



Surf Life Saving Australia - Circular

Title:	2025 SLSA Awards of Excellence
Document	Circular 48/2024-2025
Audience:	Education, Lifesaving, Sport, Club Volunteers, Presidents, Secretaries, Coaches, Officials,
From:	SLSA Lifesaving, Surf Sports, Learning and Development
Date:	26 February 2025
Subject:	2024-2025 SLSA National Awards of Excellence Information
Summary:	This circular contains information about the 2024/25 National Recognition Awards for nominees and selection panels. The circular provides links to online forms for State/Territories to complete for their category winners.

The purpose of these awards is to recognise and reward members who have made an outstanding contribution to the delivery and development of surf lifesaving activities.

This year's awards will be presented at the SLSA Awards of Excellence function on Saturday, 8 November 2025, in Sydney, venue to be confirmed.

Applications for each award close on dates specified by Branches and States/Territories. States/Territories are to submit nominations to SLSA no later than Friday 29 August 2025.

Please note only the SLSA online nomination forms will be accepted. Please click on the **ONLINE LINK** submit your nomination.

Any submissions made after these dates will not be accepted.

Application closing dates:

Branches: As identified by relevant
Branch State/Territory: As identified by relevant State/Territory
SLSA: No later than 29 August 2025

Section 1 – General Conditions

General notes

- All nominees must be SLSA financial members (or affiliated organisations). Nominations should focus on activities during the 2024/25 Surf Life Saving season, from 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025.
- Where ages are mentioned, this refers to the members age as at 30 September in the 2024/25 season.
- Winners may be called upon to act as ambassadors of Surf Life Saving, both within the organisation and to external audiences.
- Paid employees at any level may nominate for the awards listed. However, paid service will only be counted if nominating for the Lifeguard of the Year and Coach of the Year award – all other awards recognise voluntary contributions only. Unless otherwise specified, these awards are in recognition of individual achievements, team submissions will not be considered.
- SLSA will accept one award from each State/Territory, per category to ensure the process is streamlined and transparent.
- If you require further support, enquiries should be directed to state/territory centres or to: SLSA, officereception@slsa.asn.au

Guidelines for submission

- States/Territories are required to complete and submit an **ONLINE LINK** Form by 29 August 2025. No nominations will be accepted via email or post.
- States/Territories must follow the nomination process for the relevant award (found in Section 3 of the circular).
- Nominations are to include a digital profile image of the nominee (for the individual awards) or logo (for 'Club of the Year' and 'Community Education Program of the Year') via the online nomination form. **Please ensure all nominee photographs are from the shoulders up and of a high-resolution quality. Please wear a club shirt or patrol uniform, no 'selfies'.**
- Clubs are to send their completed nominations to the respective Branch and/or State/Territory by the closing date specified by each State office. State/Territory winners will be submitted online to SLSA as finalists for consideration for the national award.

Selection Process

- All finalists for the national award will go through a volunteer selection panel which will involve a review of applications.
- Finalists for the 'Surf Lifesaver of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Youth Surf Lifesaver of the Year and Club of the Year will be required to participate in a face-to-face interview or presentation (Club of the Year only); details of which will be available following the close of nominations. The selection panel will determine a winner from both a review of the application and the interview.

Section 2 – Summary of Awards

Surf Lifesaver of the Year

An active patrolling member who has made an outstanding contribution to the delivery and development of surf lifesaving frontline services.

Youth Surf Lifesaver of the Year

An active patrolling member (between the ages of 15-21, this refers to the members age as at 29 September in the 2024/25 season) who has made an outstanding contribution to the delivery and development of surf lifesaving frontline services.

Lifeguard of the Year

An Australian Lifeguard Service Lifeguard who has made an outstanding contribution to the delivery and development of lifeguard services.

Volunteer of the Year*

An impressive member who has made a difference through their volunteering efforts.

Club of the Year

An outstanding SLS-affiliated club that is committed to improving the experience of its members, providing a safer environment for the community, and improving club operations.

Athlete of the Year**

An athlete aged 15 or older who has achieved sporting excellence in Open Aged Competition.

