



**Celebrating our local  
*community heroes.***



Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra. We pay our respects to Elders from all nations and to their Elders past, present and future.

### More information

If you would like to know more about this project, contact us on **9205 5555** or **[info@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@yarracity.vic.gov.au)**

### National Relay Service

TTY 133 677 then (03) 9205 5555

### Languages

العربية	9280 1930	Italiano	9280 1931
中文	9280 1937	Español	9280 1935
Ελληνικά	9280 1934	Tiếng Việt	9280 1939
		Other	9280 1940

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## Overview

The Yarra Council Community Awards serve as a platform to honour the unsung heroes who make Yarra such a wonderful place to live, work and visit.

At the Awards Ceremony, we gather to recognise and celebrate the outstanding individuals and community groups whose contributions enrich our community's fabric, highlighting their invaluable impact and achievements.

Nominating an individual or group for an award is easy. You can do it online, and if you need any help, our team is here to assist you.

## Information and support

Phone: (03) 9205 5437

Email: [volunteer@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:volunteer@yarracity.vic.gov.au)

Website: [www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/awards](http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/awards)

## Key stages and dates

- Nominations open: Monday 13 July 2026
- Nominations close: Sunday 23 August 2026
- Awards ceremony: Thursday 12 November 2026

## Purpose

These guidelines contain information about the 2026 Community Awards for the City of Yarra, and how to nominate.

The terms and conditions can be found below. Please read the guidelines and ensure that you understand and agree to the terms and conditions prior to participating in the Awards.

## Categories and Recognition

The awards program has seven categories, with cash prizes for each winner. All individuals and community groups shortlisted for an award will be recognised for their contributions with a certificate.

## Categories

- Person of the Year
- Young Person of the Year
- Community Initiative of the Year
- Contributions to Sustainability
- Contributions to Sport & Recreation
- Contributions to Arts and Culture
- Contributions to Diversity and Inclusion

## Prizes

A monetary prize of \$500 will be awarded to each winner of:

- Person of the Year,
- Young Person of the Year, and
- Community Initiative of the Year.

A monetary prize of \$250 will be awarded to the winners in each of the remaining categories:

- Contributions to Sustainability,
- Contributions to Sport & Recreation,
- Contributions to Arts & Culture, and
- Contributions to Diversity and Inclusion.

## Nomination Process

### How to nominate

Nominations must be submitted online via the link found on the awards webpage: [www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/awards](http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/awards)

If you cannot complete the nomination online, contact the Community Development Officer at [volunteer@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:volunteer@yarracity.vic.gov.au) or on (03) 9205 5437.

### Nominating requirements

To nominate an individual or group, you will be asked to provide:

- contact details for yourself,
- contact details for the nominee, and

You will also need to:

- agree to the terms and conditions for the Awards,
- confirm the nominee has agreed to be nominated, and
- answer the short selection criteria.

Note: you must complete a separate form for multiple nominations.

### Eligibility

Person of the Year:

- Must be a current Yarra resident.
- Aged 26 years or older (at 12 November 2026)

Young Person of the Year:

- Must be a current Yarra resident.
- Aged between 12 and 25 years (at 12 November 2026)

Community Initiative of the Year:

- Individuals are not eligible for this category, the focus must be on an initiative by a group, event, campaign or movement.

All other award categories:

- An individual or group do not have live in Yarra, however they must have made a significant contribution to creating better outcomes for the community over the past year.

### Selection criteria questions

- How has the nominee made an outstanding contribution to the Yarra community over the past year?
- How does the nominee show leadership and / or be a positive role model for others? (Note: this question only applies to nominations for the Person of the Year and Young Person of the Year categories).
- Demonstrate how the nominee has made a positive impact to the lives of others in relation to the following community values:
  - Cultural harmony
  - Equality and equity
  - Improving community health and wellbeing
  - Community connectedness: How the nominee connects with diverse communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, People with a Disability, gender, young people and older people.

## Assessment Process

### Eligibility

Council officers check all applications to make sure each nominee is eligible. If a nomination doesn't meet the eligibility criteria, it won't move forward in the process.

### Review

Council officers review nomination forms against the assessment criteria and this commentary is collated and provided to assessors, along with the original applications.

### Assessment

A diverse panel of five community members from Yarra (known as the panel) assesses the nominations. They carefully consider each nominee and decide on the winners for

each category. The community panel's combined knowledge and experience ensure the process is fair and transparent.

Nominations are evaluated on the criteria. The panel is also expected to give consideration as to how the nominee and their efforts have addressed intersectionality (i.e., understanding how different parts of someone's identity overlap and affect their life experiences) in evaluating how they have supported Yarra's values of promoting diversity and inclusion for our diverse community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, LGBTIQ+ individuals, people from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, people with disabilities, and people of all genders and ages.

Nominees that are deemed to be pushing a political agenda will not be considered for assessment. The Community Awards focus on the individual or group's positive community impact and therefore any political position should demonstrate neutrality.

### Decision-making

Council officers record the outcomes of the panel assessment and prepare a report listing the nominees and recording winners for each category which is presented to the Chief Executive Officer of the Yarra City Council for consideration and final approval.

