**2025 Victorian Education**

**Excellence Awards**

***Recognising educational excellence in
Victorian government schools***

**Information Pack**

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## The Victorian Education Excellence Awards

# The Victorian Education Excellence Awards (VEEA) are the premier employee recognition program for staff in Victorian government schools.

The awards recognise outstanding principals, assistant principals, teachers, business managers, education support staff and teams across the state highlighting the impressive work, initiatives and achievements that improve schools and support children and young people to develop the skills and learning outcomes they need to succeed in life.

School staff can nominate themselves, their peers and colleagues who are making a transformative impact on young people to win grants of up to $25,000 to support ongoing professional development. However, nominees for outstanding primary or secondary principal categories must be nominated by a peer or colleague.

Nominations can be made anonymously to the nominee.

This year, nominees for outstanding primary or secondary principal categories must be nominated by a peer or colleague.

The winners of each award category will also be eligible to win Victoria’s top public education prize – the Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education and a further $20,000 grant.

Regional staff who can submit nominations include regional directors, area executive directors, senior education improvement leaders, Koorie education managers, Koorie education coordinators and Koorie education support officers.

We want to hear about the outstanding work in your school. Share how you or a colleague engage your students in learning or work as a team to improve student learning and wellbeing outcomes. Nominate a principal, share their school improvement story and, if you work in education support, share how you connect students to their school and community.

Your achievements are critical to inspiring confidence and driving improvement in schools across Victoria. Help the community really understand what you do every day to make a difference and the positive impact your work has on young people.

This Information Pack provides the requirements needed to nominate for the awards. Please also read the **VEEA Terms and Conditions**.

Visit the website for more information: <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-education-excellence-awards>

# Key dates

* Applications open – Monday 31 March 2025
* Applications close – Monday 26 May 2025 at 11:59 pm
* Judging process commences – Monday 2 June 2025
* Shortlisted nominees contacted – week commencing Monday 7 July 2025
* Judging panel interviews to confirm finalists and determine winners – Monday 14 July – Friday 25 July 2025
* Award presentation – Friday 24 October 2025 (finalists must be available to attend)

# Eligibility

* All staff employed by the Victorian government in a Victorian government school are encouraged to apply or nominate a colleague for the 2025 VEEA.
* This year, nominees for outstanding primary or secondary principal categories must be nominated by a peer or colleague.
* Nominations can be made anonymously to the nominee.
* Staff in specialist, P-9 or P-12 schools are eligible to apply for either primary or secondary categories, but please focus your response to the selection criteria for the level you have chosen.
* Early childhood staff are encouraged to apply for the [Victorian Early Years Awards](https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-early-years-awards).
* Non-government school staff are not eligible to apply.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Award Eligibility | Victorian Government School Workforce Classifications |
|  | Principal (includes executive principals, principals, assistant principals & campus principals) | Teacher | Education Support |
| *Individual Awards* |
| Outstanding Primary Principal | ü |  |  |
| Colin Simpson Outstanding Secondary Principal | ü |  |  |
| Outstanding Primary Teacher |  | ü |  |
| Outstanding Secondary Teacher |  | ü |  |
| Outstanding Early Career Primary Teacher |  | ü |  |
| Outstanding Early Career Secondary Teacher |  | ü |  |
| Outstanding Business Manager  |  |  | ü |
| *Team Awards* |
| Outstanding School Improvement | ü | ü | ü |
| Outstanding Education Support Team |  |  | ü |
| Outstanding Inclusive Education  | ü | ü | ü |
| Outstanding Koorie Education  | ü | ü | ü |
| Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students – Primary | ü | ü | ü |
| Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students – Secondary | ü | ü | ü |
| Dr Lawrie Shears Outstanding Global Teaching and Learning  | ü | ü | ü |

# Award categories

### Individual awards

*A professional learning grant of* ***$20,000*** *is available for each individual award.*

#### Outstanding Primary Principal

In recognition of exceptional principals and assistant principals who have demonstrated leadership excellence in a Victorian government primary school. These principals have made a significant contribution to improving staff and student learning and wellbeing; raised the quality of teaching; and improved the overall performance of their school.

#### Colin Simpson Outstanding Secondary Principal

In recognition of exceptional principals and assistant principals who have demonstrated leadership excellence in a Victorian government secondary school. These principals have made a significant contribution to improving staff and student learning and wellbeing; raised the quality of teaching; and improved the overall performance of their school.

