Rotary
District 9800

2025-
2026

Excellence in Education Awards

Guidelines and Templates for Clubs on how to establish an "Excellence in Education Awards" Program

Rotary District 9800

Vocational Service: Excellence in Education Awards

Overview

Introduction

Vocational Service

Through Vocational Service we:

1. *Serve Others by using our unique skills to address community needs.*
2. *Empower others through training and skill development.*
3. *Inspire Others to act with integrity by following Rotary's guiding principles.*

Establishing and/or participating in an *Excellence in Education Awards Program* enables Clubs to meet the third aspect of Vocational Service -

Inspire Others to act with integrity by following Rotary's guiding principles.

The following is a template/guideline on how to establish an "Excellence in Education Awards" program based on the successful program established by Rotary Altona City in 2018.

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Mailbox

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Front Cover

President Lenore Thornton (School Principal-retired) with four early career teacher awardees and PDG Julie Mason (School Principal-retired).

Rotary District 9800

Summary

Background

- Founded as a business networking organization, Rotary emphasizes the importance of bringing together business and professional leaders for the purposes of exchanging ideas, developing relationships, and improving communities.
- Rotary Vocational Service Awards may be used to recognize distinguished service to the community and dedication to vocational services.
- Past District Governor Julie Mason, a highly experienced Victorian Educator, proposed "Rotary Excellence in Education Awards," covering a City/Rotary Cluster, to recognize and encourage outstanding performance in local schools.

Objectives

- Recognise and honour outstanding performance in local schools (both as individuals and teams).
- Encourage early career stage teachers, experienced teachers, and outstanding teamwork in Schools.
- Develop opportunities for increased collaboration between Rotary and Schools, increase Rotary visibility, attract new members.

General Approach

- Invite local schools to nominate Teachers and/or support staff to be recognized at an Event organized and hosted by Rotary.
- Rotary Vocational Service Award Certificates to be presented to successful nominees at the Event, e.g., by Local Mayor, Dignitary, or Rotarian.
- Event to be promoted to local Media and via Rotary Club Newsletters & Websites.

Award Categories

- Encouragement Awards: for early career stage teachers (e.g. < 5-years).
- Achievement Awards: for more experienced teachers.
- Team Awards: where a group of teachers or support staff have collaborated effectively to address an important challenge or new development for a school.

Nominations

Nominations may include:

- Concise citations plus supplementary background, where appropriate, including photos of nominees for use in preparing an Event Program.
- Team awards: a 1-3 min video showcasing the Team's achievements.

Continued on next page

Summary, Continued

Key Success Factors

- Support by School Principals and their leadership teams.
- Timing: Invite nominations 5-6 weeks before end of Term 3, with nominations due before end of Term 3. Allow 4 weeks min. for Schools to respond. Hold an Awards Event early in 4th term.
- Nomination of individual classroom teachers may be challenging for schools. People in leadership or specialist roles in a large school may be more readily identifiable.
- Encouragement awards for early career stage teachers and team awards for teaching and support staff are proving popular with schools.
- Provide flexibility for Schools to submit nominations relevant to their circumstances.
- The Rotary Excellence in Education Awards program is not a competitive program between schools. Rather, it may encourage collaboration between schools by celebrating their achievements.
- Celebration Event: Good MC, Keynote Speaker & souvenir program.
- Publicise Event: e.g. local Media Channels and club website.

Celebration Event Options

- A Rotary Club meeting- more personal & networking.
- A "ZOOM Event"- backup option implemented during COVID lockdowns- potential for more participation of family & friends of recipients.

Rotary Vocational Service Award Certificates

Testimonials

Rebecca Fry (Keynote Speaker)

Rotarian and Founder, Rotary Fellowship for Leadership Education and Development, RYLA Oceania.

Twenty years ago, my year 11 Chemistry Teacher opened a door I didn't even know existed. She mentioned a science camp and looked at me like I was the kind of person (nerd) who'd say yes.
The message of my talk "From Chemistry Student to changemaker" was simple: "**Teachers are the spark. Communities like Rotary are the oxygen. Together, they create the reactions that change lives."**
A huge thank you to every teacher who continues to light a spark for the next generation. You may never see where your influence goes, but it never ends.