## Terms and conditions

1. Entries for the 2026 Yarra Community Awards are open from Monday 13 July 2026 to Sunday 23 August 2026. Entries must be received on or before the closing time.
2. The awards will be announced on Thursday 12 November 2026 at a special Awards Ceremony.
3. Individuals and community groups cannot be awarded in the same category more than once; for instance, a person cannot receive the Person of the Year award (formally known as the Citizen of the Year award) multiple times, nor can a group win the Community Initiative of the Year award again.
4. Previous award recipients are eligible for recognition in different categories, allowing for a wide-ranging acknowledgment of their varied contributions to the community.
5. Previous unsuccessful individuals and groups that have been nominated previously can be nominated again, provided that the nomination is updated.
6. Yarra City Council staff and Councillors are unable to nominate or be nominated.
7. The Community Awards Selection Panel members are unable to nominate or be nominated.
8. An individual is unable to nominate themselves.
9. A representative of a group can nominate their own group for an award, for example the Community Initiative of the Year category, however the nominator's contact details must be different to the nominee's contact details.
10. Nominees can only be nominated for more than one category; however, a separate form must be completed for multiple nominations and the selection criteria responses must be focussed on the category description.
11. All entries must be submitted on the official nomination form online. However, if you need assistance with completing the form, please contact the Community Development Officer at [volunteer@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:volunteer@yarracity.vic.gov.au) or on (03) 9205 5437.
12. Official nomination forms must be completed in full, and all required details provided by 11.59pm on Sunday 23 August 2026 to be considered a valid nomination.
13. Winners will be decided by the Community Awards Selection Panel. Judging is based on a scoring matrix against the selection criteria for the selected Award category. Nominations with the highest combined scores will be selected as the winner for each category.
14. Nominees or nominators may be contacted for further information by Yarra City Council staff.
15. The Selection Panel may consider a nomination to go into a different category other than the one they were nominated for by the nominee, if deemed more appropriate. This may happen at the eligibility checking phase and/or the judging phase.
16. All enquiries and submitted information about the awards will remain confidential (except for winners) unless permission is obtained by Yarra City Council.

17. Photos, videos, and audio recordings taken at the Awards Ceremony will be used by Yarra City Council for promotional purposes unless otherwise advised by an attendee.
18. All judges' decisions are final, and no correspondence will be entered into relating to the decision.
19. Eligible nominees who are not selected for an Award will receive a certificate of appreciation.
20. All eligible nominees plus a guest, and all nominators will be invited to attend the Awards ceremony where winners for each category will be announced, and prizes/ certificate of recognition will be presented.
21. Yarra City Council complies with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and the Health Records Act 2001 where required to do so, in respect of the collection, management and disclosure of personal information. For more information, including our Privacy Policy visit [www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/privacy](http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/privacy).

## Full Description of Categories

### Person of the Year

The Person of the Year is an individual who has made an exceptional contribution to improving the quality of life for members of the Yarra community, demonstrated exceptional leadership that inspired others as a role model, possess special skills, talents and attributes to stand out.

#### Judging criteria:

- Aged 26 years or older (at 12 November 2026).
- Must be a current Yarra resident.
- Has made a significant contribution to the Yarra community over the past year.
- Shows leadership and is a positive role model for others.
- Supports community values, including:
  - Cultural harmony
  - Equality and equity
  - Improve community health and wellbeing
  - Community connectedness: How the nominee connects with diverse communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQA+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, People with a Disability, gender, young people and older people.

### Young Person of the Year

The Young Person of the Year is an individual under 25, who has made an exceptional contribution to improving the quality of life for members of the Yarra community, demonstrated exceptional leadership that inspired others as a role model, possess special skills, talents and attributes to stand out.

#### Judging criteria:

- Aged between 12 and 25 years (at 12 November 2026).
- Must be a current Yarra resident.
- Has made a significant contribution to the Yarra community over the past year.
- Shows leadership and is a positive role model for others.
- Supports community values, including:
  - Cultural harmony
  - Equality and equity
  - Improve community health and wellbeing

- Community connectedness: How the nominee connects with diverse communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQA+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, People with a Disability, gender, young people and older people.

## Community Initiative of the Year

An initiative undertaken by a group of people, event, campaign or movement that has had a significant positive and meaningful impact on the Yarra community over the past year. This may include a group that was formed specifically to deliver a project, or campaign.

### Judging criteria:

- Can be presented to a group, event, campaign or movement (not an individual).
- Initiative has had a significant contribution to the Yarra community over the past year.
- Supports community values, including:
  - Cultural harmony
  - Equality and equity
  - Improve community health and wellbeing
  - Community connectedness: How the nominee connects with diverse communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQA+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, People with a Disability, gender, young people and older people.

## Contribution to Arts & Culture

This category recognises contributions to the thriving and evolving creative experience in Yarra.

This category also recognises contributions to the protection and enhancement of Yarra's history. Yarra has a rich history and is home to several historical buildings and sites that are of interest and value to the community.

