



**Cassowary Coast
REGIONAL COUNCIL**

The background of the cover is a close-up photograph of the Australian flag, showing the Union Jack and the seven-pointed star. To the right, there are green leaves and yellow flowers. In the top right corner, there are three stylized white circular patterns resembling fireworks or sunbursts.

Australia Day Awards Guidelines 2026-27



Acknowledgement of Country

Cassowary Coast Regional Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and sea on which we operate, the Mamu, Djiru, Girramay, Gulngay, Warrgamay, Jirrbal and Bandjin Peoples. We wish to acknowledge our respect for their current and emerging leaders and those in the dreaming. We thank all First Nations people for the contributions they make in building this community.

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Objectives

The Cassowary Coast Australia Day Awards provide the opportunity to publicly celebrate, acknowledge and honour the outstanding contributions of individuals and groups working tirelessly to improve the Cassowary Coast community by promoting the social, cultural, economic and environmental prosperity of our region through personal accomplishments, inspirational behaviours, and/or successful completion of projects, initiatives or events.

Cassowary Coast Regional Council celebrates Australia Day with an official Australia Day Awards event, at a venue and location decided by Council.

Australia Day Awards

The National Australia Day Council facilitates and promotes Australia Day to all Australians to inspire national pride and increase participation and engagement across all sectors of the community.

Cassowary Coast Regional Council delivers the Australia Day Awards at a local level, and will coordinate the public nomination and disbursement for the Australia Day Awards in the following categories:

1. Citizen of the Year
2. Young Citizen of the Year
3. Lifetime Contribution Award
4. Community Event/Project of the Year
5. Community Volunteer Champion Award
6. Sports person of the Year
7. Sustainable Environment Award

Award process

The selection and eligibility criteria for the Cassowary Coast Regional Council Australia Day Awards Program is supported by the criteria set out for the Australia Day Awards.

Eligibility criteria

- All nominees MUST be an Australian Citizen, law abiding, and be seen as a community role model.
- Nominees MUST be a resident of the Cassowary Coast Local Government Area (when nominations close).
- Nominations may be submitted by groups (i.e. committees, associations, schools) or individuals with or without the knowledge of the person being nominated.
- The nature of the Awards places emphasis on what the person has done for the community in their various field of involvement, rather than:

- recognising personal achievements and/or ambitions (except when the personal achievement has brought recognition to the Cassowary Coast community and has engendered community pride) or
 - activities undertaken as part of the nominee's normal occupational duties, unless the achievements clearly exceed the expectations of their role.
- Nominees must NOT have received the same award within the past five years.
- Unsuccessful nominees may be re-nominated in subsequent years.
- Nominees must NOT be a current sitting Councillor, nor have been in the past two years.
- Awards will not be granted posthumously.
- Nominations must be submitted using the official Australia Day Awards online nomination form via SmartyGrants, accessible through the Cassowary Coast Regional Council website.
- Self-nominations of individuals will not be accepted.
- Nominees must comply with eligibility criteria and selection criteria of each category.
- All applications MUST have a supporting referee.
- If nominees are nominated in the wrong category, nominators will be notified.

Award categories

Citizen of the Year

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the Citizen of the Year award, nominees MUST be 25 years or older as of 1 January of the year when nominations close.

Selection criteria

In assessing nominations for this award, the Selection Panel will consider the following criteria in no particular order:

- Outstanding achievement and leadership in the local community.
- Has been a role model/inspiration for community members through their achievements, leadership, character or commitment to the community.
- Has demonstrated initiative, innovation or achievement in areas such as community development, business, education, sport, culture, environment, social responsibility, or other areas that benefit the community.
- A sustained record of significant contribution and positive impact, either over the previous 12 months or over a number of years.
- Has provided the contribution on a voluntary basis or exceeded the normal requirements of the nominee's paid work.
- The breadth, significance and lasting impact of the nominee's contribution will also be considered.

Young Citizen of the Year

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the Young Citizen of the Year award, nominees MUST be UNDER the age of 25 years as of 1 January of the year when nominations close.

Selection criteria

In assessing nominations for this award, the selection panel will consider the following criteria in no particular order:

- Outstanding achievement and leadership in the local community.
- Has been a role model/inspiration for community members.
- Has shown achievements in community activities, academic, sporting, personal, cultural, environment, and/or social responsibility.
- Demonstrated selfless commitment, application and dedication, involvement in activities that promote the welfare and wellbeing in the community over previous 12 months or over a number of years.
- Has provided the contribution on a voluntary basis or exceeded the normal requirements of the nominee's paid work.

