

2027 Australia Day Awards

Awards Purpose

The Cardinia Shire Council Australia Day Awards acknowledge the contributions of local individuals and groups who have made outstanding contributions to the local community.

These awards recognise those who lend a helping hand, care for the environment or contribute through sport, the arts or cultural activities. They share the aspiration of all Australians in respect of tolerance, democracy, equity and equality of opportunity.

The successful awardees play an important role in the community during the year of appointment as role models and guest speakers.

Award Categories

- Citizen of the Year
- Senior Citizen of the Year
- Young Citizen of the Year
- Community Event of the Year

Guiding Principles

Fairness	All eligible nominations will be assessed fairly, consistently and without bias against the published criteria. No nominee will receive preferential treatment, and the same assessment requirements will apply to all nominations.
Transparency	Council will administer the awards in a clear and accountable manner. Information about eligibility, nomination requirements, assessment criteria and key dates will be publicly available, with decisions based on the published guidelines and criteria.
Inclusion	The awards celebrate the diverse contributions of individuals and groups across the Cardinia Shire community. Council encourages nominations from people of all backgrounds and is committed to an accessible and equitable nomination process.
Confidentiality	All nominations and assessment information will be treated confidentially and used solely for the administration of the awards. Those involved in the process must maintain confidentiality, and award outcomes will remain confidential until officially announced.
Evidence-Based Assessment	Recipients will be selected based on the demonstrated impact and quality of their contributions, supported by nomination evidence, documentation and referee information. Decisions will be based on the published criteria and verified information where required.

Eligibility for individual nominations

Individuals nominated for the Citizen of the Year, Senior Citizen of the Year, and Young Citizen of the Year award categories must:

- Be an Australian citizen at the close of the nomination period.
- Be a resident of Cardinia Shire.
- Be willing to accept the award if selected.

Nominators should obtain the nominee's consent prior to submitting a nomination.

Additional eligibility requirements

- Citizen of the Year: Aged over 25 and under 70 on 26 January 2027.
- Young Citizen of the Year: Aged under 25 on 26 January 2027.
- Senior Citizen of the Year: Aged 70 or over on 26 January 2027.
- Individuals may only receive the same award once within a five-year period.
- Nominees must not be serving Councillors.
- Nominations will not be accepted for activities undertaken as part of a nominee's paid employment. Volunteer and community contributions outside normal employment duties may be considered.
- Awards will not be granted posthumously.

Eligibility for Community Event of the Year nominations

This award recognises the contribution that community groups make to the Cardinia Shire community through the planning and delivery of events.

To be eligible, the event must:

- Have been held within Cardinia Shire, either onsite or virtually, between 1 November 2025 and 1 November 2026.
- Have been accessible to its intended community audience within Cardinia Shire.
- Have showcased aspects of the local Cardinia community.
- Have been managed appropriately.
- Where the event was delivered by an organisation operating under an auspicing arrangement, have met relevant insurance and governance requirements.

The organisation responsible for running the event must:

- Be based in Cardinia Shire and provide services to people within the municipality.
- Be an incorporated body with public liability insurance that adequately covered the event, or be a Community Asset Committee. *Evidence may be required.*
- Be not-for-profit and community focused.

Additional considerations

- While fundraising or profit may be a by-product of the event, it must not have been the primary purpose of the event.
- Consideration may be given to events that offered something new, innovative, or imaginative.
- Events may only receive the same award once within a five-year period.

Preparing a Nomination

Nominations must meet the following requirements:

- Complete the official nomination form in SmartyGrants. Hard copy nominations will not be accepted. *Assistance with completing an online nomination is available by contacting Council on 1300 787 624*
- Explain the achievements, background, and reasons for the nomination.
- Attach copies of any newspaper or magazine articles about the nominee and their achievements.
- List any other awards and include any other relevant information.
- Provide the names and contact details of at least two referees who can support the nomination.
- Supply the name and address of the nominator and state their relationship to the nominee. **Self-nominations will not be accepted.**
- Award recipients may be required to undertake relevant screening checks, including a National Police Check and/or Volunteer Working with Children Check, where their role as an Australia Day Award recipient involves activities that require such checks. Any required checks will be arranged and funded by Council.