Melissa Horne (MP and Vic. Govt Cabinet Minister)

It was an honour to present this year's Vocational Award Certificates to teachers and support staff nominated by leadership teams at Hobsons Bay secondary schools at the Altona City Rotary Club's Excellence in Education Awards night.
Congratulations to everyone who has reached this massive milestone. Our teachers deserve recognition for the work that they do to better the lives of their students and improve the future of our community.

(from Melissa's Report to Victorian Parliament)

PDG Dr Murray Verso, October 2018

"The Awards Night was a great initiative by the Altona City Rotary Club. The outstanding work of our best teachers often goes unheralded. The dinner enabled the wider community to gain some insight into how four exceptional teachers were having positive impacts on the students in their schools. It was inspiring stuff."

Hobsons Bay Mayor, Cr Jonathon Marsden, October 2019

"Rotary Clubs in Hobsons Bay have a long history of supporting the local community and we are blessed with several local clubs that truly make a difference. Council is proud to have a strong relationship with Rotary. From partnering on sporting events and children's programs to working together on environmental projects – Rotary is a powerful force for good in our community."

"We congratulate the wonderful teachers who are shaping the minds of our future and look forward to working together with Rotary to strengthen and benefit Hobsons Bay."

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Examples of Excellence in Education Awards

Introduction

Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 below illustrate:

- Encouragement awards for early career stage teachers.
- Achievement awards for experienced teachers.
- Team Awards for teachers and education support staff.

Fig. 1: Encouragement Awards for Early Career Stage Teachers

Caption

Honouring Early Career Stage Teachers from 4 Hobsons Bay Secondary Schools:
Left to right: PDG Michael Lapina, Grace (Williamstown High School), Sam and Hannah (Emmanuel College), Peter and Isabella (Bayside College), Nadia and Stephanie (Altona P-12 College) and Hon. Melissa Horne, MP for Williamstown and Vic. Cabinet Minister.

Common Themes

Common themes reflected in these encouragement awards included dedication to students' learning and well-being, acceptance of responsibility, impact, collaboration with colleagues, openness to feedback plus a commitment to continuous improvement.

Comments by PDG Julie Mason

- Rotarian PDG Julie Mason, school principal (retired) and founder of the awards program, say teachers are more likely to stay if they feel valued.
- "Schools will suffer if we don't hang onto new teachers. In Victoria, there's a significant gap between the number of teachers required and those being trained. These awards provide a deep affirmation as awardees are nominated by their school leadership teams and recognised publicly at the awards dinner, as showcased above."

Continued on next page

Examples of Excellence in Education Awards, Continued

Fig. 2: Achievement Awards for Experienced Teachers

Caption

L-R: President Lenore Thornton, Marc (Emmanuel College), Greta (Emmanuel College), Rhett (Altona P-12 College), Rotary District Governor Michael Lapina.

Summary of 2024 Nominations

Individual achievement awards were presented to:

- Physical education teacher Rhett from Altona P-12 College who's supported thousands of students in developing a love for healthy active living.
- Teacher Greta from Emmanuel College Notre Dame Campus, fosters a positive and inclusive learning environment in technology, and demonstrates transformative leadership.
- Year 11 and 12 teacher Marc from Emmanuel College St Paul's Campus delivered a range of awareness building and outreach programs.

Continued on next page

Examples of Excellence in Education Awards, Continued

Fig. 3: Team Award: Bayside College's New Metrics Team

Caption

L-R: Rotary District Governor Michael Lapina, Suzanne (Campus Principal), Samuel (Campus Principal), Darren (Leading Teacher- STEM), Rotary President Lenore Thornton.