Lifetime Contribution Award

Selection criteria

In assessing nominations for this award, the selection panel will consider the following criteria, in no particular order:

- Outstanding achievement and leadership in the local community.
- Has been a role model/inspiration to the community.
- Demonstrated selfless commitment, dedication and sustained service through activities that have promoted the welfare and wellbeing of the community for more than 20 years.
- Has provided the contribution on a voluntary basis or exceeded the normal requirements of the nominee's paid work.

Community Event/Project of the Year

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for Community Event/Project of the Year, nominees must:

- Be a community event or project that provides opportunities for the community to participate and contribute to social, economic and cultural life.
- Be a community event that is community focused, not stated for personal, private reward or financial benefit.
- Bring recognition and credit to the community through cultural, environmental or sporting event/project within the Cassowary Coast Local Government Area.
- For a project, be completed.

- For an event, have been held during the year immediately preceding the presentation of the award.

Selection criteria

In assessing nominations for this award, the selection panel will consider the following criteria in no particular order:

- The event/project's service and benefit to the community.
- The event/project's significant involvement of volunteers and empowerment of the community for successful delivery.
- The event/project's reflection on community values and contribution to the diversity of the community.
- Significantly benefiting the community's wellbeing or financial sustainability.

Community Volunteer Champion Award

Selection criteria

In assessing nominations for this award, the selection panel will consider the following criteria in no particular order:

- The individual has made an exceptional voluntary contribution to the local community in areas such as arts, culture, sport, recreation, community service, inclusion, youth, seniors, environment, or other community activities.
- Demonstrated sustained commitment, reliability and dedication to a community group, organisation, club, program, initiative or cause.
- Played an active role in bringing people together, strengthening community connections, and encouraging participation.
- Demonstrated leadership through volunteering, mentoring, organising, supporting, or encouraging others to participate in community life.
- Has contributed their time, skills and energy beyond what would be reasonably expected, without seeking personal or financial reward.

Sportsperson of the Year

Selection criteria

In assessing nominations for this award, the selection panel will consider the following criteria, in no particular order:

- Demonstrated outstanding achievement in sport and served as a positive role model within a non-professional sporting environment.

Sustainable Environment Award

Selection criteria

In assessing nominations for this award, the selection panel will consider the following criteria, in no particular order:

- Demonstrated exceptional commitment to environmental sustainability through advocacy, innovation and the delivery of initiatives that benefit the local environment.
- Has provided the contribution on a voluntary basis or exceeded the normal requirements of the nominee's paid work.

Selection process

Selection panel

- Australia Day Awards will be considered by a selection panel.
- The selection panel differs slightly each year, and may comprise of a combination of any of the following individuals:
 - Mayor.
 - Two to three Councillors.
 - Previous Citizen of the Year Award recipient.
- The position of the assessment panel will be voluntary, with members to meet their own travel expenses to attend meetings.
- Selection panel meetings may be conducted by electronic means.
- The selection panel reserves the right not to present an award in a category if no nominee is considered suitable.
- The selection panel reserves the right to transfer a nominee to a more appropriate award category.
- The decision of the selection panel will be final, and no correspondence will be entered into.
- The judging of the candidates will be based on the information provided in the nomination.
- The selection panel may choose to contact referees listed in the nomination form for further information.
- Selection panel members are required to declare any actual, potential, or perceived Conflict of Interest before assessing nominations. This includes any personal, professional, financial, or other relationship with a nominee that may influence, or be perceived to influence, their impartiality. Where a conflict is declared, it must be recorded, and the panel member may be excluded from assessing or discussing the relevant nomination.

Scoring assessment

Up to a value of 10 points will be awarded to each valid nomination from each member of the assessment panel.

Award recipients

Eligible nominees will be contacted by early January to confirm their attendance at the Australia Day Awards event.

Nominators will be notified by email or telephone and invited to attend.

Should any nominees withdraw from the application process, this should be noted prior to the selection panel meeting to avoid retractions after winners are determined.

Award recipients will not be announced at a Local Government Meeting as this is an internal process.

The winners will be announced at the Australia Day Awards Event where nominees, members of the public, and anyone not involved in the selection process will find out the results simultaneously.

Awards event

The Australia Day Awards event will be held at a location and on a date to be determined by the Cassowary Coast Regional Council.



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