



The Commissioner of Yukon Awards Programs celebrate the people who have worked hard to make Yukon a better place to live and a place we are proud to call home. There are three award programs.

- The Commissioner's Awards include the Award for Public Volunteer Service and the Award for Bravery. The Public Service Award recognizes individuals who have made a significant volunteer contribution to Yukon businesses, academics, arts, culture or society. The Award for Bravery honours an individual who has performed an outstanding act of bravery. The Outstanding Youth Achievement Awards recognize youth who are involved in the communities in constructive and positive ways. This award is sponsored by the Government of Yukon in partnership with the Commissioner's Office.
- Nominations opened up in June 2019 for the Order of Yukon, which will recognize Yukoners who have demonstrated a high achievement and made an outstanding contribution to Yukon society.

Here are some tips to help you when you're writing nominations for these awards and any other awards such as any of the Canadian Honours (for example, the Order of Canada, Polar Medal or the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers) and the Governor General's Awards (for example, Awards in Arts, Science and Humanities).

Writing a strong nomination for any of Yukon's medal and recognition programs will help your nomination stand out and be successful in the selection process.

How to write a powerful nomination

In order for your nomination to stand out amongst the many others received, you must explain and include examples as evidence to what makes your nominee more exceptional than the others.

It is important to use specific, concrete examples to illustrate how your nominee meets each of the eligibility and award criteria. Provide examples of how your nominee is deserving of the honour or award.

Explain how they have:

- exemplified the virtue of good citizenship;
- touched or enriched the lives of others, particularly those who are vulnerable;
- shown ongoing initiative, leadership and dedication;
- devoted themselves to sustained and selfless voluntary service;
- been an outstanding individual who has demonstrated a high achievement; and made a significant contribution to society in any area (for example, sports development, the arts, business or academics).

Another aspect of a powerful nomination is the description of the differences your nominee's contribution has made. Include examples and show where they have made a difference with details such as these:

- How did your nominee's actions change how things were before?
- What knowledge of the situation did your nominee have and what actions did they choose?
- Is the achievement ongoing or completed?
- What was the impact of the achievement on the community or territory?
- What made it an outstanding achievement? Be sure to include any extraordinary circumstances or challenges the nominee faced.
- What made your nominee's actions different from others doing the same?

Here is an example of a citation that illustrates how a nominee has demonstrated outstanding character and meets many of the criteria listed above:

"She has made a measureable [sic] impact over the last 15 years as a passionate advocate for all those afflicted with cancer in Yukon. Her volunteer activities are as varied as her skills, and they include: working with new patients helping them understand and overcome their fear of their diagnosis; assisting new patients with understanding the administrative processes of the medical system in Yukon; speaking at cancer research benefits and fundraisers in Yukon (like the Run for Mom); and simply being a friend to those who needed one. She has directly and personally raised more than \$150,000 for cancer research as a participant in the annual Run for Mom event. She has also frequently been asked to speak at presentations in the Whitehorse business community as well as appeared as the subject in many media-related fundraising materials – each that has encouraged thousands of financial contributions to cancer research in the territory. Her contribution to others becomes all the more impressive when you take into account her own health challenges over the years."

It is achievements of this kind that will convince a selection panel to consider your nominee.

What to include in reference letters

In addition to the description of the achievement, we also require supporting letters of reference from two individuals (other than the nominator) who support the nomination. These reference letters are an integral part of the nomination process, since they help to paint a complete picture of your nominee and what they have accomplished. Reference letters should describe why the candidate should be recognized, including what they have achieved that sets them apart, what significant contribution they have made to Yukon and over what period they actively made their contributions.

The reference letters **should**:

- be written by individuals who know the nominee well enough to be able to talk about the impact of their achievement first-hand;
- be current and written specifically for the honour or award you are nominating for; and
- provide various examples from a variety of views and perspectives.

The reference letters should **not**:

- state that the author supports the nomination – they should provide more information about the achievement of the nominee.

Here are three sample citations written about the same nominee, each from a different view:

"We were quite impressed by the maturity of her at 12 years old. She is now 20 and still comes to visit us on a regular basis. She still organizes many fundraising events on behalf of our daughter for the MS Society of Canada." – Parent

“I have never seen such maturity in a young person in my 20 years of teaching.” – Teacher

“I have been inspired by her to become more involved in the community, by reaching out to those not as privileged as myself and share my talents to make a positive change in the community.” – peer

Note that a reference letter from a high-profile or influential individual will not automatically give it more weight. The letter still has to specially address the merit of the nomination.

How to keep your nomination clear and simple

Remember that longer doesn't necessarily mean better. Before you submit your nomination, ensure your explanations are clear and to the point while providing enough information for the selection panel to make a decision.

A strong nomination will include words such as:

determined	commitment	respect	sustainability	generous
drive	recognition	creativity	selflessness	dedicated
innovation	mentor	performance	teamwork	positive
impact	leadership	hero	influential	supportive
visionary	role model	pioneer	trusted	admired
conscientious	organized	resourceful	inspirational	passionate
exemplary	dedicated	helpful	articulate	vibrant

and use phrases such as:

- made/make a difference
- going over and above
- strong mentor and role model
- overcoming obstacles
- positive outcome

The selection panels are only able to evaluate nominees based on the merits in the information provided to them. The weaker nominations are usually composed of an extended resume or CV, a list of educational achievements or transcripts, a list of appointments, awards or a job description for any or all of their positions. These types of nominations are seen as not exceptional and it makes the nominee appear as if they were just doing their job. Instead, you need to describe how exceptional or outstanding your nominee's achievements are and how memorable the difference they made is.

For more information

We hope this guide is helpful. You can find out more by visiting our [website](#) and clicking on the program you would like to nominate a person for. Ensure you have read the criteria carefully and give yourself lots of time to complete the nomination process by the deadline listed.

We accept nominations throughout the year, so if you missed the deadline, it will be considered in the next intake.

If you have any questions, please contact us: Email: commissionersoffice@gov.yk.ca

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