*This award is named in recognition of the late Colin Simpson who was a teacher and education leader in Victoria. He was the foundation principal of Richmond High School from 2017 to 2019 and principal of the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School (VCASS) from 2004 to 2016. He was awarded the Outstanding Leadership Award at the 2009 VEEA.*

#### Outstanding Primary Teacher

In recognition of effective and innovative teachers who have demonstrated excellence in teaching practice at a Victorian government primary school and have made a significant contribution to improving student learning and wellbeing.

#### Outstanding Secondary Teacher

In recognition of effective and innovative teachers who have demonstrated excellence in teaching practice at a Victorian government secondary school and have made a significant contribution to improving student learning and wellbeing.

#### Outstanding Early Career Primary Teacher

In recognition of effective and innovative teachers in the first five years of their teaching career who have demonstrated excellence in teaching practice at a Victorian government primary school and have made a significant contribution to improving student learning and wellbeing.

#### Outstanding Early Career Secondary Teacher

In recognition of effective and innovative teachers in the first five years of their teaching career who have demonstrated excellence in teaching practice at a Victorian government secondary school and have made a significant contribution to improving student learning and wellbeing.

#### Outstanding Business Manager

In recognition of exceptional business managers within a Victorian government school who have demonstrated excellence in school finance and business management, while making a significant contribution to the performance of their school.

### Team awards

*A professional learning grant of* ***$25,000*** *is available for each team award.*

#### Outstanding School Improvement

In recognition of exceptional staff within a Victorian government school who have demonstrated excellence to improve whole-school outcomes through strategic planning and improvement initiatives and have made a significant contribution to developing effective partnerships with the broader community to improve overall school performance.

#### Outstanding Education Support Team

In recognition of exceptional education support teams within Victorian government schools that have demonstrated excellence in collaboration and teamwork within a school setting and made a significant contribution to improving student learning and wellbeing.

#### Outstanding Inclusive Education

In recognition of exceptional staff within Victorian government schools who have demonstrated quality teaching and learning, delivered outstanding system improvements that have made a positive impact in their school and community that support learning and wellbeing through a positive climate for learning for students with additional needs.

#### Outstanding Koorie Education

In recognition of exceptional educators in Victorian government schools who demonstrate Aboriginal inclusion across the whole school, respectful and inclusive teaching and learning practices to improve Koorie student learning and engagement and embed Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum.

#### Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students – Primary

In recognition of exceptional teams within Victorian government schools that have demonstrated excellence in provision for high-ability students, supporting their learning, engagement and wellbeing and helping them thrive now and into the future.

#### Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students – Secondary

In recognition of exceptional teams within Victorian government schools that have demonstrated excellence in provision for high-ability students, supporting their learning, engagement and wellbeing and helping them thrive now and into the future.

#### Dr Lawrie Shears Outstanding Global Teaching and Learning

In recognition of exceptional teams in Victorian government schools that have demonstrated excellence in global learning and engagement at their school and have provided their students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in an increasingly complex and interconnected world**.**

*This award is named in honour of the late Dr Lawrie Shears who served as Director-General of the Victorian Education Department from 1973 to 1982 and was a strong advocate of building global education connections.*

### The Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education

*The recipient(s) of this award will receive an additional professional learning grant of* ***$20,000****.*

The Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education is awarded to the winner of an award category whose contribution to Victorian government school education is judged to be the most outstanding. The winner will have demonstrated exemplary practice while contributing to positive school culture and a commitment to improving student outcomes.

*This award is named in recognition of the late Honourable Lindsay Thompson, AO, CMG, who began his career as a teacher in 1951 before entering Parliament in 1955. He became Education Minister in 1967, held that position for 12 years and remains Victoria’s longest serving Education Minister. He was Deputy Premier between 1972 and 1981 and Premier between 1981 and 1982.*

# Selection criteria

The following section outlines the selection criteria for each award category. Please complete each selection criterion response in 400 words or less. Responses to the selection criterion for each award should be made via the online nomination system, Award Force: <https://veea.awardsplatform.com/>.

### Individual awards

### When responding to the category selection criteria, consider Victoria’s vision for the Education State and if you have addressed the priorities relevant to your work.

The five key Education State priorities that guide our work are:

* **Excellence in teaching and learning:** Informed by the latest evidence, ensuring our dedicated teachers have the most effective teaching tools and support.
* **Every student matters:** We will ensure safe and welcoming environments – so teachers can do their best work, students can do their best learning, and every school offers a safe and respectful environment.
* **Lifting secondary school student engagement and achievement:** Strengthen engagement in secondary school and continue to support every student to embark on a positive post-school pathway.
* **Expand, support and recognise our school workforce:** Continue to attract, retain and support a highly-skilled, diverse school workforce, including by reducing the administrative burden, delivering professional learning and supporting teaching wellbeing.
* **Schools at the centre of communities:** Build welcoming, world-class and modern schools, which meet the needs of local communities so every child can have access to a great local school.