Heritage can relate to tangible features such as buildings, precincts, landscapes, streetscapes, archaeological sites, objects, collections and records, or to intangible elements such as cultural practices, stories, traditions, folklore and other knowledge that is inherited over generations.

### Judging criteria:

- Can be presented to an individual or group
- Recipient has made a significant contribution to the areas of creative arts, culture, or heritage in the Yarra community over the past year.
- Supports community values, including:

- Cultural harmony
- Equality and equity
- Improve community health and wellbeing
- Community connectedness: How the nominee connects with diverse communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, People with a Disability, gender, young people and older people.

## Contribution to Sport & Recreation

This category recognises contributions to organised sport and encouraging physical activity in Yarra. We encourage physical activity as a part of everyday life for people of all ages and abilities.

### Judging criteria:

- Can be presented to an individual or group
- Recipient has made a significant contribution to sports and physical activity in the Yarra community over the past year.
- Supports community values, including:
  - Cultural harmony
  - Equality and equity
  - Improve community health and wellbeing
  - Community connectedness: How the nominee connects with diverse communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, People with a Disability, gender, young people and older people.

## Contribution to Sustainability

This category recognises contributions made by a group or an individual initiating a project, program or activity that delivers genuine and measurable action in direct response to the climate emergency or an environmental issue relevant to Yarra.

This might include advocacy for climate action, reducing carbon emissions, supporting circular economy, valuing biodiversity, supporting local food systems, building social connections and influencing the community to take sustainable climate action.

### Judging criteria:

- Can be presented to an individual or group
- Recipient has made a significant contribution to the areas of environmental sustainability in the Yarra community over the past year.
- Supports community values, including:

- Cultural harmony
- Equality and equity
- Improve community health and wellbeing
- Community connectedness: How the nominee connects with diverse communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, People with a Disability, gender, young people and older people.

## Contribution to Diversity & Inclusion

This category recognises contributions to making sure that all people can participate in community life in Yarra. We value our diversity, where people of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, incomes, educations, languages, cultures and backgrounds feel welcome and connected.

### Judging criteria:

- Can be presented to an individual or group
- Recipient has made a significant contribution to the areas of diversity and inclusion in the Yarra community over the past year.
- Supports community values, including:
  - Cultural harmony
  - Equality and equity
  - Improve community health and wellbeing
  - Community connectedness: How the nominee connects with diverse communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, People with a Disability, gender, young people and older people.

## Frequently asked questions

### **When are nominations due?**

Nominations must be submitted by Sunday 23 August 2026.

### **Is there an entry fee?**

No, there is no fee for submitting a nomination.

### **Can I nominate myself?**

No, individuals cannot nominate themselves.

A member of a community organisation may nominate their own organisation; however, the nominator and the organisation's primary contact cannot be the same person.

### **Can I nominate an individual or group outside of the City of Yarra?**

Other than the Person of the Year and Young Person of the Year categories, the nominee does not have to be a resident of Yarra, but they must have made a significant positive contribution to the Yarra community in the past year.

### **Do I have to complete the nomination in one sitting?**

No. Once you have started an online nomination, you will be able to save your progress and complete it later if required. However, incomplete entries will not be assessed once nominations have closed.

### **How many nominations can I submit?**

You can submit as many nominations for individuals or group as you like. However, you can only submit one entry per nominee.

### **Do I have to make a nomination online?**

If you are unable to complete a nomination online, there is an option for the nomination to be done using a PDF form. This can be provided by email, or if further assistance is required you can contact the Community Development Officer at [volunteer@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:volunteer@yarracity.vic.gov.au) or phone (03) 9205 5437.

### **Do I have to tell the person or group that I am nominating them?**

Yes, by submitting a nomination you confirm that the person or group has agreed to be nominated.

### **How do I know if my nomination form has been submitted properly?**

You will receive an automatic confirmation email to say we have your nomination form. Don't forget to check your "junk" mail in case it went there. If you did not get this email, please check that you hit the "save & submit" button on the last page of the nomination form.

### **How are nominations assessed, and Award winners selected?**

Each nomination is reviewed by Council Officers to confirm it is eligible.

A judging panel (Community Awards Selection Panel) will consider all eligible nominations and rate each against the description for the selected Award category. The winner of each category will be the nominee with the highest combined scores.

### **When will the Awards be announced and presented?**

The 2026 Awards will be presented at an official ceremony on 12 November at the Richmond Town Hall. Full details will be shared with nominators and recipients.

### **What are some tips on writing a quality nomination submission?**

Your responses to the section criteria questions are all about quality over quantity! When providing information about your nominee, it is important to highlight their outstanding contributions, therefore add examples with as much detail as possible including:

- relevant dates of their major achievements;
- how long the nominee has been involved in the activity they are being nominated for and the degree of their contribution;
- explain how the nominee been an inspiration, role model, shown leadership or overcome challenges; and/or
- note if they have won other awards or been acknowledged in other ways.

Consider including supporting documentation such as photos, articles, personal references and other relevant information. These can be attached as files or weblinks.

See here for an example of previous winners:

[2025 winners](#)

[2024 winners](#)

[2023 winners](#)