NL Sport & Volunteer Awards Categories 2026

Category 1 - School Sport Champion (Primary School Staff)
This award recognises a member of school staff who has made an outstanding contribution to the provision of sport or physical activity for young people within their school.

We are looking for evidence of how they have -

- Has contributed to the development of basic skills by providing high quality opportunities for children and young people to take part in sport and physical activity before school, at lunch time and after school.
- Created and maintained a sporting ethos within their school community.
- Enabled the school to attend a variety of events.
- Invested time in their own development, such as attending appropriate CPD and training.

Category 2 - School Sport Champion (Secondary School Staff)
This award recognises a member of school staff who has made an outstanding contribution to the provision of sport or physical activity for young people within their school.

We are looking for evidence of how they have -

- Has contributed to the development of basic skills by providing high quality opportunities for children and young people to take part in sport and physical activity before school, at lunch time and after school.
- Created and maintained a sporting ethos within their school community.
- Enabled the school to attend a variety of events.
- Invested time in their own development, such as attending appropriate CPD and training.

Category 3 - Primary Sports School of the Year
A North Lanarkshire Primary School that has created a sporting culture and enhanced the sporting provision within their school.

We are looking for evidence of how they have -

- Qualified for gold level in Sportscotland School Sport Award (Gold achieved is desirable).
- Provided a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Created strong links to local clubs and the community.
- Used sport as a vehicle to develop young people e.g. targeted programmes, leadership etc.
- Shown commitment to being inclusive and providing opportunities for all.

Category 4 - Secondary Sports School of the Year

A North Lanarkshire Secondary School that has created a sporting culture and enhanced the sporting provision within their school.

We are looking for evidence of how they have –

- Qualified for gold level in Sportscotland School Sport Award (Gold achieved is desirable).
- Provided a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities.
- Created strong links to local clubs and the community.
- Used sport as a vehicle to develop young people e.g. targeted programmes, leadership etc.
- Shown commitment to being inclusive and providing opportunities for all.

Category 5 - New Volunteer of the Year

This award recognises an individual who has recently started volunteering and has already made a significant impact within their organisation or community.

We are looking for evidence of how they have:

- Demonstrated commitment and enthusiasm in their new volunteering role.
- Made a meaningful difference through their contributions, whether by supporting individuals, enhancing programmes, or driving positive change.
- Shown initiative and a willingness to learn, taking on responsibilities and growing in their role.
- Inspired others through their dedication, positive attitude, and fresh perspective.
- Committed to personal development, seeking training or experiences to improve their skills and effectiveness as a volunteer.

Category 6 - Project of the Year
This award will be given to a group that has implemented a project or programme with a significant positive impact on people's lives. The project will have addressed community needs for example by bringing people together, enhancing health and wellbeing, developing valuable skills, breaking down barriers, promoting inclusion, and achieving social outcomes.

We are looking for evidence of how the project has –

- Made a meaningful impact: in the community, including the number of people benefited and the scale of positive change.
- Taken an innovative approach to solve community problems, showcasing creativity and originality.
- Involved the community: fostering strong ties and involving a range of community members.
- Created sustainability ensuring the project's long-term viability, including plans for ongoing support and funding.

Category 7 - Community Organisation of the Year
This award recognises a community organisation that has made a significant impact through its programmes, initiatives, and support for local people.

We are looking for evidence of how they have:

- Achieved accreditation or recognition through relevant local or national bodies.
- Developed strong connections with the wider community.
- Recruited, supported, and celebrated volunteers and staff who contribute to their success.
- Shown a commitment to inclusivity, ensuring opportunities are accessible to all.

Category 8 - Young Coach of the Year
This is awarded to an individual, aged 21 or younger (on 1st August 2025). It looks for coaches who have shown dedication to develop themselves and who have had a significant impact on the people they coach.

We are looking for evidence of how they have -

- been an inspiration and a positive role model
- delivered weekly quality coaching sessions, meeting the needs of all participants.
- provided inclusive opportunities, helping to remove barriers and reduce inequalities in sport.
- helped their participants to build confidence and resilience, and develop a positive attitude towards sport and physical activity
- adopted a person-centred approach to coaching, taking time to understand their participants needs and goals and helping them reach their potential
- invested time and energy in their own development and is working towards or has gained a recognised SGB coaching qualification/award appropriate to the level at which they coach

Category 9 - Coach of the Year
This is awarded to a coach who has shown dedication to develop themselves and who has had a significant impact on the people they coach.

We are looking for evidence of how they have -

- Has been an inspiration and a positive role model
- Has delivered weekly quality coaching sessions, meeting the needs of all participants.
- Has provided inclusive opportunities, helping to remove barriers and reduce inequalities in sport.
- Has helped their participants to build confidence and resilience, and develop a positive attitude towards sport and physical activity
- Has adopted a person-centred approach to coaching, taking time to understand their participants needs and goals and helping them reach their potential
- Has invested time and energy in their own development and is working towards or has gained a recognised SGB coaching qualification/award appropriate to the level at which they coach

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Category 10 - Young Volunteer of the Year
This is awarded to a young person aged 21 or younger (on 1st August 2025). who has volunteered in their school, community organisation or club. The recipient will have made a significant contribution to the development of community projects, programmes and/or sport and physical activity in their role as a volunteer.

We are looking for evidence of how they have -

- Dedicated a substantial amount of time to volunteering.
- Inspired and been a positive role model.
- Demonstrated exceptional commitment, dedication and effort.
- Had a significant and meaningful impact on their local community.
  Has adopted a person-centred approach to volunteering, taking time to understand people's needs and supporting others



Category 11 – Volunteer NL Excellence Award
The Volunteer NL Excellence Award will be presented to an individual who has demonstrated a significant contribution to volunteering over a substantial period.

We are looking for evidence of how they have -

- Had a lasting impact on their community.
- Gone above and beyond, what is required of them as a volunteer.
- Shown an exemplary long-term commitment to the community sharing their expertise, skill set and knowledge.
- Shown selfless service, consistent effort and been a positive influence on others.

Category 12 - Volunteer of the Year
This is awarded to a volunteer who has made a significant contribution to the development of community projects, programmes and/or sport and physical activity. Through their volunteering they will have significantly changed the lives of participants/communities.

We are looking for evidence of how they have -

- Dedicated a substantial amount of time to volunteering.
- Inspired and been a positive role model.
- Demonstrated exceptional commitment, dedication and effort.
- Had a significant and meaningful impact on their local community.
- Has adopted a person-centred approach to volunteering, taking time to understand people's needs and supporting others