

2026 Australia Day Award Nomination Guidelines

2026 Australia Day Awards

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 have shown a willingness to lend a helping hand, concern for the environment or participated in sport, arts, or cultural diversity. They share the aspirations 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.

How to compile your nomination

Nominations should meet the following requirements:

- submissions should be completed on the official nomination form in SmartyGrants, no hard copies will be accepted
- responses should 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 other relevant information
- submit the name of at least two other referees' details to support the nomination
- supply the full name and address of the nominator and state the relationship to the nominated person (self-nominations are not accepted)
- winners over 18 years of age must be willing to undergo a Victoria Police criminal records check (at Council's expense)
- winners (over 18 years) must undergo a Volunteer Working with Children Check

Please note: submitted information remains the property of Cardinia Shire Council.

Selection panel

A selection panel made up of community representatives, Council officer(s) and Councillors will assess the nominations.

The decision of the Cardinia Shire Council Australia Day Awards Panel is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

Eligibility for individual nominations

Individuals are required to be:

- an Australian Citizen at the close of nominations

- a resident of Cardinia Shire
- willing to accept the award (please ensure you get their permission to nominate)

The individual nominated for Citizen of the Year, Senior Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year Award should demonstrate any or all of the following:

- takes the lead and shows demonstrated leadership
- provides a positive role model or mentor to peers and to others
- promotes the overall welfare and wellbeing of the community
- participates and has shown outstanding achievements in community activities, academic, sporting, personal, cultural, environment and civic responsibility

In addition:

- Young Citizen of the Year nominees must be under 25 years of age on 26 January 2026
- Senior Citizen of the Year nominees must be at least 70 years of age on 26 January 2026
- individuals can only receive the same award once in a five-year period
- nominees cannot be a serving Councillor
- nominations will not be accepted for individuals for service in a position of paid employment
- awards will not be granted posthumously

Eligibility for community event of the year nominations

The Community Event of the Year Award is presented to an organisation that has staged - onsite or virtually, the most outstanding community event between 1st November 2024 and 1st November 2025. This award recognises the contribution community groups make to the municipality.

The event must have:

- been hosted on site or virtually within Cardinia Shire between 1st November 2024 and 1st November 2025
- been open and accessible to all residents of Cardinia Shire
- showcased aspects of the local Cardinia community
- been managed appropriately

The organisation responsible for running the event must be:

- based in Cardinia Shire and service people within the municipality
- a fully incorporated body with a public liability insurance policy to adequately cover their event, (proof of meeting these criteria will be required) or a Community Asset Committee
- not-for-profit and community focused

The event nominated should reflect some or all of the following:

- purpose of the event and the outcomes achieved
- impact of the event on the community

- level of community participation, and ongoing sustainability
- operating within the budget allocated

In addition:

- while some fundraising or profit may be a by-product of the event, it should not be the main focus
- consider whether the event offered something new and imaginative
- events can only receive the same award once in a five-year period

Nomination open and closing dates

Nominations will open 9am on Monday 22 September 2025 and close 9am Wednesday 5th November 2025.

Enquiries

For further information visit www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/australiaday or call **1300 787 624** or email mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au