Assessment Process

Council Officers will complete an eligibility check before nominations are provided to the selection panel. Eligible nominations will be assessed by the panel against the published assessment criteria. Scores and comments will be compiled by Council Officers. The selection panel will determine the award recipients, who will remain confidential until the official announcement.

Assessment Criteria

Individual Awards

Criterion	Weighting
Positive contribution to the Cardinia Shire community	30%
Positive impact and benefit to others	25%
Leadership, mentoring or role modelling	20%
Inclusion, accessibility and strengthening community connection	15%
Evidence, referee support and sustainability of contribution	10%

Community Event of the Year

Criterion	Weighting
Community benefit and outcomes	30%
Accessibility, inclusion and reach	20%
Local identity and community participation	20%
Planning, safety and appropriate management	15%
Innovation, sustainability and value for money	15%

The scores for all of the above criteria are added up to give a total score out of 100. A single overall score is produced by combining the panel's assessments.

Tie-break Process

If two or more nominees receive the same highest total score, the panel will apply a tie-break process.

The panel will first compare the tied nominees' scores against the assessment criteria in order of weighting, starting with the highest weighted criterion. If the tie cannot be resolved through this process, the panel will undertake a structured deliberation and determine the recipient by majority vote. The panel's decision will be final.

This process ensures priority is given to the most important assessment criteria first, with panel deliberation and voting used only where scoring cannot otherwise separate tied nominees.

Example of a Tie-Break for an Individual Award

If Nominee A and Nominee B both receive an overall score of 86, the panel will first compare their scores against the highest weighted criterion, Positive contribution to the Cardinia Shire community (30%).

The nominee with the higher score for this criterion will be ranked ahead.

If the nominees remain tied, the panel will compare scores against the remaining criteria in descending order of weighting:

- Positive impact and benefit to others (25%)
- Leadership, mentoring or role modelling (20%)
- Inclusion, accessibility and strengthening community connection (15%)
- Evidence, referee support and sustainability of contribution (10%)

If the nominees remain tied after all criteria have been compared, the panel will undertake a structured discussion of the nominations, considering the nomination evidence, referee comments and alignment with the purpose of the award. The recipient will then be determined by a majority vote of the panel.

Selection panel

A Selection Panel will be established by Council to assess eligible nominations against the published award criteria. The panel may comprise a combination of Community Representatives, Councillors and Council Officers.

The panel must have at least three members. Council will determine the panel composition before assessment begins and ensure enough eligible panel members remain available to assess each award category. This allows the panel to operate during election period or at other times when councillors are unavailable while maintaining an appropriate level of oversight and consistency.

The selection panel will determine the award recipient. The panel's decision is final.

Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality

All selection panel members must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest before reviewing nominations. Where a conflict is declared, the panellist will be required to complete Council's Conflict of Interest declaration form.

Council will review each declaration and determine how the conflict will be managed. A panel member with a conflict must not discuss or score the relevant nomination.

Where the conflict affects the integrity of assessing the broader award category, the panel member must not participate in assessing that category.

If excluding a panel member means fewer than three eligible panel members remain for a category, Council must appoint a replacement panel member before assessment continues.

All nominations and supporting information will be treated confidentially and used only to administer and assess the Australia Day Awards.

Selection panel members, Councillors and Council officers involved in the process must maintain confidentiality regarding nomination information, assessment discussions and award outcomes. Successful nominees will be notified prior to the public announcement, and all award recipients will remain confidential until officially announced by Council.

Nomination open and closing dates

Nominations will open at 9:00am on Monday 21 September 2026 and close 5:00pm Wednesday 4 November 2026.

Nominations must be submitted by the published closing date and time. Late nominations will not be accepted unless Council determines that an administrative or system error prevented submission.

Council may request clarification or verification of information already submitted but will not accept substantial new information after the closing date unless required to correct an administrative error.

Enquiries & Feedback

For further information or to provide feedback, please visit:

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/about-council/your-council/australia-day-awards

or call **1300 787 624** or email mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au