

2026 ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Awards Guidelines

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The ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Awards celebrate leaders with disability in our community and the outstanding achievements of Canberra based individuals, teams, businesses, and organisations who have demonstrated their commitment to welcome, collaborate with, support, and improve the experience and outcomes for Canberrans with disability in their workplace, business, and community.

Nominations should demonstrate how their initiative, project or achievements go beyond minimum standards and/or go over and above expectations, in creating better outcomes for people with disability and making Canberra more inclusive for people with disability.

Presentation of Awards

The 2026 award winners will be announced on Wednesday 9 December 2026 at a gala Awards dinner in the National Ballroom of the Hotel Realm in Barton.

Further event and ticketing information will become available on the ACT Inclusion Council website at: [http:// actinclusion.com.au/](http://actinclusion.com.au/)

Awards

There are a total of 6 Inclusion Awards:

1. Leader in Inclusion
2. Excellence in Inclusive and Innovative Employment Practices
3. Excellence in Collaborating with people with Disability
4. Excellence in Access and Inclusion
5. Excellence in Innovation and Impact
6. Sue Salthouse Award for Championing Human Rights and Equality

Each award will recognise one winner, and up to two finalists. The Judging Panel may also award a commendation.

Nomination Information

Canberra based individuals, including people from business and government, or community organisations and local business, can be nominated. Nominations may also be made for teams from community organisations, business or government.

Self-nominations are welcome.

As our understanding of inclusion matures, so do the expectations of the Judging Panel. Nominations from individuals, teams, businesses, and organisations who have previously submitted a nomination for the Inclusion Awards must provide evidence of growth, how their inclusion practices have evolved and delivered strengthened or improved outcomes for people with disability since their last submission. Nominations which do not provide clear evidence of progress since the previous nomination will not be progressed to the Judging Panel.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, teams, businesses and organisations are encouraged to apply. Consistent with ACT Government objectives, projects, activities or initiatives that contribute towards closing the gap on disadvantage between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Canberrans will be considered. This is part of the ACT Government's commitment to Closing the Gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2026 ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Awards Guidelines

As outlined in the [ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement](#), the ACT Government and community partners are committed to self-determination as the guiding principle in the delivery of programs and services.

Individuals, teams, businesses, and organisations providing excellence in delivering supports for people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are also encouraged to submit a nomination.

If you are unsure which award to nominate for, ACT Office for Disability staff can assist in advising which award best suits the nominee.

Individuals, teams, businesses and organisations can nominate for more than one award however a separate nomination form needs to be completed for each nomination.

Multiple nominations for the same nominee or initiative will be collated and considered together under the most appropriate Award as deemed by the Chair of the Judging Panel and or the ACT Office for Disability.

We reserve the right to reallocate the nomination under a different award if the nominee is deemed better suited to another Award.

Nominations close **5pm, Tuesday 15 September 2026.**

If you need any assistance or reasonable adjustments to submit a nomination, please contact the ACT Office for Disability via email OfficeForDisability@act.gov.au or phone (02) 6207 1086 and leave a message so the Office for Disability can return your call.

To use the National Relay Service, contact 13 36 77 (TTY number - Speak and Read, Type and Read, and Type and Listen) then ask for (02) 6207 1086.

Awards Criteria

Before nominating an Award, nominators should review the Award options and the associated behaviours the nominee must have demonstrated before making a selection.

1. Leader in Inclusion

Recognises a person with disability who is a leader in community. The nominee will have made a significant personal contribution to creating change that promotes the full and equal participation of all people in the ACT.

This nominee will have demonstrated one or more of the following behaviours:

- achieved improved outcomes for all people in the ACT through promoting change to legislation, policy, or programs.
- changed community attitudes through activities such as awareness-raising or other behaviour change initiatives.
- increased the visibility of disability by promoting the diversity of disability issues and experiences.
- designed and implemented activities, initiatives, processes, systems or programs that delivered better access or inclusion experiences for people in the ACT.

2026 ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Awards Guidelines

2. Excellence in Inclusive and Innovative Employment Practices

Recognises initiatives that deliver improved access or employment outcomes for people with disability by creating positive open employment experiences or opportunities.