Summary of Nomination

- Bayside P-12's team was recognised by Rotary for their contributions to #New Metrics.
- This is an invitation only research partnership between innovative schools in Australia and New Zealand, along with the University of Melbourne.
- The partnership is leading a global movement seeking improved ways to teach, assess and report on complex competencies that learners need to thrive throughout school and beyond.

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Examples of Excellence in Education Awards, Continued

Fig. 4: Team Award: Williamstown High School- Administration Team

Caption	**L-R:** Melissa Horne (MP) Amanda, Leanne, Rhiannon, Past President Lenore Thornton (School Principal- retired).
Team Nomination (as submitted)	These three incredible staff members work seamlessly together to ensure the daily operations of Williamstown High School's Pasco Campus runs smoothly, calmly, and efficiently. They are, quite simply, the A-Team. Rhiannon, Leanne and Amanda create a consistently welcoming atmosphere for students, staff, families and visitors. Their professionalism, kindness and commitment underpin everything that happens on campus. Whether it's managing the flow of the day, supporting student wellbeing, or assisting staff with countless administrative tasks, they do it all with warmth and unwavering dedication. They are highly process-driven, constantly reviewing and refining how things work to improve efficiency and clarity for all. Their communication is excellent, both within their team and across the wider staff, and they are always willing to cover for each other, assist others, and go the extra mile, often without being asked. The Administration Team's work is often behind the scenes, but it is absolutely essential to the functioning of our school. Their diligence, adaptability, and collaborative spirit make them worthy recipients of recognition through the Rotary Education Team Award.

Rotary District 9800

Example Invitation Letter to Schools

Introduction This invitation letter was used in 2025.

Rotary Altona City | UNITE FOR GOOD

21 July 2025

Subject: 2025 Hobsons Bay Rotary Education Awards: Invitation to Nominate

Dear Principal

The Rotary Club of Altona City will host the Hobsons Bay "Excellence in Education" Awards in 2025. We invite you to nominate members of your Staff for these awards by **Friday 12 September.**
Successful nominees are to be recognised at a Rotary Recognition Dinner on Tuesday 21 October 2025 at Kooringal Golf Club (Wilga Avenue, Altona) at 6.00pm for 6.30pm.

Award Categories:

1. **Encouragement Awards:** for early career stage teachers.
2. **Achievement Awards:** for more experienced teachers.
3. **Team Awards:** Where a group of teachers or support staff have collaborated effectively to address an important challenge or new development for a School.

Submission of Nominations:

- **Citations:** Please submit concise citations for each nomination which could be read at the recognition event on 21 October. For Team awards, consider outlining the situation, the team's response, key outcomes, and key learnings that could be shared.
- **Photos:** please include a hi-res photo of each individual nominee, and of the Team for a team nomination. Please ensure that the name is clear on the relevant photo for each citation.
- **Examples of awards from previous years:** Our website (www.altonacityrotary.org.au) highlights the 2024 Education Awards. Each school knows best what is relevant and appropriate at a particular school.
- **Timing:** Please send nominations to bgoodwin@bigpond.com by **Friday 12 September 2025**.

Rotary Recognition Dinner Meeting (21 October 2025):

- Hon. Melissa Horne (MP, Williamstown) has been invited to present the awards.
- Keynote Speaker: Rebecca Fry: "From Chemistry Class to Changemaker." Flyer attached.
- Awardees will be our non-paying guests. Others are welcome at a cost of $50.00pp for a two-course meal. Drinks at bar prices. (RSVPs to B Goodwin by Tuesday 14 October).

We look forward to your nominations.
Sincerely

Bryan Goodwin, Vocational Director
(M: 0499 999 469;
E: bgoodwin@bigpond.com)

Jan Douglas (Past President)
(M: 0414 566 999;
E: douglas_print@bigpond.com

QR Code for Altona City Rotary Website:

Example Flyer

Introduction This is the 2025 promotional flyer.

