

Nomination Guide

OFFICIAL

Contents

About the awards	2
Key stages and dates	2
Award categories	2
Robin Clark Awards.....	2
Minister's Award for Excellence in Protecting Children	3
Foster Carer Award.....	3
Kinship Carer Award	4
Engaging Kids in School Award.....	4
Keeping At Risk Young People Safe Award	4
Partner Awards.....	5
Judging criteria	5
How to nominate	6
Step 1	6
Step 2	6
Step 3	6
Step 4	6
Step 5	7
Step 6	7
Step 7 (if shortlisted only).....	7
Terms and conditions of entry	7
Eligibility.....	7
Nomination process.....	8
Screening	8
Judging and selection	9
Awards and recognition.....	9
Nominator's consent.....	9
Nominee's consent.....	10
Privacy statement.....	10
Liability.....	10

About the awards

The Victorian Protecting Children Awards recognise and celebrate individuals, teams and groups who demonstrate excellence in working with children, young people, families, and carers.

Foster, permanent and kinship carers, academics, policy, program, supervisory and direct service staff from community, government or academic organisations are encouraged to nominate anyone they believe demonstrate exceptional commitment to promoting the wellbeing of children and young people.

Key stages and dates

Key stage	Date
Nominations open	Tuesday 5 March 2024
Nominations close	5:00 pm Wednesday 10 April 2024
Judging period	Early – mid May 2024
Screening of finalists	June – July 2024
Finalists announced	Early August 2024
Awards ceremony	Early September 2024

Award categories

The 2024 Victorian Protecting Children Awards recognise excellence in protecting children, young people and their families or carers. See below for further details on each of the Award categories and the criteria.

Robin Clark Awards

Two of the pre-eminent Victorian Protecting Children Awards honour the memory of Robin Dennis Clark (1936–2001) who was an inspirational and respected leader in child protection and care services across Australia in the 1980s and 90s.

Robin Clark Leadership Award

The winner of this pre-eminent award epitomises Robin Clark and her legacy of inspiring leadership and influential stewardship of child and family policy and practice in Victoria.

This award recognises an **individual** whose leadership inspires others to act wisely and care deeply about achieving the best outcomes for children, young people and their families or carers.

Nominees in this category have a distinguished track record as visionary and transformative leaders in practice, policy, research or education.

Examples of work may include:

- a champion of system-wide reform leading to sustained improvement in the lives of children, young people and their families or carers
- influencing the practice of others, through leadership, advocacy and mentoring

- empowering Aboriginal self-determination and cultural safety to achieve the best outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people and their families or carers.

Nominees for the Robin Clark Leadership Award are highly respected individuals from government, the community or the child and family services sector.

Robin Clark Making a Difference Award

The team or group winners of this award embody Robin Clark's vision and legacy of a well-connected community and service system contributing to better outcomes for children, young people and their families or carers.

This award recognises the exceptional contribution of a **team or group** of people who have worked to directly improve the lives of children, young people, families and carers in Victoria. This can be in partnership or collaboration with government and non-government agencies.

The winners of this award strive to achieve excellence and their work shows insight, practicality and respect for the needs of children, young people, families and carers, including supporting Aboriginal self-determination to achieve the best outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people and their families or carers.

Nominees will demonstrate outstanding creativity, courage and collaboration. Examples of work may include:

- providing expert, strategic advice to improve support and decision making for children and young people in care
- championing the rights of carers, children and young people through the development and delivery of training, financial support, or new innovative models of care.

Note: Nominees for the Robin Clark Making a Difference Award are teams and groups from government, the community or the child and family services sector.

Minister's Award for Excellence in Protecting Children

This award recognises an **individual, team or group** that have advanced their approach or intervention to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, young people and their families or carers.

These advances can be demonstrated across the child and family services sector through case management, education, prevention and early intervention, or the provision of care to children and young people in care services (including secure welfare services).

Examples of work may include:

- developing new programs, or strengthening existing programs to improve outcomes for at risk children and young people
- working in different ways to achieve outcomes for high-risk youth
- embedding sustainable change within organisational practices to create more opportunities for at risk children and young people
- empowering Aboriginal self-determination and cultural safety to achieve the best outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people and their families or carers.

Foster Carer Award

This award recognises assessed and approved foster carers, both present and past, who have made a significant contribution to the lives of children and young people in care.

Examples of work may include:

- providing exceptional care, support and stability to a child or young person

- overcoming challenges to advocate for children and young people's needs and creating a positive effect on young lives
- demonstrating an understanding of the importance of connection to culture and kin for children and young people in care, and working with agencies and child protection to prioritise this connection
- empowering Aboriginal self-determination and cultural safety to achieve the best outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

Note: Nominations for multiple carers who have provided care for the same child or sibling group are eligible.

