

World Teachers' Day – NT Excellence Awards 2026

About the awards

The annual World Teachers' Day - NT Excellence Awards (formerly known as Teaching in the Territory Excellence Awards) recognise and celebrate the contribution of Northern Territory Government school teachers, principals, leaders and support staff for their commitment to providing quality education for Territory children.

The awards recognise staff in nine categories in Northern Territory (NT) schools across six regions: Barkly, Big Rivers, Central, Darwin, East Arnhem and Top End, with each region having a category winner. Each category then has an overall NT winner.

Key dates:

NOMINATIONS OPEN	NOMINATIONS CLOSE	FINALISTS ANNOUNCED	AWARDS CEREMONY
Wednesday 15 April	Sunday 31 May	August	Friday 30 October

Award categories and criteria

NT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator of the Year

Eligible nominees include principals, school leaders, teachers, assistant teachers and support staff of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

NT Early Childhood Educator of the Year

Eligible nominees include early childhood educators who work in preschool, Families as First Teachers (including Stay Play Learn), child care and transition settings.

NT Corporate-based Support Person of the Year

Eligible nominees include DET corporate staff providing support to schools. Can be an individual or a team.

NT Inclusion Educator of the Year

Eligible nominees include special education teachers, school leaders, teachers and support staff

NT Leader in Education of the Year

Eligible nominees include school leaders, assistant principals, senior teachers, highly accomplished and lead teachers.

NT Primary Educator of the Year

Eligible nominees include primary teachers (years 1 to 6) and senior teachers.

NT Principal of the Year

Eligible nominees include principals (level 1-7).

NT Secondary Teacher of the Year

Eligible nominees include middle years and senior secondary teachers (years 7 to 12), and vocational education trainers, teachers and coordinators

NT School-based Support Person of the Year

Eligible nominees include aboriginal team teachers, support staff, administration staff, attendance officers, paraprofessionals working in classroom contexts and maintenance staff.

Nominees must be a Northern Territory Department of Education employee working within a Northern Territory school or corporate office to be eligible to win an award.

How to apply

Nominations are open from Friday 17 April to Sunday 31 May. Ensure you have read the Terms and Conditions prior to submitting your nomination.

Choosing a category

You may wish to nominate a colleague, friend, family member or manager to recognise them for the outstanding contribution they're making in their school. This nomination guide gives you a breakdown of the eligibility requirements for all categories; be sure to choose the category in which you can most comprehensively address all the selection criteria.

If you need assistance with selecting a category, or don't understand some of the criteria, please email teacherawards@education.nt.gov.au or phone **8922 2150**.

Once you submit your nomination you will receive a confirmation email. The online nomination system allows you to amend your submission up until the closing date.

Endorsement and judging

Nominations will be considered by the principal or line manager of the nominee who can endorse one nomination per category for their school for further consideration.

Progressed nominations will undergo a quality check to ensure that nominees do not have any current performance issues. Performance issues could be identified by Human Resources, the nominee's principal or line manager or the relevant authority.

Announcements

Finalists are expected to be announced in August.

Regional and overall winners will be announced at World Teachers' Day events on **Friday 30 October**.

Categories

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator of the Year

Aboriginal educators and support staff play a significant role in the lives of young Territorians and are exceptional leaders in the classroom and school communities. This award honours the commitment of Aboriginal educators across the Territory who are inspiring their students and creating future success for all Territorians.

Selection criteria

1. Describe how the nominee demonstrates leadership, uses initiative and excels as an educator or support staff member.
2. Describe how the nominee interacts with students and young people, colleagues and the community.
3. Provide examples of how the nominee has contributed to student engagement and achieves positive outcomes for student learning and wellbeing.

Consider the [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership \(AITSL\) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) focus areas below when writing your nomination.

Teachers

1. Know students and how they learn
2. Know the content and how to teach it
3. Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning
4. Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
5. Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
6. Engage in Professional Learning
7. Engage Professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

Principals

1. Leading teaching and learning
2. Developing self and others
3. Leading improvement, innovation and change
4. Leading the management of the school
5. Engaging and working with the community

Corporate Based Person of the Year

This award recognises department corporate staff who provide valuable services to support school based staff. Eligible nominees include DET corporate staff providing support to schools. Can be an individual or a team.