#### Outstanding Primary Principal and Colin Simpson Outstanding Secondary Principal

* **Vision, values and culture** – Successfully leads the development of the school’s vision, setting and modeling high standards and behaviours consistent with Department of Education values. Builds a positive school culture and shared expectations across the whole school community.
* **Leading improvement, innovation, and change** – Demonstrates ability to develop and implement clear, evidence-based improvement plans, policies, and initiatives. Leads and manages innovation and change to deliver high-quality educational outcomes for all students.
* **Leading the management of the school** – Demonstrates ability to use a wide range of data and tools to ensure efficient resource management through the use of strategic, workforce and financial planning and monitoring. Ensures expenditure and professional development for staff supports school’s goals and leads to school improvement.
* **Leading teaching and learning** – Demonstrates instructional leadership and the creation of a positive culture of support and collaboration among school staff, enabling effective use of data to inform teaching and learning and improve student outcomes.
* **Engaging with the community and the system** – Demonstrates positive and purposeful relationships with students, teachers, parents, and the broader community. Engages with inclusive and culturally responsive education practices. Positions the school as a community hub and positively builds the reputation of the Victorian government education system.

#### Outstanding Primary Teacher and Outstanding Secondary Teacher

* **Focus on student outcomes** – Demonstrates significant improvement in student learning and wellbeing outcomes through the use of data, evidence-based practice methods and high expectations of students. Empowers students to have voice and agency in their own learning.
* **Quality teaching and learning** – Demonstrates high-quality teaching practice through excellent curriculum, pedagogy and assessment practices and use of high impact teaching strategies that are differentiated to meet students’ needs. Provides a supportive and productive learning environment that promotes inclusion and collaboration.
* **Implementing improvement, innovation, and change** – Demonstrates ability to develop and implement evidence-based improvement plans, policies, and initiatives. Leads and manages innovation and change to deliver high-quality educational outcomes for all students.
* **Peer collaboration and school contribution** – Demonstrates and models collaboration with peers to improve teaching and learning through participation in school-based collaborative initiatives such as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Challenges and supports peers to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and impact on learning. Contributes to the school outside of the classroom to enrich students’ learning experiences.
* **Engaging with the community and the system** – Demonstrates positive and purposeful relationships with students, teachers, parents, and the broader community in line with the Department of Education values. Engages with inclusive and culturally responsive education practices, builds school pride and connectedness, and enhances the reputation of the Victorian government education system.

#### Outstanding Early Career Primary Teacher and Outstanding Early Career Secondary Teacher

* **Focus on student outcomes** – Demonstrates significant improvement in student learning and wellbeing outcomes through the use of data, evidence-based practice methods and high expectations of students. Empowers students to have voice and agency in their own learning.
* **Quality teaching and learning** – Demonstrates high-quality teaching practice through excellent curriculum, pedagogy and assessment practices and use of high impact teaching strategies that are differentiated to meet students’ needs. Provides a supportive and productive learning environment that promotes inclusion and collaboration.
* **Implementing improvement, innovation, and change** – Demonstrates ability to develop and implement evidence-based improvement plans, policies, and initiatives. Leads and manages innovation and change to deliver high-quality educational outcomes for all students.
* **Peer collaboration and school contribution** – Demonstrates and models collaboration with peers to improve teaching and learning through participation in school-based collaborative initiatives such as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Challenges and supports peers to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching strategies and impact on learning. Contributes to the school outside of the classroom to enrich students’ learning experiences.
* **Engaging with the community and the system** – Demonstrates positive and purposeful relationships with students, teachers, parents, and the broader community in line with the Department of Education values. Engages with inclusive and culturally responsive education practices, builds school pride and connectedness, and enhances the reputation of the Victorian government education system.

#### Outstanding Business Manager

* **Focus on school outcomes** – Demonstrates outstanding business management practices that improve the financial and strategic resource management of the school. Uses efficient systems, processes and operations that result in improved school outcomes.
* **Leadership** – Demonstrates effective leadership of staff to ensure effective and ethical use of school resources through transparency, integrity, and accountability. Supports achievement of the school’s strategic and annual plans.
* **Developing self and others** – Demonstrates outstanding practices to foster teamwork and collaboration and develop the capacity of staff across the school in financial and procurement processes. Models Department of Education values and encourages others to do the same.
* **Engagement with the community and the system** – Demonstrates positive and purposeful relationships with school staff, peers, and the broader community. Engages with others in an inclusive and culturally responsive manner and enhances the reputation of the Victorian government education system.

