

YOUTH AND FUTURE TALENT AWARDS

Who we are

Newry, Mourne & Down Youth Voice are a district wide consultative group under the Northern Ireland structure of Youth Voice which gives young people the opportunity to engage with decision makers and have a say on local issues. The group is supported by the Education Authority.

Our Partnership

Youth Voice is a collaboration with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Community Planning Department and are closely aligned to the Community Planning partnership.

The Awards

The Youth and Future Talent Awards (YAFTAs) were created in 2012 by the Newry & Mourne Youth Council to help raise the positive profiles of the work young people are involved in across our district. The aim was to highlight the “unsung heroes” who don't normally receive recognition.

This year will be the ninth awards ceremony and they will be hosted within the council area.

All aspects of this programme have been designed and managed by young people for young people.

An independent panel will shortlist the nominations, without knowing names of nominees or nominator, so they cannot be influenced with their decisions.



CATEGORIES



Category	Eligibility	Criteria
Good Relations Award	Individual or group	The person/group who has developed or been involved in a project or event that has improved relationships bringing people together from different community backgrounds and/or ethnic minorities. A person /group who has been proactive in creating an inclusive community which promotes community membership which is respectful and inclusive of people with different political opinions, religious beliefs and ethnic backgrounds.
Mental Health & Wellbeing Award	Individual or Group	The person or group who advocates on behalf of others to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing issues in young people. The person or group who promotes positive mental health and wellbeing among young people and challenges the stigma around poor mental health.
Voice of Young People Award	Individual or group	The person/group that demonstrates strong leadership among peers has an enthusiastic and positive attitude. Is resourceful and takes initiative. The person/group has been the voice of a community/ individual concerning a particular subject/needs and issues.
Community Safety Award	Individual or group	The person/group who have developed or been involved in a community safety project for their community. The person/ group who has identified and taken action on a particular safety issue in their community. The person/group who has demonstrated a real enthusiasm to their community, have shown dedication to a particular safety project. The person/Group who have created a safety project that significantly benefited their local community
Inspirational Young Person Award	Individual	The person who has made a big impact on their community or an individual. The person should be someone peers look up to and admire who takes on a leadership role and encourages others to get involved as well. The person should have gone significantly beyond the normal expected involvement.
Inclusion Award	Individual or group	The person or group that has promoted the inclusion and participation of young people at risk of social exclusion, marginalisation or isolation due to their gender, sexual orientation or disability. The person or group that has championed an inclusion project/ programme that has helped to raise awareness of inclusion
Environmental Award	Individual or group	The person/group who have developed or been involved in an environmental project that has instilled civic pride and tackled an environmental issue within their local community. The person/group who has demonstrated a real enthusiasm and leadership in instilling civic pride and tackling environmental issues in their local community.
Social Enterprise/ Action Award	Individual or group	The person or group who has a clear social or environmental mission and invests at least half their profits towards their social purpose. The person or group who has been involved in a project that incorporates volunteering, fundraising, campaigning or supporting others.

HOW TO NOMINATE

If you would like to nominate an individual young person or group for one of the YAFTA Awards you must:

Complete the nomination form and return to the Education Authority at the address below:

Niamh Mc Namee

YAFTAs
Newry Youth Resource Centre
4 Carnbane Road
Newry
BT35 6QA
Email: niamh.mcnamee@eani.org.uk
Phone: 028 3025 1515

For any general queries, support or advice please contact Niamh or Paul at the following details:

Paul Fitzsimons

YAFTAs
Killyleagh Outdoor Learning Centre
Shore Road
Killyleagh
BT30 9HU
Email: paul.fitzsimons@eani.org.uk
Tel: 077 3497 8626

For additional forms please contact Niamh or Paul on above details

Evaluating nominations

We are setting up a working group, which represents young people, Education Authority, Community and Voluntary Sector, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and the Community Planning Partnership members to evaluate the YAFTA Awards. This group will be responsible for checking, verifying and short listing entries.

Deadline: The deadline for nominations is Friday 30th January 2026 at 17.00

YAFTA Awards Ceremony will be held on Tuesday 3rd March 2026

Nomination rules:

We've developed a few rules that you need to follow when you're nominating someone for a YAFTA Award:

- Individuals and groups cannot nominate themselves
- Young people must be aged to max 25 years old and there is no lower age limit
- Individual or group nominated must be within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council area
- Nominations will be reviewed by our YAFTA Awards working group and our judging panel will short list finalists
- You can only nominate an individual or group in one category
- Nominations must relate to work activity between 1st January 2025 and 5th March 2026.

Online Nomination form: <https://forms.office.com/e/aw1ZwewBBU>

