

# SAFE GUARD

The New Zealand Workplace  
Health & Safety Awards 2026

## ENTRY PACK



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Mahi Haumaru Aotearoa

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# ABOUT THE AWARDS

## BACKGROUND

- The NZ Workplace Health & Safety Awards have run each year since 2005
- They are easy to enter, and entry is free
- They are run by Safeguard magazine (published by Thomson Reuters), with the active support of WorkSafe New Zealand and ACC

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE AWARDS?

To celebrate the best health and safety initiatives and the dedicated people working to improve health and safety outcomes in New Zealand.

## WHO JUDGES THE AWARDS?

The panel usually consists of five people, including representatives from Safeguard, WorkSafe New Zealand and a trade union, as well as a health & safety practitioner.

## HOW MANY CATEGORIES ARE THERE?

There are 9 categories for organisations and 6 categories for individuals.

Details of each category appear on pages 6 and 7.

## WHO CAN ENTER?

- Any organisation which operates in New Zealand
- Any person who works in New Zealand
- An organisation can submit multiple entries, so long as each entry describes a substantially different health and safety initiative

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## WHEN ARE THE WINNERS ANNOUNCED?

The awards will be presented at a gala dinner on **23 June 2026** at the Viaduct Events Centre in Auckland, the social highlight of the year for everyone involved in health and safety. The gala dinner coincides with the two-day Safeguard National Health and Safety Conference.

**Finalists receive a complimentary ticket to the dinner.**

## KEY DATES:

<b>ENTRIES OPEN</b>	.....	JANUARY 2026
<b>ENTRIES CLOSE</b>	.....	1 APRIL 2026
<b>FINALISTS NOTIFIED</b>	.....	4 MAY 2026
<b>GALA DINNER</b>	.....	23 JUNE 2026

Thinking of submitting an entry into an **organisational category**? Don't forget to enter the people behind the initiative into an **individual category**.

# WHY ENTER?

## OPPORTUNITY FOR REFLECTION

The act of writing and submitting an entry is an opportunity to pause, put day-to-day matters to one side, and reflect on what has worked well over the last year or so, and the lessons learned. This process of critical analysis is valuable in evaluating your strengths (and ongoing challenges) in health and safety — and may spur further improvements.

## PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF GOOD WORK

The successful initiatives or personal qualities of all finalists are acknowledged publicly at the gala dinner in front of a large audience of influential experts, executives and politicians. Further acknowledgement occurs as part of a post-awards media campaign.

## ENGAGEMENT

Finalists and winners have the opportunity to acknowledge and reward the efforts of the teams and individuals involved, which is an opportunity to reinforce key messages to staff and others across your supply chain around health and safety engagement.

## NETWORKING AND LEARNING

Finalist or not, the gala dinner provides great learning and networking opportunities for people at all levels, from frontline workers to directors.



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# HOW TO ENTER

## HOW SHOULD I WRITE AN ENTRY FOR ONE OF THE ORGANISATIONAL CATEGORIES?

We suggest you answer the following questions:

- What does the organisation do?  
(eg: industry sector, size, key activities)
- What specific issue or problem did you face?  
(include the risks involved)
- What solution did you come up with  
to solve the problem?
- When did you start work on this initiative?
- Within the last 24 months, what evidence is there  
that your initiative has been successful?
- What learning took place?

## HOW SHOULD I WRITE AN ENTRY FOR ONE OF THE INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES?

We suggest you answer the following questions  
about the person you nominate:

- How do you know the nominee?
- What does the nominee's organisation do?  
(eg: industry sector, size, key activities)
- What is the nominee's role?
- Why have you nominated this person?
- What has the individual achieved **within the last 24 months** that has made a difference to the  
health and safety of their organisation or industry?

## HOW LONG SHOULD AN ENTRY BE?

Most entries should be able to be described in no more  
than **three or four A4 pages**.

## CAN I ENTER MORE THAN ONE INITIATIVE OR NOMINATE MORE THAN ONE PERSON?

Yes, so long as you submit each one as a new entry on  
the website.