**Team awards**

When responding to the category selection criteria, consider Victoria’s vision for the Education State and if you have addressed the priorities relevant to your work.

The five key Education State priorities that guide our work are:

* **Excellence in teaching and learning:** Informed by the latest evidence, ensuring our dedicated teachers have the most effective teaching tools and support.
* **Every student matters:** We will ensure safe and welcoming environments – so teachers can do their best work, students can do their best learning, and every school offers a safe and respectful environment.
* **Lifting secondary school student engagement and achievement:** Strengthen engagement in secondary school and continue to support every student to embark on a positive post-school pathway.
* **Expand, support and recognise our school workforce:** Continue to attract, retain and support a highly-skilled, diverse school workforce, including by reducing the administrative burden, delivering professional learning and supporting teaching wellbeing.
* **Schools at the centre of communities:** Build welcoming, world-class and modern schools, which meet the needs of local communities so every child can have access to a great local school.

#### Outstanding School Improvement

* **Focus on outcomes** – Prioritises collaboration as a mechanism to lead the vision, values and culture of the school. Models high standards and behaviours consistent with the Department of Education values, focusing on the improvement of student learning and wellbeing.
* **Quality practice** – Demonstrates excellence in curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and support practices including use of high impact teaching strategies that leads to improved student and school outcomes. Demonstrates effective whole-school professional learning through implementing school-based collaborative initiatives such as Communities of Practice, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), Differentiated Support for School Improvement (DSSI) and other collaborative teams.
* **Evidence-based improvement** – Demonstrates a structured and collaborative approach to analysing school and student data and builds practice based on the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO 2.0) Improvement Cycle, as a means to drive whole-school improvement.
* **Engaging with the community and the system** – Demonstrates positive and purposeful school relationships with students, teachers, parents, and the broader community. Develops partnerships with other schools that improve overall school performance. Engages with others in an inclusive and culturally responsive manner and positively builds the reputation of the Victorian government education system.

#### Outstanding Education Support Team

* **Focus on student outcomes** – Demonstrates effective direct and/or indirect improvements to student learning and wellbeing, as evidenced through the provision of education support services. Empowers students to have voice and agency in their own learning.
* **Quality practice** – Demonstrates excellent practices in the team’s respective areas of work that promote a positive climate for learning and lead to improved student and school outcomes. Provides a supportive and productive learning environment that promotes inclusion and collaboration.
* **Implementing improvement, innovation, and change** – Demonstrates exemplary and innovative evidence-based practices and successful implementation of change in response to student needs that deliver high-quality outcomes for students. Demonstrates diligent management of a project(s) that led to significant improvement in the delivery of education support services (where relevant).
* **Developing self and others** – Demonstrates an outstanding work ethic and a commitment to teamwork and collaboration, including development and support of colleagues across the school. Models Department of Education values and encourages others to do the same.
* **Engaging with the community and the system** – Demonstrates outstanding engagement and communication with colleagues, parents/carers, and the broader community in a manner that is inclusive and culturally responsive, while positively building the profile of the school within the Victorian government education system.

#### Outstanding Inclusive Education

* **Focus on student outcomes** – Demonstrates positive impact on the learning and wellbeing of students with additional needs through the use of data and evidence-based practice methods. Empowers students and their families to have voice and agency in regard to their education experience.
* **Quality teaching and learning** – Demonstrates high-quality teaching practice through excellent curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and reporting practices in response to identified student needs. Provides a supportive and productive learning environment that promotes inclusion and collaboration.
* **Implementing improvement, innovation, and change** – Demonstrates ability to develop and implement evidence-based improvement plans, policies, and initiatives. Leads and manages innovation and change to deliver high-quality education outcomes for all students.
* **Engaging with the community and the system** – Demonstrates positive and purposeful school relationships with students, teachers, parents, carers, and the broader community to develop an understanding of students with additional needs through implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy. Delivers outstanding system improvements to increase understanding around disabilities and additional needs for all students.

#### Outstanding Koorie Education

* **Focus on student outcomes** – Demonstrates positive impact on Koorie student learning and wellbeing through the use of data and evidence-based practice methods to create educational pathways and employment outcomes (where relevant) for Koorie students.
* **Quality teaching and learning** – Demonstrates a collaborative approach to excellent curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and reporting practices that embed Aboriginal perspectives supporting the vision of Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026 (Marrung). Provides a supportive and productive learning environment that promotes inclusion and collaboration for all students.
* **Collaborate with community and the system** – Demonstrates partnerships with the local Koorie community to continually improve staff and students understanding of Koorie inclusion and cultural safety, while positively building meaningful relationships between the school and Koorie community. Participates in school-based collaborative initiatives such as Communities of Practice, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and multidisciplinary teams designed to support Koorie student outcomes.

#### Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students – Primary and Secondary

* **Focus on student outcomes** – Demonstrates strong outcomes in learning and wellbeing of high-ability students through data and evidence-based practice methods within the school. Empowers students to have voice and agency in their own learning.
* **Quality teaching and learning** – Demonstrates high-quality classroom teaching practice for high-ability students, through excellent curriculum, pedagogy, assessment practices and support including use of high impact teaching strategies. Provides an inclusive learning environment that promotes collaboration.
* **Implementing improvement, innovation, and change** – Demonstrates implementation of whole-school, evidence-based initiatives and programs that support high-ability students consistent with the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO 2.0). Leads and manages innovation and change to deliver high-quality educational outcomes for high-ability students and professional learning for teachers.
* **Engaging with the community and the system** – Demonstrates positive and purposeful relationships with students, parents, and the broader community. Demonstrates collaboration through school networks to improve teaching and learning for high-ability students across the Victorian government education system.

#### Dr Lawrie Shears Outstanding Global Teaching and Learning

* **Focus on student outcomes** – Demonstrates the positive impact of global learning and engagement on student engagement and outcomes.
* **Quality teaching and learning** – Provides evidence of embedding global learning and engagement into teaching, assessment and reporting, including the Victorian F-10 intercultural capabilities, languages and across other subject areas (e.g. history, arts, English).
* **Implementing improvement, innovation, and change** – Demonstrates innovation and a whole-school approach to global learning and engagement, including teacher capability building and engagement of school community.
* **Leadership** – Demonstrates leadership and influence in global learning and engagement through partnerships and collaboration beyond own school.

# Nominations

### Who can nominate?

All eligible school-based staff in government schools are invited to nominate themselves or a colleague for the 2025 VEEA via the online nomination system, Award Force: <https://veea.awardsplatform.com/>. Award Force is optimised for desktops, tablets (iPad and Android) and smartphones.

This year, nominees for outstanding primary or secondary principal categories must be nominated by a peer or colleague

Nominations can be made anonymously to the nominee.

Nominations for the 2025 VEEA open 9:00 am Monday 31 March 2025 and close at 11:59 pm Monday 26 May 2025.

No late nominations will be accepted. Please see the timeline below and allow adequate time to complete and seek endorsements for nominations.

The following Department of Education staff may nominate (as nominator) school-based colleagues for the VEEA:

* Executive and principal class employees
* Teachers
* Education support class employees
* School Council members who are current department employees
* Regional Directors, Regional Executive Directors and Area Executive Directors
* Senior Education Improvement Leaders (SEILs)
* Koorie Education Managers (KEMs), Koorie Education Coordinators (KECs) and Koorie Education Support Officers (KESOs)

#### Indicative nomination completion timeline



### How-to guide for nominations

This section explains how you can nominate yourself or your team and/or nominate a colleague or a team of colleagues.

### Nominate yourself or you and your team

1. Visit the online nomination system, Award Force: <https://veea.awardsplatform.com/> (NOTE first-time users will need to register their details).
2. Starting the nomination
	1. Click on ‘Start an application’ to begin.

Under ‘category’, select ‘I’m entering’ and then select the relevant award category. **Note:** **nominees for outstanding primary or secondary principal categories must be nominated by a peer or colleague.**

Enter your name/the names of your team members in the ‘Name of nominee or team’ field. Click on ‘Save + next’.

* 1. In the ‘About the nominee(s)’ tab, enter your details. You only need to enter your own email address in this tab. NOTE If nominating team members, their email addresses and details are entered under the ‘Team members’ tab. You can opt to select to nominate anonymously to the nominee for all categories.

1. Nomination details – key selection criteria
	1. Complete each selection criterion in **400 words or less** to demonstrate your/your team’s professional excellence and impact. Consider the 5 Education State priorities when addressing the criteria.
	2. Be specific and provide examples that show how you or your team have made an impact on student and school outcomes. Ensure you outline evidence and examples against each selection criteria. Describe any programs or initiatives that show improved student learning and/or wellbeing outcomes. Be proud of these achievements – you or your nominee(s) deserve recognition.Click on ‘Save + next’.
2. Endorsements
	1. Please allow adequate time to complete and seek endorsements for nominations. **Note that: Principal categories do not require endorsements.**
	2. In the ‘Endorser details and statement’ tab, download the **Nomination Endorsement Form**. You may like to save and close your application at this stage, while you organise the completion of the Nomination Endorsement Forms.
	3. Provide the Nomination Endorsement Form to at least two endorsers. Endorsements must be completed, signed, and returned in time for you to upload your endorsements **prior to Monday 26 May 2025**. Follow up with your endorsers to ensure they complete the forms on time.
	4. When you receive your endorsements (check they have been signed), log back into the system, and upload the completed Nomination Endorsement Forms in the space provided in the ‘Endorser details and statement’ tab. The easiest way to upload each Nomination Endorsement Form is to scan and save the file on your computer and then upload it.
3. Double-check that you have met all the online requirements and submit your application.