Selection criteria

1. How does the nominee(s) effectively support schools in providing resources and processes assisting school improvement
2. Provide examples of how they contribute to a supportive and productive learning environment that promotes inclusion and collaboration.
3. Provide examples of how the nominee(s) supports school improvement and deliver outstanding results in their school

Inclusion Educator of the Year

This award recognises outstanding educators who embed inclusive practices enabling the inclusion of all children/students access to high quality education, and to learn in a safe and supportive learning environment, so they can reach their potential. This is inclusive of children with a disability, children who exhibit challenging behaviours, children with mental health needs and children who are vulnerable for another reason.

Selection criteria

1. Describe how the nominee demonstrates quality differentiation, provides reasonable adjustments and teaching strategies to meet the individual needs of children.
2. Describe how the nominee demonstrates professional practice by consulting with children/students, families and relevant stakeholders to create a shared understanding, agreed actions and a commitment to action.
3. Provide examples of how the nominee has enabled children/students to achieve their individual goals as independently as possible and become valued members of the school community.

Early Childhood Educator of the Year

This award recognises high-quality educators who exhibit exceptional pedagogical skills and knowledge to engage families and children in supportive learning environments. These educators develop effective and inclusive environments for young Territorians to facilitate children's learning and development and transition them into the primary school education setting.

Selection criteria

1. Describe how the nominee demonstrates professional practice, engagement with children/young learners and excellence in their role.
2. Describe how the nominee collaborates and interacts with children, colleagues, families and the community.
3. Provide examples of how the nominee has contributed to engagement and achieves positive outcomes for child development, learning and wellbeing.

Consider the [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership \(AITSL\) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) focus areas and the [National Quality Standard quality areas](#) when writing your nomination.

ITSL Standards for Teachers

1. Know students and how they learn
2. Know the content and how to teach it
3. Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning
4. Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
5. Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
6. Engage in Professional Learning
7. Engage Professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

National Quality Standard quality areas

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Governance and leadership

Leader in Education of the Year

This award recognises extraordinary leaders who drive performance, innovation and system improvements within schools and the department. It honours professionals who are leaders in school and organisational excellence, and deliver outstanding results for schools, their colleagues and young Territorians.

Selection criteria

1. Describe how the nominee demonstrates leadership and innovation in driving school improvement.
2. Describe how the nominee empowers their colleagues, inspires their students and delivers outstanding results in their school.
3. Provide examples of how the nominee actively contributes to student engagement and achieves positive outcomes for student learning and wellbeing.

Consider the [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership \(AITSL\) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) focus areas and the [National Quality Standard quality areas](#) when writing your nomination.

Teachers

1. Know students and how they learn
2. Know the content and how to teach it
3. Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning
4. Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
5. Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
6. Engage in Professional Learning
7. Engage Professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

National Quality Standard quality areas

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Governance and leadership

Primary Educator of the Year

This award recognises high-quality educators who exhibit exceptional pedagogical skills and knowledge to engage students and young people to be proficient learners in the primary school setting. These educators develop effective and inclusive environments for young Territorians and empower them to engage in learning. This award honours the passion and dedication of primary teachers who are achieving positive outcomes with students and young people.

Selection criteria

1. Describe how the nominee demonstrates professional practice, engagement with young learners and excellence in their role.
2. Describe how the nominee collaborates and interacts with students and young people, colleagues and the community.
3. Provide examples of how the nominee has contributed to engagement and achieves positive outcomes for student learning and wellbeing.

Consider the [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership \(AITSL\) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) focus areas when writing your nomination.

Teachers

1. Know students and how they learn
2. Know the content and how to teach it
3. Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning
4. Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
5. Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
6. Engage in Professional Learning
7. Engage Professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

Principal of the Year

Eligible nominees include principals (level 1-7).

Selection criteria

1. Describe how the nominee demonstrates exemplary leadership and drives improvement, innovation and positive change in their school.
2. Describe how the nominee collaborates and interacts with young Territorians, colleagues and the community to generate outstanding results.
3. Provide examples of how the nominee has led the way for school improvement, contributed to staff development and improved student engagement and wellbeing.

Consider the [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership \(AITSL\) Australian Professional Standards for Principals](#) focus areas when writing your nomination, and the [National Quality Standard quality areas](#) when writing your nomination.

Principals

1. Leading teaching and learning
2. Developing self and others
3. Leading improvement, innovation and change
4. Leading the management of the school
5. Engaging and working with the community

National Quality Standard quality areas

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Governance and leadership

Secondary Educator of the Year

Eligible nominees include middle years and senior secondary teachers (years 7 to 12), senior teachers and vocational education trainers, teachers and coordinators.

