

Guidelines & tips for writing quality Landcare Awards nominations

Overview

The key to a well-written Landcare awards nomination is providing specific examples that illustrate how an individual, group, network, organisation or team's achievements meet or exceed each of the selection criteria for the award category. Often, the challenge is sticking to the imposed word count when addressing each of the criteria. Try to be as clear, concise and as compelling as possible.

Before you start

Underline/highlight the key words in selection criteria that you will use within your response to ensure you stick to your main point.

For example: Demonstrate how the individual has implemented Landcare activities and has helped others to implement Landcare activities in their area.

Write down as many words as you can. They don't need to be in sentences; just single words that come to mind when you reflect on the words that you've highlighted for each selection criteria. Then think about the meaning and tone of those words you've written and choose the ones that feel right to shape your response.

Collect your evidence

Much of your evidence to demonstrate what you have achieved will already exist in some form or other, including:

- data collected
- reporting on grants
- previous awards nominations
- text from websites or web pages, fact sheets, presentations, speeches, newsletters and articles

Getting started

You are asked to provide a summary of your nomination. Start with a clear and explicit statement about why the nominee deserves recognition. Include enough information for the assessor to become familiar with the nominee's specific challenges faced, actions taken, and results or goals met. **List the most important information in the first few sentences** and then elaborate as necessary.

Support your statements with specific examples that address the award criteria and elaborate on why the nominee's accomplishments are worthy of the award.

These examples should include outcomes, results, and/or activities above and beyond the nominee's job description and expectations.

Include qualities that make this person, group or network outstanding, and that are clearly relevant to the award criteria. E.g., collaborative, initiative, contribution, team-building, and leadership.



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Consider including the following evidence to answer the 'who, what, when, where, why, how' in your supporting statements:

Examples include:

- WHAT did the nominee do (e.g. projects, activities)?
 - Projects and/or activities *above and beyond* the nominee's job description
 - Any challenges or issues encountered and overcome
- HOW did they do it?
 - Initiative and/or leadership
 - Teamwork
 - Creativity and/or innovation
 - Behaviours and/or attitudes (include, but should not dominate write-up)
- WHAT were the results and/or impact?
 - What did the nominee's efforts accomplish? Include data on achievements. For example, secured grants for 100,000 plants for xxx biolink, 100 hectares of private land was revegetated, 100 people involved in project etc.
 - Are there specific benefits that Landcare or the community has derived from those efforts?
 - If the project is still being developed or has not yet produced results, consider identifying major milestones completed and the impact to date, as well as the overall expected outcome.

Remember, the summary will be used for promotional use; including: case studies, awards and conference program books, media articles, or social media. This is your opportunity to make your nominee shine!

Support your statements with evidence

Avoid sweeping generalities; (i.e. "He's a hard worker," or "She goes above and beyond her job duties". Make every sentence count! Successful nominations have enough details to make the case for the nominee's achievement.

Weak vs Strong Example

Weak: "She always celebrates diversity."

Strong: "She was responsible for initiating the Landcare group's first multicultural Landcare fair. This is now an annual event that has increased participation of migrants and refugees in the local community by 30 per cent. She raises awareness by translating flyers to promote the event into several languages; assists stall-holders with translating their signage and flyers; and invites bi-lingual speakers to present on topics that demonstrate ways to increase biodiversity and promote the sustainable management of land in the region."

Can you see the difference?



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Spell out acronyms

The first time you use an acronym, spell it out: *Far East Victoria Landcare (FEVL)*.

Stick to the word count

The maximum character count for each criteria point is 2,000 characters, or approximately 300 words. Ensure you make every *word count!*

Use simple, powerful verbs instead of abstract nouns, and delete words that don't add clarity.

<u>Use</u>	<u>Instead of</u>
inform	provide information
apply	make an application

No waffle 'in terms of', 'it's important to note that'

No clichés 'unpack', 'moving forward'

No empty terms 'appropriate', 'not appropriate'

Put yourself in the judges' position

Remember, the judges are reading multiple Landcare award nominations! Don't assume that judges know anything about you, your group/network, or project, and what it has achieved.

Present your nomination in a way that sets it apart from others. Be clear. Be concise. Be compelling.

Now, submit your nomination!

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