### Nominate a colleague or team of colleagues

1. You can nominate a colleague or a team anonymously to the nominee. The nominee will need to accept the nomination for the nomination to be valid.
2. Visit the online nomination system, Award Force: <https://veea.awardsplatform.com/> (NOTE first-time users will need to register their details).
3. Starting the nomination
	1. Click on ‘Start an application’ to begin.
	2. Under ‘category’, select ‘I’d like to nominate someone for’ and then select the relevant award category.
	3. Enter your colleague’s name(s) in the ‘Name of nominee or team’ field. Click on ‘Save + next’.
	4. In the ‘About the nominee(s)’ tab, enter your colleague’s email address or the email address for the team’s key contact.
	5. For a team award, also enter the school name of the team you are nominating and the region (the ‘position’ field is not a mandatory field). NOTE: under the ‘Team members’ tab, enter the names and email addresses for each of the team members you are nominating. You will need to indicate that you have the support of your team members to include them in the nomination.
4. Nomination details – key selection criteria
	1. Complete each selection criterion in 400 words or less detailing how your colleague(s) has/have demonstrated professional excellence and impact. Consider the 5 Education State priorities when addressing the criteria.
	2. Be specific and provide examples that show why you are nominating your colleague(s). Describe how your colleague or the team has made an impact on student and school outcomes. Ensure you outline evidence and examples against each selection criteria. Describe any programs or initiatives that show improved student learning and/or wellbeing outcomes. Be proud of these achievements – your colleagues deserve recognition. Click on ‘Save + next’.
5. Colleague(s) must accept their nomination
	1. Your colleague(s) must accept their nomination whether it is anonymous or not for the nomination to be valid.
	2. The nomination must be accepted before the nomination close date. Your colleagues will be sent an email asking if they accept or reject the nomination. Please make sure the nominee’s email is entered in the ‘nominee email address’ section.
	3. For a team award nomination confirm they accept the nomination before submitting your application. Check the box for each team member in the ‘Team members’ tab to confirm your nominees agree to be nominated.
6. Endorsements
	1. Please allow adequate time to complete and seek endorsements for nominations. **Note that: Principal categories do not require endorsements.**
	2. In the ‘Endorser details and statement’ tab, download the **Nomination Endorsement Form**. You may like to save and close your application at this stage, while you organise the completion of the Nomination Endorsement Forms.
	3. Provide the Nomination Endorsement Form to at least two endorsers. Endorsements must be completed, signed, and returned to you in time for you to upload your endorsements prior to **Monday 26 May 2025**. Follow up with the endorsers to ensure they complete the forms on time.
	4. When you receive your endorsements (check they have been signed), log back into the system, and upload the completed Nomination Endorsement Forms in the space provided in the ‘Endorser details and statement’ tab. The easiest way to upload each Nomination Endorsement Form is to scan and save the file on your computer and then upload it.
7. Double-check that you have met all the online requirements and submit the nomination.
8. Once the nomination is submitted, an email will be sent to your nominee(s) inviting them to review and accept the nomination. Your nominee(s) must complete this step, or the nomination will not proceed.

### Nomination endorsement requirements

### Endorsement requirements

Except for Principal categories, all applicants must provide **at least two endorsements** in support of their nomination. The table below lists the award categories and the endorser requirements and options.