Rotary Altona City | UNITE FOR GOOD

HOBSONS BAY EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARDS

21 October 2025
6.00 for 6.30 PM
Kooringal Golf Club
Wilga Ave, Altona

RSVP by 14 October to
bgoodwin@bigpond.com
M: 0499 999 469

2-courses, alternating drop
Drinks at bar prices

Prepayment of $50.00 per head to
BSB: 633 000
Acc: 145157368

Keynote: Rebecca Fry

"From Chemistry Class to Changemaker"

Rotarian Rebecca Fry is a leadership and strategy facilitator, coach, and speaker passionate about helping people thrive. With over 15 years of experience designing and delivering transformative leadership programs across Australia and New Zealand, Rebecca brings deep expertise in creating spaces that honour people's strengths and contributions. As the founder of the Rotary Fellowship for Leadership Education and Development, RYLA Oceania, and her own consultancy, she works with schools, organisations, communities, government, and emerging leaders to drive meaningful impact. Most recently, she developed the Changemakers Launchpad program in partnership with the City of Sydney.

Rebecca is honoured to be keynote speaker for this year's Excellence in Education Awards and celebrating those who shape our future through education.

Example Awards Program

Introduction 2025 Awards Program (front page).

Rotary Altona City and Proudly supporting your Community Community Bank · Altona and Laverton Bendigo Bank

present

THE 2025 HOBSONS BAY EDUCATION EXCELLENCE AWARDS

21 October 2025 at Kooringal Golf Club

The Awards:

ENCOURAGEMENT AWARDS for early career stage teachers.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS for those with more experience.

TEAM AWARDS recognising groups of teachers or education support staff who have collaborated effectively to address important challenges or new initiatives.

The process:

Awardees are nominated by school leadership teams and recognised publicly, providing deep affirmation.

Program

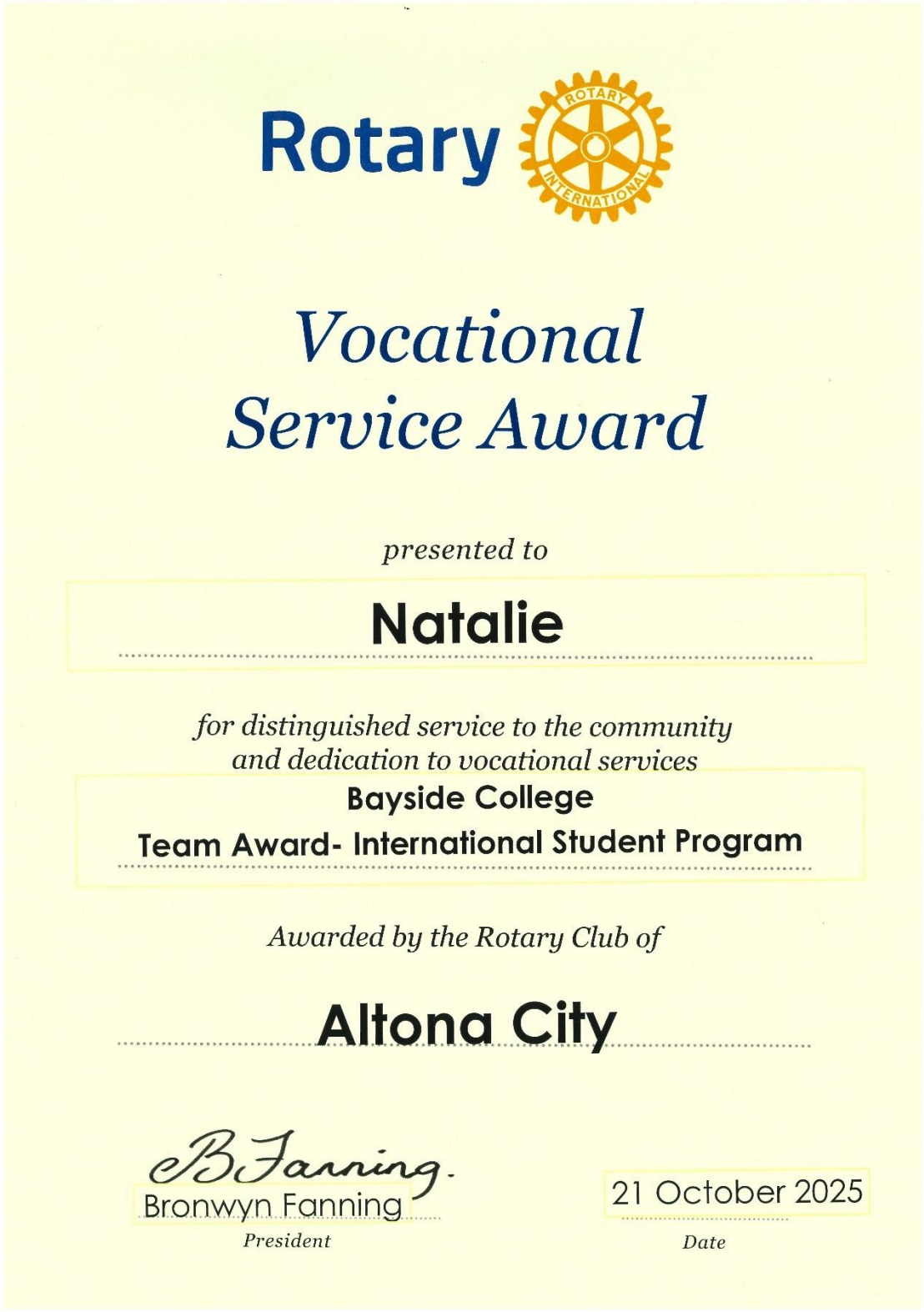
6.30pm	Opening	MC Danny Civitico - Past President RCAC
	Welcome	Bronwyn Fanning – President of Rotary Altona City
6.40	Toast to Rotary	Rotary District 9800 District Governor – Peter Shepheard
6.45	Keynote	Rebecca Fry: from Chemistry class to Changemaker
7.05	**Dinner**	
7.40	Encouragement Awards	Past District Governor Julie Mason AM
8.05	Achievement Awards	Rotarian RCAC and Retired Principal Anne Morton
8.15	**Dessert**	
8.30	Team Awards	Past President RCAC Lenore Thornton
9.00	Closing Remarks	Hon. Melissa Horne MP