This nominee will have demonstrated one or more of the following behaviours:

- Utilised inclusive workplace practices beyond basic expectations, such as:
 - developed employment targets or implemented identified roles to capitalise on the skills and experiences of people with disability.
 - created a culture of inclusion by providing ongoing education and training on disability awareness and accessibility, for management and employees.
 - developed and implemented an effective Disability Action and Inclusion Plan.
 - created meaningful and successful work experience opportunities for students with disability.
- Utilised inclusive recruitment practices beyond basic expectations, such as:
 - designed accessible recruitment processes that were welcoming, accessible and responsive to people with disability.
 - created accessible and welcoming job advertisements that were written in plain English, accessible by assistive technology, and clearly articulated information about the approach to reasonable adjustments is provided.

3. Excellence in Collaborating with People with Disability

Recognises outstanding consultation and co-design efforts and the creation of strong, equal partnerships with people with disability. The nominee will have delivered improved outcomes, while amplifying the diverse experiences, views, and needs of people with disability.

This nominee will have demonstrated one or more of the following behaviours:

- supported, enabled, and collaborated with people with disability to:
 - identify and respond to priority issues;
 - be involved in making decisions;
 - review progress and outcomes; and
 - be appropriately remunerated for time, skills, and expertise.
- implemented initiatives to increase the inclusion and representation of people with disability in leadership and governance roles.
- implemented engagement approaches to ensure people with disability were consulted and had appropriate opportunities to co-design on matters, including policies, programs, or services.
- have found new or creative ways to collaborate with people with disability to achieve positive outcomes.

2026 ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Awards Guidelines

4. Excellence in Access and Inclusion

Recognises an organisation or individual who took action to enhance the full and effective participation of people with disability through:

- promoting the benefits of inclusion to the whole community,
- creating an environment that includes and values people with disability, and
- improving access to information and environment, including social environment.

This nominee will have demonstrated one or more of the following behaviours:

- prioritised, developed, and distributed information in accessible formats and ways, such as:
 - resources are written in plain English and is available in alternative formats such as Easy Read.
 - Auslan interpreters are proactively utilised to ensure meetings, events, and media is accessible.
 - Web content is accessible (e.g., meets Web Content Accessibility Guidelines with user testing).
- prioritised projects or initiatives that brought about improved access and inclusion of people with disability beyond minimum standards (e.g., built a Changing Place so everyone has access to suitable, safe, and private bathroom facilities).
- developed an impactful awareness campaign, or initiative, that promoted inclusion and value of people with disability to community, working to create a culture that values people with disability.
- enhanced opportunities for people with disability to learn new skills, engage with new interests, or showcase diverse talents and perspectives.
- created impactful opportunities for people with disability to access cultural life and tourism, including accessible and inclusive events, nightlife, arts, theatre, and social events.

5. Excellence in Innovation and Impact

Recognises exceptional, creative and forward-thinking approaches that advance and welcome people with disability in their workplace, business and community.

This nominee will have demonstrated one or more of the following behaviours:

- developed and implemented a comprehensive Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (DAIP), ensuring your workplace, product or services are accessible and inclusive to people with disability, and is registered with the Australian Humans Rights Commission and publicly available (e.g., on your website).
- developed innovative programs or services that addressed an identified gap that responds to the needs of people with disability.
- codesigned research or developed a product or service that led to significant positive outcomes to the lives of people with disability (e.g., developed a program that utilises or increases access to assistive technology for people with disability).
- supported another organisation, individual or business to be disability responsive and inclusive.

2026 ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Awards Guidelines

6. Sue Salthouse Award for Championing Humans Rights and Equality

Recognises excellence in the promotion and fulfillment of human rights for people with disability.

This nominee will have demonstrated one or more of the following behaviours:

- significant contributions to protect and advance the human rights of people with disability, through legislation policy and practice.
- actively promoted and upheld the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities principles and expectations.
- is a strong leader in reducing barriers, championing and securing rights promotion, protection and/or attitudinal change activities.
- has contributed above and beyond and is recognised in community for significant and enduring contributions.