## I'M NOT SURE WHICH CATEGORY TO ENTER. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Pick the category you think best fits your initiative, but  
don't worry about getting it wrong — the judges reserve  
the right to move your entry to a different category.

## WHAT IS THE ENTRY PROCESS?

Entrants are encouraged to submit their entries in PDF  
format on the Safeguard website.

[www.safeguard.co.nz/awards](http://www.safeguard.co.nz/awards)

Each entry requires:

- Completion of the online entry form
- Upload the entry itself

Alternatively, entrants can submit their entries in PDF  
format via email to:

[safeguardawards@thomsonreuters.com](mailto:safeguardawards@thomsonreuters.com)

## CAN I SUPPLY SUPPORTING MATERIAL?

If you have essential supporting evidence which  
cannot be sent via PDF (eg: video or physical objects  
closely related to the entry) then please email  
[safeguardawards@thomsonreuters.com](mailto:safeguardawards@thomsonreuters.com) with the details.

## ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS?

Please contact us via email:

[safeguardawards@thomsonreuters.com](mailto:safeguardawards@thomsonreuters.com)

Or by phone to Annette Vao, 021 247 7144.

**ENTRIES CLOSE 5pm, 1 April 2026**

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# JUDGING

**The judges will consider the following factors. They do not expect every factor to apply to each entry, so do not worry if some factors do not apply to your initiative or nominee.**

## FOR THE ORGANISATIONAL CATEGORIES:

- A.** Credible detail (is the initiative sufficiently well described?)
- B.** Risk reduction (to what extent has people's health or safety benefited?)
- C.** Innovation (how clever/original is this?)
- D.** Beyond compliance (how much beyond 'business as usual'?)
- E.** Wider application (could others adopt this initiative?)
- F.** Organisation size (how does this rate given the resources available?)
- G.** Time period (was the initiative mostly done within the last 24 months?)

## FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES:

- A.** Made a difference (how have their actions specifically benefited people?)
- B.** Exceeded expectations (to what extent have they gone the extra mile?)
- C.** Inspired others (have they encouraged others to engage in health & safety?)
- D.** Time period (have their actions taken place in the last 24 months?)

## ABOUT THE JUDGING

- The judges assess each entry using the criteria on the left
- They reserve the right to move an entry to a different category
- They accept each entry on good faith as a fair and accurate description. However they have the ability to contact the entry's nominated referee to seek clarification
- The judges' deliberations are confidential. No correspondence will be entered into
- This means that we are unable to give any feedback on reasons why an entry may not have been successful

## HOW DO THE JUDGES MANAGE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST?

We need to manage potential conflicts of interest between members of the judging panel and the entries they are asked to consider. At the same time, we do not wish to discourage entries from organisations with which judges may be associated in some way.

We ask judges to declare any personal association, however remote, with an award entry.

Typical potential conflicts of interest include:

- The judge was directly involved in an Organisational category initiative.
- The judge's organisation substantially funded an Organisational category initiative.
- The judge is a friend or colleague of an Individual category nominee.

Where the panel is alerted to a conflict of interest, the judge concerned may speak to the entry but must leave the judging room while the remaining judges determine if the entry will become a category finalist or winner.

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# AWARD CATEGORIES

**Entries in all Organisational and Individual categories – except Lifetime Achievement – are expected to describe specific recent initiatives, that is, initiatives which have occurred in the 24 months prior to the Awards year. Vendors of products for the H&S market should enter the Innovation category or encourage a client to enter one of the other organisational categories.**

## ORGANISATIONAL

### Category 1: Safety

For an initiative which addresses a specific work-related safety risk.

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### Category 2: Health

For an initiative which addresses a specific work-related health risk.

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### Category 3: Wellbeing

For an initiative which seeks to improve the mental and/or physical health of workers.

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### Category 4: Engagement

For an initiative which successfully engages workers in seeking to improve health, safety and wellbeing at work.

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### Category 5: Innovation

For the development of a New Zealand design or technology which eliminates or manages a risk to safety, health or wellbeing at work.

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### Category 6: Safety-II

Best example of a successful initiative inspired by the principles of Safety-II/Safety Differently/HOP.