|  | Required Endorsement | Additional Endorsements |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Award Category | Principal | Local Aboriginal Group**[[1]](#footnote-2)**  | Regional Executive Directors, SEIL, KEC, KESO | School Council Member | Community Business Partner**[[2]](#footnote-3)** | Fellow colleague |
| *Individual Awards* |
| Outstanding Primary Principal |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Colin Simpson Outstanding Secondary Principal |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Outstanding Primary Teacher | Yes |  |  | Yes |  | Yes |
| Outstanding Secondary Teacher | Yes |  |  | Yes |  | Yes |
| Outstanding Early Career Primary Teacher | Yes |  |  | Yes |  | Yes |
| Outstanding Early Career Secondary Teacher | Yes |  |  | Yes |  | Yes |
| Outstanding Business Manager | Yes |  |  | Yes |  | Yes |
| *Team Awards* |
| Outstanding School Improvement |  |  | Yes | Yes | Yes |  |
| Outstanding Education Support | Yes |  |  | Yes |  |  Yes |
| Outstanding Inclusive Education |  |  | Yes | Yes | Yes |  |
| Outstanding Koorie Education |  | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |  |
| Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students - Primary |  |  | Yes | Yes | Yes |  |
| Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students - Secondary |  |  | Yes | Yes | Yes |  |
| Dr Lawrie Shears Outstanding Global Teaching and Learning |  |  | Yes | Yes | Yes |  |

### Who can endorse my nomination?

Except for Principal categories, all nominations must have **at least two** endorsements, and no more than four.

Some awards require that **one** of those be from the nominee’s principal, and a **second** to be chosen from a list of approved endorsers.

Where the nominator is a principal, and principal endorsement is required for that award, the nominating principal must obtain at least two endorsements (either from a principal-class colleague at the nominee’s school (e.g. an assistant principal) or from the additional endorsements list).

The Outstanding Koorie Education Award requires endorsement from a school’s Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and/or local Aboriginal community organisation or group.

Nominees for, or nominators of, individual or team awards are unable to endorse their own nomination.

A ‘community business partner’ broadly encompasses the full range of organisations that schools are likely to have working relationships with, which may include not-for-profit organisations and commercial businesses.

The completed **Nomination Endorsement Forms** must be uploaded with the nomination via the VEEA online nomination system, Award Force: <https://veea.awardsplatform.com/>

**Applications that do not meet these requirements will be incomplete and ineligible for judging**.

### Responsibilities of the Endorser

It is expected that endorsers will:

* Discuss the application with the person seeking the endorsement (the nominator)
* Inform the nominator as soon as possible if an endorsement cannot be provided
* Complete the Nomination Endorsement Form by including your details and indicating your endorsement. You may provide an optional 200-word statement of endorsement of the nominee(s). Include your knowledge of the work the nominee(s) has done in their school and evidence of impact on student outcomes.
* Sign and return the Nomination Endorsement Form to the nominator prior to the closing on **Monday 26 May 2025 at 11:59 pm**.

### Nomination Endorsement Form

*Please email this form to each of your endorsers to complete. Each completed Nomination Endorsement Form will need to be scanned and uploaded with your application via VEEA online nomination system, Award Force:* [*https://veea.awardsplatform.com/*](https://veea.awardsplatform.com/)

**Endorser Details (Endorser to complete):**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Position** |  |
| **School** |  |
| **Region** |  |
| **Mobile Number** |  |
| **Email Address** |  |
|  |  |
| **Applicant Name(s):** |  |
| **Award Category:** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I hereby support and endorse the application of the above-mentioned candidate** |  |[ ]
| **Would you be happy to be contacted by a member of the judging panel if further information is required?** *Please select.* | Yes | [ ]  |
|  | No |[ ]

**Optional: provide a statement of endorsement of the applicant below *(maximum 200 words).* Include your knowledge of the work the nominee(s) has done in their school and evidence of impact on student outcomes.**

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| **Date:** | **Name:** | **Signature:** |

*Please return the completed form to the nominator to allow them to complete their application. Applications close* ***Monday 26 May 2025 at 11:59 pm****.*

# Judging

Judging panels will independently judge each award category. Judges use the matrix below to score each criterion.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Label** | **Description** |
| 1 | **Unsatisfactory** | * did not meet the selection criterion **and**
* lacked evidence to support nomination
 |
| 2 | **Satisfactory**  | * met some selection criterion **and**
* provided some evidence to support nomination against some criterion
 |
| 3 | **Good** | * met most selection criterion **and**
* provided good evidence to support nomination against some criterion
 |
| 4 | **Very good**  | * met all selection criterion **and**
* provided good evidence to support nomination against each criterion
 |
| 5 | **Excellent** | * met all selection criterion **and**
* provided strong evidence against each criterion
 |
| 6 | **Outstanding** | * met all selection criterion **and**
* provided outstanding evidence against each criterion
 |

Nominations will be assessed to determine the shortlist of nominees for each award category (usually the top three nominations).

### Interviews

The judging panel may interview the shortlisted nominees (proposed finalists) for each award category. Interviews will take place from Monday 14 July to Friday 25 July 2025 online via Webex or Microsoft Teams.

If you are shortlisted for an interview and are part of a team award, the interview will be limited to five team members.

