



City of
STONNINGTON

Volunteer Awards Program Policy

VERSION 3

Policy Owner

Community and Wellbeing Directorate

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Approved by

Council

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Introduction

The Volunteer Awards Program was first introduced in 2021 to celebrate people and community groups whose commitment to volunteering makes a difference to our local community, positively impacts the lives of others and makes City of Stonnington a better place to live.

Purpose

The Purpose of this Policy is to provide a clear framework for the management of the Volunteer Awards Program.

Scope

This Policy applies to Volunteer Awards issued to the community by the Council but does not apply to any awards issued to staff or teams within the Organisation.

Objectives

To provide an appropriate framework that facilitates the recognition of people and community groups whose commitment to volunteering makes a difference to the local community, positively impacts the lives of others and makes the City of Stonnington a better place to live.

Principles

This policy is guided by the following principles:

1. Outstanding achievement or contribution towards our community is the basis of the awards for which the City of Stonnington wishes to provide recognition.
2. Nominations are open to any and all community members and therefore will be promoted as broadly as possible.

Policy

Each year the Volunteer Awards Program will open in May during National Volunteer Week and culminate in a Volunteers Recognition Awards Ceremony in October.

The CEO has discretion to adjust these dates in the event of a timetable clash due to Council elections or other legislative requirements that may impede administration of the Volunteer Awards Program.

Categories of Community Awards

- a) Community Service
- b) Young Person
- c) Community Group
- d) Sport
- e) Environmental Sustainability
- f) Arts and Culture

Mayor's Award

A Mayor's Award is selected by the Mayor, or in the event the Mayor is not available, by the Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee from nominations received across all categories of Community Awards.

The Council by resolution may consider each year additional or alternative categories of Volunteer Awards that reflect extraordinary circumstance or challenges and opportunities facing the broader community at that time. This will be initiated by request from Council or if

an officer determines a recommendation should be made in that year. Categories otherwise will remain the same each year.

Category award winner will each receive \$250 donation to a charity or not for profit group of their choice who is active in the City of Stonnington and providing services or programs in line with their Award category.

Eligibility

Nominees do not have to be a resident of the City of Stonnington but must have made a substantial contribution to the municipality.

Community group nominees must be a group active within the municipality of at least four members.

Youth Volunteer nominees must be aged up to 25 years.

Individuals cannot self-nominate to receive a Volunteer Award. Volunteers working with (but not employed by) community groups can self-nominate in the "Community Group" category only.

Current serving Councillors and Council staff members are not eligible to be considered for these awards. Former Councillors and Council staff are eligible provided 2 years have passed since the end of their term or employment.

Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee

The Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee will consist of:

- a) the Mayor (Chair);
- b) two other interested Councillors; and
- c) any recipients of prior year Volunteer Awards (aged over 18), subject to interest and availability.

A Council officer (non-voting) will provide administrative support to the committee.

The committee is to be constituted of volunteer members and no person shall be paid for their attendance or contribution outside of their normal employment remuneration.

Each committee member will be expected to make an objective assessment of the nominees placed before them for consideration in line with the Assessment Criteria outlined in the nomination form. Recommended award winners will be agreed upon by consensus of the advisory committee.

Scoring by the Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee will be provided in future reports to councillors, de-identifying individual responses by the committee members.

The committee reserves the right to consider nominations in a category or categories other than the category it was nominated in, recognizing there may be an oversupply of nominations in one category and an undersupply in another with some nominations delivering across categories.

The Mayor's Award is selected by the Mayor, or in the event the Mayor is not available, by the Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee during the Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee meeting from nominations received across all categories. The Mayor's Award is not subject to evaluation based on the Assessment Criteria.

In exceptional circumstances the committee has discretion to provide 'Commendations'. In these circumstances the recipient will be recognised with a 'Commendation' certificate at the Award Ceremony.

Governance

The committee deliberations, process and conduct will be overseen by the Manager Connected Communities who will play no active part in the evaluation of the nominees.

As this Award process must be conducted in the strictest confidence, all committee members will need to sign both:

- a) a confidentiality agreement not to disclose any aspect of the nominees, documents, committee discussions or decisions; and
- b) a declaration that they have no conflict of interest regarding any of the awards and the nominated nominees.

Preliminary Governance Review of Nominees

All award nominees will be background checked as far as is permitted under privacy frameworks by the Manager Connected Communities.

Such checks are to ensure that they are a fit and proper person to receive the honour under consideration by Council.

Any findings will be advised to the Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee under strict confidence.

Council Approval

Following the confirmation process outlined above, a report will be prepared and presented to Council for acceptance of the Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee recommendations.

Withdrawal of Award

Should it become known that a recipient of any Volunteer Award may have conducted themselves in a manner which brings serious disrepute to the Council or the dignity of the award, then Council will investigate the matter and reserves the right to withdraw the award by resolution under confidential business.

Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|------|------------|
|------|------------|

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Community member | A person who makes a significant contribution to the Stonnington community through their volunteering. |
| Serious disrepute | Misconduct that directly and adversely affects the Councils reputation or the dignity and honour of the award. |
| Volunteer | A persons who works in an unpaid capacity. |

Responsibilities

| Party/parties | Roles and responsibilities |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Council | Approve annual award categories |
| Mayor | Chair Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee |
| Manager Connected Communities | Oversight of process |
| Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee | Assess nominations and recommend Award winners |

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Council commits to monitoring processes, information sharing and decision making to understand the overall level of success in the Policy's implementation.

A periodic review of this policy will be undertaken to ensure any changes required to strengthen or update the policy are made.

Officers are authorised to make minor editorial amendments as needed for administrative or updated information purposes (for example, but not limited to: changes to position and roles, references to legislation, definitions etc). Officers may also make amendments to the list of related documents at such times where reference material or guidelines require updating.

Related Legislation and Policies

There are a range of legislation, codes and Council documents that inform and support this Policy. These include, but are not limited to:

| Legislation | Council documents |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Support Framework (Council 13 December 2021) |

Attachment 1

The following Assessment Criteria does not form part of the Policy; it will be annually reviewed and included in the nomination form each year.

Assessment Criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed against the following criteria.

| Criteria | Weighting |
|--|------------|
| 1. ACHIEVEMENT How has the nominee made an outstanding contribution, through volunteering, to the Stonnington community during the past 12 months and/or over the span of a number of years? | ___/10 |
| 2. COMMITMENT How has the nominee shown their commitment to serving the community? For example: Evidence of a focused, consistent, intentional effort to serve the community over a period of time. | ___/10 |
| 3. IMPACT Through volunteering, what positive impact and difference has the nominee made? For example: Difference and impact in the organisation where the volunteering has occurred; to individual community members; and / or the community in general. | ___/10 |
| 4. RECOGNITION How does this nominee's volunteering contribution stand out? Why does the nominee deserve the award? (Maximum 150 words) For example: Highlights may include the period of time given to volunteering; nominee's unique personal qualities; specific skills and abilities provided through volunteering; challenges the nominee has had to overcome to volunteer; etc. | ___/10 |
| 5. Has the nominee received any other awards for the achievements described in this nomination? | Info. only |
| 6. Where relevant to the volunteering work, does the nominee hold a valid Working with Children Check? | Info. only |

The following Categories of Community Awards does not form part of the Policy; these will be annually reviewed and included in the nomination form each year.

- a) Community Service
- b) Young Person
- c) Community Group
- d) Sport
- e) Environmental Sustainability
- f) Arts & Culture

Mayor's Award

This Award recognises exceptional volunteering service and impact on community, a cause, group or organisation.

This Award is not open for nominations. The recipient of this award will be selected by the Volunteer Awards Advisory Committee from outstanding candidates across all award categories.

Community Service

Celebrating volunteer activities that demonstrate strong community service in supporting communities and promoting inclusion, respect, and equity.

Examples may include:

- participation in local groups
- involvement with charity and non-profit organisations
- fundraising
- advocating for change or a cause
- being a mentor or positive role model for others.

Young Person

Celebrates the important and selfless impact of young people volunteering. Nominees will be young people, aged up to 25 years, who have made a contribution to a community, a cause, or a service through volunteering.

Examples may include:

- mobilising and organising peers and others to address an issue or opportunity
- being a mentor or positive role model for others
- involvement with a charity, community service, or community group
- demonstrating leadership or contributing for a cause

Community Group

Celebrates the enormous volunteer effort contributed to, and the opportunities provided by, not-for-profit organisations and / or community groups for the Stonnington community.

Examples may include:

- assistance provided to people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged
- provision of inclusion and social connection programs
- assistance provided to diverse demographic and / or cultural groups

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- material aid and / or emergency relief.

Sport

Celebrates the immense contribution to community wellbeing, inclusion, fitness and social connection generated by volunteers in sporting clubs and / or groups.

Examples may include:

- development programs
- demonstrating open and inclusive club culture
- initiating innovative activities
- contribution to club administration and / or operations.

Environmental Sustainability

Celebrates volunteers who contribute to environmental sustainability and climate health through activities such as:

- initiating a project to reduce energy use
- promoting recycling or protection of local wildlife
- engaging with the community through workshops
- working bees or meetings
- raising awareness about sustainability issues.

Arts and Culture

Celebrates volunteers who support the creative sector through activities such as:

- providing services and expertise to support artistic outcomes across not-for-profit theatre, galleries, films, performances
- developing networks and advocacy for arts and culture groups
- being a mentor or positive role model within the local arts sector
- showing commitment to enhancing diversity and inclusion across the arts.