### Category 7: Collaboration

Best example of collaboration between two or more PCBUs who have collaborated on handling a shared risk to both sets of workers to achieve successful health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

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### Category 8: Governance

Best initiative by a board, or by others in support of a board, to improve health & safety governance.

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### Category 9: Leadership

For leadership of initiatives which have helped improve workplace health, safety, wellbeing or recovery at work across an industry sector or geographic region.

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# AWARD CATEGORIES CONT.

## INDIVIDUAL

### Category 10: Practitioner

Recognises an individual in a paid H&S role whose work over the last 24 months has significantly influenced health and safety practice and outcomes in their organisation.

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### Category 11: Emerging practitioner

As for practitioner, but restricted to people aged under 35 as at 31 March 2026, AND who have less than five years' experience in a paid H&S role.

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### Category 12: Representative

Open to elected H&S representatives whose efforts to influence and persuade have led to demonstrable positive changes in their organisation's approach to health, safety and wellbeing.

### Category 13: Mental health champion

Recognises an individual who has effectively championed mental wellbeing in their organisation.

### Category 14: Leader

Open to senior executives or directors who are not health, safety and wellbeing practitioners but whose leadership has helped transform their organisation's approach to health, safety and wellbeing.

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## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

This special award gives the judges the opportunity to recognise a person who has devoted a significant portion of their working life to advancing the cause of health and safety in New Zealand, and whose achievements have benefited many people, regionally or nationally.

To nominate someone for this award, please submit a citation of no more than 500 words which answers these questions: How do you know the nominee? What do you consider the nominee's #1 achievement (be specific)? What effect did this achievement have? (Repeat for any further achievements).

Please do not advise the nominee that he or she has been nominated. Note that it is in the nature of lifetime achievement awards that they are given to people who are in the latter stages of their career. The judges may hold nominations over for consideration in future years.

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## SUPREME WINNER

Best overall contribution to improving workplace health & safety in New Zealand.

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*(Selected from the winners of the Organisational categories.)*

## JUDGES' COMMENDATIONS

Commendations may be awarded to entries that are of particular merit, but do not comfortably sit in any of the existing categories. A maximum of two Commendations may be awarded.

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## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Entries received after the closing date will not be accepted.
- Entries for designs and/or inventions must be the entrant organisation's original concept, over which the organisation or entrant has intellectual property rights.
- Entries which the judges believe to be false, exaggerated or unverifiable will not be rewarded.
- The judges have complete discretion in determining finalists and winners. Their decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.
- Thomson Reuters reserves the right to publicly revoke an award or withdraw a finalist should we learn of information that, had it been disclosed to the judges, would have materially affected the panel's decision.
- The assessment, conduct and results of the awards shall not create any legal obligations or duties between entrants and Thomson Reuters and any Awards sponsor.
- A correctly completed entry form is required to accompany each entry.
- An award entry may be withdrawn from consideration only by the person who submitted it.
- Entrants are expected to have all necessary approvals from within their organisation to enter.
- For the individual categories (not including Lifetime Achievement), if a person is nominated by someone outside the nominee's organisation, we reserve the right to inform the nominee's organisation that they have been nominated. We also reserve the right to show the nominee's organisation the entry. This is in line with our 'no surprises' policy.
- All entries are regarded as confidential and will not be passed on to third parties; however, initiatives of category winners and finalists may be described in summary or in detail at the awards dinner and in Safeguard magazine or other Thomson Reuters publications.
- All category winners are expected to work with Safeguard and Awards sponsors to help publicise their achievements, and agree to participate in publicity activities following the award presentations.
- This is likely to include being interviewed by a Safeguard journalist who will write a story for publication in Safeguard magazine. In accordance with standard media industry parameters around story approval, any alterations suggested by the award winner or finalist will be limited to errors of fact only and will be delivered within the time limits required to meet publication deadlines.
- Thomson Reuters is not responsible for any loss or damage to entries. Entries will not be returned once submitted.
- An award does not constitute an endorsement by Thomson Reuters, WorkSafe New Zealand, ACC or any other sponsor.
- Sponsor organisations, or their representatives, are not permitted to enter the category which they sponsor.

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