Youth Athlete of the Year** An athlete aged between 15-18 (this refers to the members age as at 30 September in the 2024/25 season) who has achieved sporting excellence in Youth and/or Open Aged Competition.

Surf Sport Team of the Year The 37th edition of Surf Sport Manual defines a team as an event that is contested by more than one competitor from the same club or lifesaving unit who may either complete an event or race together as a discrete unit (e.g., boat race, IRB race, surf teams, R&R, double surf ski team etc.) or separately (e.g., relay events, board rescue etc.).

Coach of the Year

An accredited coach who has made a significant contribution to athlete performance at a state, national and/or international level, to the development of athletes in SLS activities outside of surf sports, and to the educational development of other coaches in SLS.

Official of the Year

An accredited surf sports official who has made a significant contribution to both officiating at a state, national and/or international level, and to the educational development of other officials in SLS.

Trainer of the Year

An endorsed Trainer who is passionate about building the skills of others, consistently delivers a positive learning experience, and who encourages other members to engage in the delivery of training.

Assessor of the Year

An endorsed Assessor who is passionate about building the skills of others, consistently delivers a positive and supportive assessment experience, and who encourages other members to engage in training or assessment.

Community Education Program of the Year

A non-commercial activity or program that is targeted to non-members who are an identified at-risk group within the community. The purpose should contribute significantly to the organisation's mission of saving lives, creating great Australians and building better communities.

Innovation Award***

A well-researched concept, piece of equipment, program or event which is/has been implemented to improve any facet of Surf Life Saving.

Rules

*Applications that focus on significant achievements in one particular area may not be considered if this area is also covered by other awards (e.g., Lifesaver, Coach, Official, Trainer and Assessor of the Year).

**A youth aged competitor (i.e., aged 15 to 18 years as at 29 September in a 2024/25 season) may be nominated for both the Athlete of the Year and Youth Athlete of the Year. However, only results achieved in Open Age Events and Open Age Team representation are considered for Athlete of the Year Award.

*** The innovation may have been developed in conjunction with an external body/sponsor but must be owned by a member or group of members of an affiliated SLS club.

Section 3 – Nomination Process

Volunteer and Program/Innovation Awards

Refer to **Section 2** for the summary of each award.

- Surf Lifesaver of the Year
- Youth Surf Lifesaver of the Year
- Volunteer of the Year
- Lifeguard of the Year
- Assessor of the Year
- Trainer of the Year
- Community Education Program of the Year
- Innovation Award

How to nominate for the above awards:

Complete the [ONLINE LINK](#) and answer the three questions below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. Tell us about the member/individual or program/innovation being nominated.
2. What has been achieved?
3. What impact has this had, and for whom?

For Surf Lifesaver and Youth Surf Lifesaver of the Year awards, nominations require patrol hours to be uploaded for the 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/2025 season (extracted from Surf Guard).

When showcasing the member, you may want to consider the questions below to boost the quality of your nomination...

- What relevant positions, roles or responsibilities do they hold?
- Have they done something in response to an identified need or problem?
- Have they done something new or different to achieve results?
- Have they inspired others to think or to do things differently?
- Have they had to overcome any challenges to make a difference or achieve success?
- Do they model positive and supportive attitudes, behaviours and actions?

When showcasing the achievements of member, programs or innovations, you may want to consider the questions below to boost the quality of your nomination...

- What was the motivation or research which drove the program/innovation?
- What were the aims and objectives?
- What did it look like (location, duration, resources required etc.)?
- How was it evaluated to ensure it achieved its aims and objectives?
- Were there any challenges which needed to be overcome to achieve success?
- You may wish to attach photographs, include links to any promotional material created or media coverage received.

Club of the Year Award

To nominate for the Club of the Year award:

Complete the [ONLINE LINK](#) attaching your club's strategic and/or operational plan and membership statistics, and provide a response to the five questions below (each answer no more than 400 words).

1. Tell us the story of your club.
2. What has your club achieved over the last 12 months (2024/2025 season)?
3. Why have the achievements made a difference at your club, and to whom, and how did you bring the club members on the journey?
4. What are your plans for future development and continuous improvement at your club?
5. What is ONE lesson that your club can share with other SLS clubs both here in Australia and internationally?

