

Volunteer Ireland Awards 2025 Terms and Conditions

The Volunteer Ireland Awards are the major annual initiative to celebrate the remarkable achievements of volunteers in Ireland by honouring them at a national level.

The Volunteer Ireland Awards is an initiative managed by Volunteering Ireland, trading as Volunteer Ireland, a company limited by guarantee and with charity status (CRO 362625/CHY 15474). Our registered address is Carmichael House, 4 Brunswick Street North, Dublin 7, D07RHA8.

The organisers reserve the right to modify or vary the terms and conditions at any time. By making or accepting a nomination you agree to be bound by these terms and conditions.

All entrants (both nominators and nominees) agree that the organisers and related individuals or entities as well as our sponsors shall not be liable for losses or injuries of any kind resulting from participation in the Awards.

Decisions made by Volunteer Ireland and the judging panels are final.

Nominees are not excluded from entering other volunteer schemes.

Awards campaign

Online nominations are open from 19 August 2025 to 17 October 2024. There are 11 award categories. One nominee will be selected as an awardee in each category. Nominees that have been selected as awardees will be notified by early November. The Christine Buckley Volunteer of the Year will be announced on the 6th of December 2025. The Awards ceremony will take place in Dublin this year.

Categories

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There are eight individual award categories: Animals & Environment; Arts, Culture & Festivals; Campaigning & Activism; Children & Youth; Health & Wellness; Safety & Emergency Services; Social Inclusion & Community Support; and Sports & Recreation.

Individuals or volunteer duos can be nominated in any of the above categories.

The category of nomination should align with the primary aim of the organisation that engages the volunteer. For example, if a nominee creates art for an animal rescue organisation, they will be assessed in the Animals & Environment category, not the Arts, Culture & Festivals category. Volunteer Ireland reserves the right to re-categorise nominations that we feel are better suited to another category

There are 2 group categories, one for groups with 3–20 volunteers and the other for groups with more than 20 volunteers.

The final category is 'Outstanding Volunteer Manager'. This category recognises those who lead volunteers and/or manage volunteer programmes. Nominees in this category may be paid employees or volunteers.

Nominees can only be entered in one category per nomination. If a nominee is nominated multiple times in more than one category they will be judged within the category deemed most suitable and can only be shortlisted and named an awardee in one category.

Nominations and judging

Anyone can nominate a volunteer: someone they know who gives their time voluntarily and without pay. Nominees for the category 'Outstanding Volunteer Manager' may be paid employees or volunteers. For all other categories, individuals' and groups' activities are only eligible if performed on a voluntary, unpaid basis.

Volunteers can be nominated more than once. All of the nomination information about a volunteer will be compiled into a single nomination for review by the judging panels.

Nominees under the age of 18 must have parental consent to participate.

The Volunteer Ireland Awards aim to recognise and celebrate as many volunteers as possible. Because of this, if a volunteer has previously been shortlisted in the last **3 years**, they cannot be nominated again for the same volunteer role.

All nominations must be submitted through Volunteer Ireland's website at <https://www.volunteer.ie/nominate-a-volunteer>. Only the written content from the

nomination form will be used in the judging process, no links or additional media will be considered.

Nominations that are incomplete, illegible, inaccurate, forged, irregular in any way, or otherwise not in compliance with these official rules are void. Volunteer Ireland reserve the right to withdraw a nomination should adequate information not be available.

All of the nominations undergo a process to anonymise and remove any identifiable information. They are then read and assessed by multiple judges from across the charity and nonprofit sector, including Volunteer Ireland staff. The top three scoring nominations from each category form the shortlist, with the awardee in each category being announced in person at the Awards ceremony.

The winners of each category are also submitted to an additional judging panel of approximately 10 judges across the charity and nonprofit sector, including Volunteer Ireland staff. The highest scoring nomination from this round is the Christine Buckley Volunteer of the Year which is announced in person at the Awards ceremony.

The number of nominations received for any single volunteer has no bearing on the judging process and exact duplicates of nomination information may be deleted. Volunteer Ireland will not accept lobbying by any person or organisation on behalf of a nominee. Judging panels will make their decisions based solely on the content of completed nomination forms.

Nominee involvement, contribution and impact will be subject to verification from their organisation or outside agencies should they be shortlisted in their category. Volunteer Ireland reserves the right to conduct a background check on nominees and their volunteer activities, at our own discretion. It may be necessary to contact third parties not specified on the nomination form should Volunteer Ireland deem it necessary to do so, particularly if the nominee is not part of a recognised organisation. Volunteer Ireland reserves the right to withdraw an entry from the judging process or awards campaign at any time.

Background checks undertaken as part of the awards campaign are primarily to confirm, to the best of our ability, that the volunteering described in an awardee's nomination form did take place as stated. We will consider any publicly available information and information brought to our attention about nominees' suitability. Volunteer Ireland does not take any responsibility for assessing awardees in any further capacity.

Posthumous nominations are accepted, as long as consent from the family of the nominee has been granted and the relevant volunteering took place within the last 3 years.

Nominees in the Outstanding Group category are not eligible for the overall Volunteer of The Year Award and paid Volunteer Managers are not eligible for the Volunteer of The Year Award.

Once a nominee has been shortlisted in their category and has accepted, they agree to the following:

Nominees grant the organisers and their partners the right to use information and content provided by the nominator for publicity and institutional promotional purposes to the extent permitted by law.

The nominee understands and agrees that the organisers may request more information from them for such purposes and may request that they take part in a publicity photo-call and media interviews.

Upon acceptance of a position on the shortlist, a nominee agrees to attend the Award ceremony.

Information that is provided by nominators when they submit an entry to the Volunteer Ireland Awards will be held by the organisers and used where necessary for the administration of the awards. Information will not be shared with, or sold to, any external parties. Nominees may request a copy of the information in their nomination submission.

Information may be held by the organisers for recordkeeping and research purposes in line with GDPR.

Volunteering In Action photography contest

The photography contest falls under the umbrella of the Volunteer Ireland Awards and therefore, all prior terms and conditions are also applicable including the right to disqualify any submissions.

The awardee will be notified and announced publicly in November 2025.

Photographers must be based in Ireland and the photographs must be taken in Ireland.

Photographers must be over 18 or have parental consent to participate.

The photographer will retain all ownership and rights to the photograph and will be credited if ever used by Volunteer Ireland.

The photographer must consent to the photograph being used by Volunteer Ireland to promote volunteering in print or digitally, including on social media.

All people in the photograph must consent to the use of photographs in the following ways:

- as part of the Volunteer Ireland Awards campaign on social media, volunteer.ie and digital/print media
- as part of a photo exhibition at the Volunteer Ireland Awards ceremony.
- publicity material for further activities or events on leaflets/websites/magazines
- illustrations of the activities or events in published articles/newspapers
- future grant applications

If the photograph includes anyone under the age of 18, parental consent for the above is required. We will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform us immediately.

Photographers agree to provide information about the setting, event and people in the photograph in order to write accurate captions and alt text.

Judging and prizes

Every shortlisted nominee will receive one complimentary ticket for themselves and two additional complimentary tickets for guests to attend the Volunteer Ireland Awards on 6th December 2025 at the Carlton Hotel Blanchardstown. All entries are eligible to be displayed at the VIA Ceremony.

The judging process will involve a vote by a panel of non-profit industry professionals and this decision will be final. The judging will be blind, meaning the photographs will be assessed without knowledge of who the photographer is.