Kinship Carer Award

This award recognises assessed and approved kinship carers, both present and past, who have made a significant contribution to the lives of children and young people in care.

Examples of work may include:

- providing exceptional care, support and stability to a child or young person
- overcoming challenges to advocate for children and young people's needs and creating a positive effect on young lives
- demonstrating an understanding of the importance of connection to culture and kin for children and young people in care, and working with agencies and child protection to prioritise this connection
- empowering Aboriginal self-determination and cultural safety to achieve the best outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

Note: Nominations for multiple carers who have provided care for the same child or sibling group are eligible.

Engaging Kids in School Award

This award recognises education is fundamental to development and helps build a strong community.

The winner of this award is an **individual, team or group** who has supported children and young people in their schooling journey or introduced young children to early years and pre-school programs.

Nominees are committed to the very best outcomes for children and young people and demonstrate their ability to work with the education and child protection systems.

Examples of work may include:

- mentoring or supporting children in care to engage with schooling
- developing creative approaches to bringing the education and child protection systems together
- encouraging participation in early years and pre-school activities
- encouraging access to mainstream education, vocational education (VET), job training or skill building programs
- empowering Aboriginal self-determination and cultural safety to achieve the best outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people and their families or carers.

Keeping At Risk Young People Safe Award

This award recognises an **individual, team or group** that best supports at risk youth. The winner of this award prioritises empowering young people in the decision-making process and assists them to achieve their goals.

Examples of work may include:

- assisting at risk young people with gaining access to the support they need. This may be for important life skills, independent living, employment pathways, education-based support, culturally appropriate care, mental health and substance abuse

- implementation of programs that improve outcomes for at risk young people
- empowering Aboriginal self-determination and cultural safety to achieve the best outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people and their families or carers.

Partner Awards

CREATE Positive Impacts Award

This award gives Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children and young people aged 8 - 25 years the opportunity to nominate someone. This may be a carer, support worker or agency who has made a positive difference to their lives, particularly through assisting them to have a voice within the out-of-home care system.

Note: this award is managed by the CREATE Foundation and will be judged by a committee of children and young people.

Find more information at the [CREATE Foundation website](https://create.org.au/) <https://create.org.au/>.

To nominate for the CREATE Positive Impacts Award, use the [online nomination form](https://forms.office.com/r/S44utQ3ziM). <https://forms.office.com/r/S44utQ3ziM>.

Child and Youth Empowerment Award – Commission for Children and Young People

This award was established by the Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People and recognises an individual, team or organisation who has achieved excellence in realising children's and young people's right to meaningfully participate in matters affecting them.

Note: this award is managed by the [Commission for Children and Young People](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/) <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/>.

Leaving a Legacy Award

This award recognises the people who have made a significant contribution to the child, youth, and family services sector throughout their career as well as making an impact on their local community.

'Leaving a Legacy' acknowledges those who have positively contributed to the sector and whose remarkable achievements should be highlighted.

Note: This award is managed by [The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare](https://www.cfecfw.asn.au) <https://www.cfecfw.asn.au>.

Nominations are not open for this award, the winner is determined by the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare.

The Walda Blow Aboriginal Children and Young People Award

This award recognises contributions of an Aboriginal person, persons or organisations in Victoria to the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people.

Note: this award is managed by the [Commission for Children and Young People](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/) <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/>.

Judging criteria

The judging panel will take into consideration the following when assessing nominations:

1. How has the nominee/s shown exceptional effort and excellence in practice?

40%

2. How has the nominee/s improved outcomes for children, young people and their families or carers?

30%

3. How has the nominee/s empowered children, young people and their families or carers in decision making processes?

30%

How to nominate

Step 1

Read the below Terms and Conditions which includes:

- eligibility
- nomination process
- consent
- privacy
- liability.

Step 2

Determine who to nominate and for what category. Discuss the nomination with the nominee's manager and with the nominee.

Please note: All nominations are required to be endorsed by the nominee's manager and the nominee will need to accept the nomination once submitted.

Step 3

Register your details with the [online nomination platform](https://vpca.awardsplatform.com) <vpca.awardsplatform.com>.

Please note: We can accept offline nominations via email. If you require an offline nomination form or have any questions, please contact the awards team by telephone on 03 9456 5660 or email the [Protecting Children Awards](mailto:protectingchildren.awards@dffh.vic.gov.au) inbox <protectingchildren.awards@dffh.vic.gov.au>.

Step 4

Log in to Award Force (the online nomination platform) to enter the nomination by typing directly into the electronic form.

Under the 'Nomination Statement' tab you are required to address the judging criteria in 800 words or less.

