

Rural Community Business Awards nomination guide & FAQ



Nomination guide

This year's Rural Community Business Awards will host eight award categories - six of which will be looking at the achievements of community-owned businesses, while the remaining two will seek to celebrate the dedication and outstanding efforts of the individuals who play an integral part in the business.

Community Business award categories

- **Connecting the Community Award** - recognising community businesses that are going the extra mile to create safe and welcoming spaces for everyone
- **Investing in Local People Award** - looking to celebrate community businesses that are striving to invest in local people through the creation of employment, training and volunteering opportunities
- **Going Green Award** - celebrating community businesses who are going further to make their business and community 'green' through the introduction of environmentally friendly initiatives
- **Keeping it Local Award** - recognising how community businesses are contributing to supporting the local economy through the provision of utilising local supply and services
- **The 'More Than' Award** - celebrating community businesses that are providing a wide range of services and amenities that communities value and need
- **One to Watch Award** - celebrating the community groups that are not yet open and trading but are on the way to creating something incredibly special

Nomination guide

Individual award categories

- **Community Contribution Award** - recognising the outstanding efforts of the individuals who are going above and beyond for their community business. Perhaps through the business, they're going the extra mile for vulnerable residents or they're a constant source of support in keeping the business going? Or maybe they're making a difference by creating initiatives to bring the community together?
- **Young Person Award** - acknowledging the young people aged 15 to 25 who are helping to make a difference in their community-owned business. Is their enthusiasm infectious? Do they always step up in times of need or strive to share their skills in order to enhance the business.

Please refer to the [FAQ's section below](#) for details on the criteria for entering.

Nomination guide - top tips

To support your entry into this year's Rural Community Business Awards, we've put together some top tips that will help make your nomination stand out in front of our panel of judges.

Include visuals

Photos and videos are a great way of bringing your story to life, so where possible try to include visuals alongside your nomination

Evidence

If possible, try to share some case study examples that evidence your project or services. Personal stories are always a strong way to demonstrate evidence

Impact

Make sure you showcase the impact of your efforts - what difference have those efforts had on the community?

Enthusiasm

We know your community is very committed and enthusiastic to make a difference. Try to get this passion across in your nomination

Clear & concise

Try to get your point across as clearly and concisely as you can so there's no confusion as to the amazing work you're doing

Review

Before you click submit, go back and have a look through to check you've included all the information you can to best tell your story

If you'd like to talk through any element of your nomination, please get in touch with us on 01993 630022 or email events@plunkett.co.uk.

FAQs

What are the Rural Community Business Awards? The Rural Community Business Awards are an annual celebration of the incredible achievements of rurally based community-owned businesses across the UK and the dedicated individuals involved in them, over the last year, and the positive impact those achievements are having on the local communities.

Who can enter? Plunkett's Rural Community Business Awards are open to community groups and individuals who meet the following criteria:

Community Business awards (except 'One to Watch' Award - see below) - Plunkett defines a community business as being locally rooted, trading for the benefit of the local area, and as being accountable to the community and having broad community impact. Any groups who feel they adhere to these foundations are welcome to apply for a Community Business award. In addition, the business must be:

- Open and trading
- Situated in a rural location
- Based in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

One to Watch Award - This award is open to community groups who are beginning their journey towards being an open and trading community-owned business. To qualify, groups must be:

- Registered as a legal entity working towards being an open and trading business
- Situated in a rural location
- Based in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

Community Contribution Award - Individuals being put forward for the Community Contribution Award must be:

- Involved in a rural community business (defined as above) as a volunteer or employee of the business

FAQs continued

Young Person Award - Individuals being put forward for the Young Person Award must be:

- Involved in a rural community business, as defined above, and recognised as a volunteer or employee of the business
- Be aged between 15 and 25 years old

Can we enter if we've been a previous winner of a Rural Community Business Award? Yes.

Can I enter more than one category? Yes, please do. You are welcome to enter your community business for as many categories as you wish.

Can more than one nomination be submitted for a nominee? Yes, although we do encourage you to consider pulling together your nominations to tell your story in even more detail. Nominations received for the same nominee will be considered together.

Is there a price for each of the winners? Yes, each category winner will receive a cheque for £250 for their community-owned business. This will be presented at the award ceremony on Wednesday 23rd October.

Do I have to pay to enter? No, entry into the Rural Community Business Awards is free of charge.

How do I make my nomination? You can submit your nomination on the Plunkett website at www.plunkett.co.uk/rural-community-business-awards.

When do entries open? Entries into the Rural Community Business Awards will open at 10am on 19th June 2024.

FAQs continued

When do entries close? You will need to submit your nominations [by 5pm on 16th August 2024](#).

How will winners and finalists be selected? A panel of judges, made up of representatives from award sponsors, will come together on 10th September to go through the nominations and consider their winners and finalists.

For the **Community Business awards**, the judges will be identifying one winner and two finalists for each category. Entries into the Community Business Award categories will be judged on their ability to demonstrate:

- **Impact** – what direct impact has the community business’s efforts had or continue to have, on the local community and wider society?
- **Inclusivity** – how inclusive has the work been? Have efforts made the project or service accessible to everyone?
- **Innovation** – is this an inspired new venture? Is it something creative and innovative that the judges won’t have seen before?

Our panel of judges will also be selecting three finalists from the nominations received in the **Individual award categories**. The judges will base their decision on the individual efforts shown in the nomination. In particular they’ll be considering what the individuals have done and for how long they’ve been doing it, as well as looking at the overall impact those efforts have made to the community business and the local community. The three finalists from each Individual award category will then go to a public vote to decide the overall winner.

When will the shortlisted finalists be announced? The finalists from all eight award categories will be announced at [10am on 30th September 2024](#).

FAQs continued

When will the Individual award categories - the Community Contribution and Young Person awards, public voting open and close? The public voting round for the Community Contribution Award and Young Person Award will open at 10am on 30th September and will close at 5pm on Friday 4th October 2024.

When will we find out if our nomination has been successful? Following the judging session on the 10th September, we'll be writing to each nomination by email, between the 11th and 18th September, to let them know the outcome of their entry.

When will the Rural Community Business Awards take place? They'll be taking place on Wednesday 23rd October in London, from 4pm onwards, after the [National Community Business Conference](#).

Who will be invited to attend the award ceremony? All award category finalists will be invited to attend the award ceremony on the 23rd October. Community business finalists will be invited to bring two representatives and each individual finalist will be allowed to bring one guest along with them. Finalists will join Plunkett staff, supporters, sponsors and partners for the ceremony.

What is expected of the finalists in order to be a part of the Rural Community Business Awards? We would love to have all our finalists with us at the award ceremony in London, so please do keep the 23rd October free just in case. We'll ask each finalist to create a short video that will be shown during the ceremony, alongside other category finalists. We also ask that finalists engage their own communities in the campaign, sharing content across their website, social media channels and newsletters.

Will finalists be able to attend the National Community Business Conference too? Yes of course, in fact we actively encourage you to come along to join a day of learning, networking and inspiration. Please book your tickets at www.plunkett.co.uk/conference/

Rural Community Business Awards agenda

ACTION	DATE
Nomination round opens	19th June
Nomination round closes	16th August
Online judging session	10th September
Finalists notified	11th - 18th September
Finalists announced	30th September
Voting round opens	30th September
Voting round closes	4th October
Rural Community Business Awards ceremony	23rd October

Have a question that is not answered here? Please contact events@plunkett.co.uk for more information about the 2024 Rural Community Business Awards.