When showcasing your club's achievements, consider the questions below to support your nomination...

- How does your club support the SLS 2025 Strategic Plan?
- What new initiatives, programs or events did your club implement in the last 12 months (season 2024/2025) -that extended your strategic objectives? How did you identify the need for this?
- How does your club deliver sustainability and improvement measures across the areas of governance, leadership, development, community engagement (or community support initiatives), plus the delivery of lifesaving services?
- What, if any, challenges did the club have to overcome to achieve this success?
- How does your club management team model a positive and supportive culture, behaviours and actions?
- You may wish to attach any photographs, reference letters or media coverage that relate to your nomination.

Note:

If your club has been a successful Club of the Year at a Branch, State or National level in the past five (5) years, please note this on your nomination."

Please attach the Club's Strategic Plan and season 2024/2025 and season membership statistics

Sport Awards

- Athlete of the Year
- Youth Athlete of the Year
- Surf Sport Team of the Year
- Official of the Year
- Coach of the Year

How to nominate for these awards

Complete the [ONLINE LINK](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words)

Athlete of the Year

How to nominate for the above awards:

Complete the [ONLINE LINK](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. Has the athlete competed in any representative teams (including international competition) during the 24/25 season? If so, please list the team and how they contributed to the success of the team?
2. List the competition results achieved by the athlete in the 24/25 season at championship carnivals or major surf sports events?
3. In the 24/25 season how is the athlete a positive role model, a good sportsperson and/or an ambassador for Surf Life Saving? How do they contribute to broader lifesaving activities and engage with other members (including juniors or mentoring)?
4. Does the athlete hold any coaching and/or officiating qualifications?

Youth Athlete of the Year

How to nominate for the above awards:

Complete the [ONLINE LINK](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. List the competition results achieved by the Youth Athlete in the 24/25 season at championship carnivals or major surf sports events?
2. Has the Youth Athlete competed in any representative teams (including international competition, if relevant) during the 24/25 season? If so, please list the team and how they contributed to the success of the team?
3. In the 24/25 season how is the youth athlete a positive role model, a good sportsperson and/or an ambassador for Surf Life Saving? Do they contribute to broader lifesaving activities and engage with other members (including juniors, mentoring, coaching or officiating)?

Surf Sport Team of the Year

How to nominate for the above awards:

Complete the [ONLINE LINK](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. List the competition results achieved by the Team in the 24/25 season at championship carnivals or major surf sports events?
2. Has the Team competed as a Branch/State or National representative team during the 24/25 season? If so, please list the events?

3. In the 24/25 season how has the Team been positive role models and shown good sportsmanship and/or been good ambassadors for Surf Life Saving? Do they contribute to broader lifesaving activities and engage with other members (including juniors)?

Official of the Year

How to nominate for the above awards:

Complete the [ONLINE LINK](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. What officiating qualification does the member currently hold, Core, Technical or Senior Official?
2. List the member's officiating roles they have fulfilled during the season at Club, Branch, State, National and International level (where applicable).
3. Describe the Officials achievements during the 24/25 season, including examples, areas of achievement may be in mentoring, training, documentation and process, new programs, solving problems etc.
4. Please provide examples of how the official adheres to and is a role model of the values of SLSA, Surf Sports and the SLSA Match Fixing Policy.
5. List any training or development the official has undertaken this season to improve themselves and their impact.

Coach of the Year

How to nominate for the above awards:

Complete the [ONLINE LINK](#) and answer the questions listed below (with each answer no more than 400 words).

1. What coaching qualification does the member currently hold, Foundation, Development or Performance Coach?
2. What coaching roles has the member fulfilled during the 24/25 season at Club, Branch (where applicable), State, National and International Level?
3. List the competition results attributed to the coach, where this member was the primary coach for the athlete and/or team, in the 24/25 season.
4. Has the coach been involved in any mentoring and development of other coaches, creating of supporting documentation and/or programs. Please provide examples of where the coach has shown a positive and supportive attitude, behaviour and actions (including who it has impacted and how) in the 24/25 season?
5. Has the coach undertaken any personal development to improve themselves as a coach in the 24/25 season?