Selection criteria

1. Describe how the nominee demonstrates professional knowledge and utilises innovative techniques to structure programs and pathways that are meaningful and inclusive for all students.
2. Describe how the nominee collaborates and interacts with their students, colleagues and the community. Provide evidence of how the nominee has gone above and beyond in supporting students in the relevant pathways.
3. Provide examples of how the nominee has contributed to student engagement and achieved positive outcomes for student learning and wellbeing. Describe how the nominee supports students in accessing any relevant skillsets and training.

Consider the [Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership \(AITSL\) Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) focus areas when writing your nomination.

Teachers

1. Know the students and how they learn
2. Know the content and how to teach it
3. Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning
4. Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments
5. Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning
6. Engage in Professional Learning
7. Engage Professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community

School-based Support Person of the Year

Eligible nominees include aboriginal team teachers, support staff, administration staff, attendance officers, paraprofessionals working in classroom contexts and maintenance staff.

Selection criteria

1. How does the nominee demonstrate effective improvements to student achievement, attendance and wellbeing through provision of their support services?
2. Provide examples of how they contribute to a supportive and productive learning environment that promotes inclusion and collaboration
3. How does the nominee demonstrate outstanding engagement and communication with colleagues, parents/carers and the community in a manner that is inclusive and culturally responsive?

Terms and conditions

World Teachers' Day – NT Excellence Awards 2026

1. WTD NTEA refers to the World Teachers' Day – NT Excellence Awards.
2. WTD NTEA were formerly known as the Teaching in the Territory Excellence Awards.
3. Northern Territory schools are allocated according to regions. The regions are: Barkly, Big Rivers, Central, Darwin, East Arnhem and Top End.
4. Regional category winners of the 2026 WTD NTEA will progress as finalists for the overall NT winner of that category.
5. Eligible principal nominees include principals' level 1-7.
6. Special education teachers can be nominated for other categories, other than the Inclusion Educator of the Year category, if they meet the relevant criteria.
7. All nominees must be employed by the Northern Territory Government and be working in/or a Northern Territory Government school or Corporate Office at the time of nomination.
8. All nominees must have worked as a teacher/trainer/principal or support person in the Northern Territory for the last 3 years or more.
9. All nominees must meet the eligibility criteria for the award category.
10. Teachers, principals and support staff can be nominated in more than one category, if they meet the relevant criteria, however, are only eligible to win one award.
11. A student, parent, colleague, principal, member of the school council or a member of the public can nominate a teacher, support staff member or principal for the WTD NTEA. Self-nomination will not be accepted.
12. Nominations will not be accepted after close of business on Sunday 31 May 2026.
13. Principals must endorse one nominee from their school per category in all categories, excluding the Principal of the Year and Leader in Education of the Year categories.
14. Nominations for the Principal of the Year and Leader in Education of the Year categories go straight to the Senior Director for each region for endorsement.
15. The Northern Territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educator of the Year category is for nominees who are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.
16. The Northern Territory Vocational Education Trainer of the Year category has been combined with the Northern Territory Secondary Educator of the Year category. Please use this category to nominate a Vocational Education Trainer staff member.
17. To be considered, nominees must show a significant personal contribution to improved student outcomes, engagement and wellbeing.
18. Schools/principals can only endorse one nomination per category.
19. Nominees will only be considered if they meet the eligibility criteria for their nominated category and are endorsed by their principal.
20. You may edit your entry after submitting, up until the entry deadline.
21. Failure to comply with the Terms and Conditions may result in nominations not being accepted.

22. The department reserves the right to not award a winner or regional finalist in a category and the judges' decisions are final.
23. Nominations should, as much as possible, limit the disclosure of information which may be considered as confidential.
24. Information pertaining to individual students is confidential and should not be released without the written permission of the parent, guardian or student concerned.
25. No responsibility will be accepted for incomplete, late, damaged, corrupt or non-received entries.
26. Nominations will remain the property of the NTG and may be reproduced in electronic or print format.
27. Regional and NT finalists will be selected based on the information provided in their nomination form for principals' endorsements.
28. All information provided to support a nomination is subject to provisions of the NT Information Act and therefore may be provided to the nominee if requested by them.
29. The Department of Education and Training reserves the right to use the name and photographs, and video or audio recordings of award nominees, finalists and winners for marketing and promotional purposes relating to the awards.