Rotary Altona City | UNITE FOR GOOD https://www.altonacityrotary.org.au

Rotary District 9800

Rotary Vocational Service Award Certificate

Introduction This example is for a Team Award. Adapt for other award categories.



Rotary

Vocational Service Award

presented to

Natalie

for distinguished service to the community and dedication to vocational services

Bayside College

Team Award- International Student Program

Awarded by the Rotary Club of

Altona City

B Fanning.

Bronwyn Fanning

President

21 October 2025

Date

Rotary District 9800

Example STEAM Award Nomination Form

Introduction The example below is a specific nomination form for a STEAM Teacher.

Rotary Richmond

Rotary Club of Richmond – Excellence in Education Award 2025

Nomination Form – Outstanding Teacher in STEAM Award

The Rotary Club Richmond **Excellence in Education** Awards recognise the inspirational and outstanding teachers who make positive contributions to their communities and support young people to develop the skills and learning outcomes they need to succeed in life. These awards aim to recognise and celebrate the real and unique differences educational staff make to the lives of students and their communities.

Outstanding Teacher in STEAM Award
In recognition of outstanding and innovative contributions to STEAM education, and for encouraging young people in one of the crucial areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM).

School:

Teacher of STEAM Nominated:

Please provide some background information for the nominated person.

Please provide practical examples and background information about your nominee using the following selection criteria below to guide your responses.

1. Demonstrates innovative methods or strategies in the teaching of STEAM related subjects.
2. Evidence of a significant positive impact on student learning and outcomes in STEAM areas.
3. Active participation in professional development activities related to STEAM education and subjects.
4. Undertakes leadership roles within the school community, particularly in promoting STEAM education. This might include mentoring other teachers, organising community STEAM events, or advocating for policy changes that support STEAM education.
5. Makes STEAM education accessible and inclusive for all students, including underrepresented groups.