The following information is required in the online nomination form:

- Nominator and nominee details
- Nominee's manager's name and email address
- Summary of nomination (100 words – not scored)
- Detailed nomination addressing judging criteria (800 words or less – scored)
 - How has the nominee/s shown exceptional effort and excellence in practice?
 - How has the nominee/s improved outcomes for children, young people and their families or carers?
 - How has the nominee/s empowered children, young people and their families or carers in decision making processes?
- One referee letter of support

- Supporting documentation (optional – not scored, maximum of two documents)
- If nominating a team, you will need three key members' legal name, address, email and date of birth.

Step 5

Complete your online nomination/s by **5:00 pm Wednesday 10 April 2024** via online nomination platform.

Step 6

Once the nomination has been submitted, the following will occur:

- the nominee/nominated team contact will receive an email asking them to accept the nomination and agree to the terms and conditions.

Step 7 (if shortlisted only)

Shortlisted nominees will be thoroughly vetted, and a screening process conducted by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

Shortlisted nominees may be contacted during this time to clarify information or to provide more details in relation to the safety screening process.

If a nominee/nominated team or group contact fails to accept the terms and conditions or fails to comply with the above screening process, that nominee or nominee's team, will be ineligible to be considered for the awards.

Important: if, on the basis of a safety screening result, the Department considers an individual is not a fit and proper person to receive an award or to be inducted, then that individual and/or the individual's team, will be withdrawn from consideration for the award or for induction. Withdrawal of an individual or a team on the basis of a safety screening check result is at the sole discretion of the Department and will not be subject to review or appeal.

Terms and conditions of entry

Please note the Terms and Conditions include a screening process. Please read and ensure that you understand the awards Terms and Conditions before completing a nomination.

- A person who nominates (**Nominator**) a person as an individual or as part of a team (**Nominee**) for the 2024 Victorian Protecting Children Awards (**Awards**) and submits a nomination is deemed to have accepted these Terms and Conditions.
- The State of Victoria acting through the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (**Department**) is the promoter of the Awards.

Eligibility

Nominees and nominated teams (including each individual team member) must:

- be a living Australian resident (temporary or permanent); and
- have contributed to the improvement of outcomes for children, young people and their families or carers in Victoria, through their work in the community, public sector, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO), community service organisations, education or academia; and
- not have previously won a Victorian Protecting Children Award (under this or any previous name), in their individual capacity or as part of a team (where applicable) for work of the same nature within the last three (3) years.

Nominations must focus on the specific contributions of the Nominees.

A person cannot nominate themselves, whether in an individual capacity or as a member of a team.

A team may comprise of any number of people:

- from the same organisation working on a common project;
- from different organisations working on a common project; or
- working together, to achieve better outcomes for children, young people and their families or carers in Victoria
- three key team members will be required to go through a vetting and screening process.

Members of the judging panel, employees and contractors of the Department who are directly involved in conducting the Awards as well as their immediate families, are ineligible to be nominated.

If a Nominee or an individual team member does not meet the above criteria, the nomination will be ineligible.

Nomination process

- Completed nominations must be received by **5:00 pm Wednesday 10 April 2024**. Nominations received after this time will not be considered for the Awards and no responsibility will be accepted by the Department for lost, late, incomplete, or incorrectly submitted nominations.
- A separate online nomination form must be completed for each Nominee, or each nominated team or group.
- Nominations **must** include one referee/reference letter which support the accuracy of the nomination and verify the contribution of the Nominee or nominated team or group. The names and contact details for the referee must be included in the nomination. Referees must not be the Nominator, Nominee or a member of a nominated team.
- Nominations will be acknowledged with a confirmation email once your nomination form has been submitted. The Nominee will also receive a confirmation email.
- All correspondence for team nominations will be sent to the **team representative**. It is the responsibility of the team representative to inform all team members about Terms and Conditions and any other important information.

Screening

- All shortlisted Nominees including members of a nominated team will be required to confirm their acceptance of these terms and conditions by following the instructions sent via email notifying them of their nomination.
- All shortlisted nominations including individual nominations and three key team members will be subject to a thorough vetting and screening process conducted by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.
- The screening process includes, but is not limited to, National Police Check, Carer register check, CRIS check, quality of care check.
- The National Police Check will be started by the Department via Australia Post and will be the responsibility of each individual Nominee and team member to complete the online process prior to the date advised.
- If a Nominee does not accept the Terms and Conditions or, where applicable, fails to submit a completed National Police Check with proof of identity in the required time frame, the Nominee and/or team will be ineligible to be considered for the Awards.

Judging and selection

- The Department reserves the right to verify the validity of nominations, allocate nominations into an alternative category and disqualify any nomination which, in the opinion of the Department, can be considered objectionable, potentially insulting or inflammatory or generally damaging to the goodwill or reputation of the Awards, the Department and/or the Minister for Children, or any nomination that is not compliant with these Terms and Conditions.
- The Department may request further information or clarification from the Nominator, Nominee(s) or referees regarding any nomination.
- The judging panels will consider all eligible nominations and score each against the criteria for the selected Award category.
- Judging panels will meet and discuss the outcome of the scoring and compile a shortlist for each Award category.
- Award recipients will be selected from shortlisted Nominees.
- In considering shortlisted Nominees, the Department will take into account the results of an individual Nominee's safety screening check and consideration will be made as to the currency and seriousness of any offence(s), any known mitigating circumstances and the individual Nominee's subsequent contribution to Victoria.
- The Department reserves the right to disqualify a Nominee or nominated team if the results of their police check are deemed unsatisfactory by the Department, with no right of review.
- The Minister for Children (or the Minister's representative) and the Department's decisions on all matters pertaining to the Awards are final and no correspondence or discussion will be entered.

Awards and recognition

- Each Award finalist will be invited to attend the Awards ceremony which will be held in early September 2024 where the Award recipients will be announced and presented with their Award.
- Award finalists and Nominators under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian to attend the Awards ceremony.
- All travel costs associated with an Award finalist, their Nominator and parent or legal guardian (if applicable) attending the Awards ceremony and other related costs are the responsibility of the Award finalist and their Nominator.
- The names of the Award winners and/or finalists may be published on the Department's website, newspapers and other media channels.

Nominator's consent

By submitting a nomination, including personal information (as defined in the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) or where applicable any health information (as defined in the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic)) provided as part of that nomination, each Nominator confirms that they consent, and has the consent of any person whose personal information is contained in a nomination, including but not limited to:

- the Nominee(s) (or if under the age of 18, the Nominee's parent or legal guardian); and
- referees,
- to provide that information to the Department, and for the Department to disclose that personal information to other parties for the purpose of conducting the Awards including, but not limited to, the Award judges, the Minister for Children and their office, the office of the Commission for Children and Young People, Create Foundation, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare and Award partners.

If the Nominator does not agree or have the requisite consent, the Nominator must not provide their personal information or the personal information of anyone else and may be unable to submit a nomination for the Awards.

Each Nominator consents to the Department using the Nominator's nomination description, statements, name, likeness, image, voice and/or participation in the Awards (including photograph, film and/or recording of the same) in any media for an unlimited period of time without further notification, remuneration or compensation for the purpose of promoting, publicising or marketing the Awards (including any outcome). If the Nominator does not agree, the Nominator must not provide their personal information or the personal information of anyone else and may be unable to submit a nomination for the Awards.

Nominee's consent

By accepting the nomination, all Nominees, including all nominated team members, agree to the following Terms and Conditions:

- Nominee(s) (or if under the age of 18, the Nominee's parent or legal guardian) consents to the Department using their nomination description, statements, name, likeness, image, voice and/or participation in the Awards (including photograph, film and/or recording of the same) in any media for an unlimited period of time without further notification, remuneration or compensation for the purpose of promoting, publicising or marketing the Awards (including any outcome).
- Nominee(s) consents to the Department using their personal information, and for the Department to disclose their personal information to other parties for the purposes of conducting the Awards including, but not limited to, the Award judges, the Minister for Children's Office, the office of the Commission for Children and Young People, Create Foundation, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare and Award partners.
- Nominee(s) consents to taking part in the screening process including, but not limited to, National Police Check, Carer Register check, CRIS check, quality of care check and review of social media and other public online profiles.

If the Nominee(s) does not agree, the Nominee(s) must not accept their nomination and will be ineligible for the Awards.

If a team member of a nominated team does not agree, the team representative must provide a photo that does not include the nominated team member and ensure no reference to the team member is mentioned in the nomination.

Privacy statement

Consistent with Victorian Government policy and legislation, the Department endorses fair information handling practices which are laid out in the [Department's privacy statement](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/privacy-statement) <<https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/privacy-statement>>.

Information supplied as a part of the nomination will be used by the Department, the judging panel, the office of the Minister for Children and the Award ceremony venue for the purposes of considering nominations, safety screening, selecting Award recipients and providing the Award ceremony.

Information will not be disclosed or used for any other purpose without the express consent of the person to whom the information relates, unless otherwise required or permitted by law.

The Nominators or Nominees can seek to correct their personal information or complain about a breach of their privacy by emailing protectingchildren.awards@dffh.vic.gov.au.

Liability

It is intended and agreed that the conduct of the Awards shall not give rise to any legal obligations, liabilities or duties, valid or enforceable in any way against the Department, the Minister for Children or the State of Victoria.

To receive this publication in an accessible format phone (03) 9500 4044, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [email Protecting Children Awards](mailto:protectingchildren.awards@dffh.vic.gov.au) <protectingchildren.awards@dffh.vic.gov.au>.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, March 2024.

In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

ISBN 978-1-76130-479-8

Available at [2024 Victorian Protecting Children Awards](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/victorian-protecting-children-awards) <https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/victorian-protecting-children-awards>