During the interview, nominees will be asked to respond to questions relating to the key selection criteria. A copy of the questions will be emailed to you, or your team contact before the interview.

Following the interview, the judging panels will confirm which of the shortlisted interviewees will become the finalists and winner of each award category. An esteemed judging panel will select the winner of the Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education from the winners of each award category.

Winners will be announced at the ceremony on Friday 24 October 2025.

# Professional Learning Grants

Winners of award categories receive professional learning grants of $20,000 for individual awards and $25,000 for team awards. Grants should be spent and claimed by the end of March 2027. The winner of the Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education will receive an additional professional learning grant of $20,000 which should be spent by the end of March 2028.

The following table lists some approved professional learning activities. Winners must submit a Professional Learning Budget Plan to obtain approval for their activities prior to commencing them. A final report outlining activities undertaken and outcomes must also be submitted.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Approved professional learning activities** | **Links** |
| All graduate programs offered by Victorian Higher Education Providers and accredited by the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) are approved.  | A list of these programs can be accessed by selecting ‘postgraduate’ in the initial teacher education search function on the [VIT accredited programs page](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/registering-as-a-teacher/teaching-programs/accredited-initial-teacher-education-programs) |
| All VIT endorsed programs for qualified teachers are approved. | A list of these programs can be accessed using the ‘endorsed programs for qualified teachers’ search function on the [VIT accredited programs page](https://www.vit.vic.edu.au/registering-as-a-teacher/teaching-programs/accredited-initial-teacher-education-programs#endorsedprogram) |
| Professional learning calendar for teachers and school staff. | The Department provides a comprehensive list of [professional development](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/professional-learning.aspx) to support teachers, education support staff and business managers. Professional development opportunities run throughout the year. Please consult the calendar.  |
| All short courses that are directly related to an award winner’s professional learning goals (as outlined in their Performance and Development Plan) offered by graduate education schools/departments of Victorian Higher Education Providers are approved. Note: Education support class employees may consider courses offered by other faculties of Victorian Higher Education Providers and should consult the Department regarding options. | [Australian Catholic University](https://www.acu.edu.au/study-at-acu/how-to-apply/individual-units) [Deakin University](https://www.deakin.edu.au/study/find-a-course/short-courses)[Eastern College Australia](http://www.eastern.edu.au/study/courses)[Holmesglen TAFE](https://www.holmesglen.edu.au/study-with-us/short-courses)[La Trobe University](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/short-courses) (single subject study)[Melbourne Polytechnic](http://www.melbournepolytechnic.edu.au/course-info/short-courses/) (short course guide) [Monash University](http://www.monash.edu/education/future-students/courses/short-courses)[RMIT University](http://shortcourses.rmit.edu.au/)[Swinburne University of Technology](http://www.swinburne.edu.au/study/options/find/short/)[The University of Melbourne](https://students.unimelb.edu.au/?in_c=mega)[Victoria University](https://www.vu.edu.au/search?tab=vu_courses) |
| All courses offered by the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership (Academy) are approved. | More information can be accessed on the [Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership](https://www.academy.vic.gov.au/professional-learning)  professional learning courses page. |

# Resources

Please refer to any of the Department’s resources listed below when preparing your application form to support your nomination.

#### Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO 2.0)

[FISO 2.0](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/fiso/policy), a key Education State reform initiative, was first introduced in 2015 and then redesigned in 2021 for all Victorian government schools. It is an evidence-based framework that enables schools to focus their improvement efforts on practices that have the greatest impact on student learning and wellbeing.  FISO 2.0 elevates the importance of wellbeing, through which schools prepare students to manage the complexities of the world in which they live.

#### Victorian Teaching and Learning Model (VTLM)

The [VTLM](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/practice/improve/Pages/Victorianteachingandlearningmodel.aspx) brings FISO 2.0 into the classroom. It creates a line of sight between the whole-school improvement approach and classroom practice. It allows teachers and school leaders to focus on high impact improvement initiatives and drive those initiatives through evidence-based decisions about their teaching and student learning.

#### High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS)

[HITS](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/practice/improve/Pages/hits.aspx) are 10 instructional practices that reliably increase student learning wherever they are applied.

#### Practice Principles

The [practice principles](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/practice/improve/Pages/principlesexcellence.aspx?Redirect=1) for excellence in teaching and learning are nine signature pedagogies which make the difference in improving student achievement and motivation. They provide a starting point for a close analysis of your professional practice.

#### Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

[PLCs](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/management/improvement/plc/Pages/default.aspx) are an approach to school improvement where groups of teachers work collaboratively at the school level to improve student outcomes.​

#### Marrung, Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026 (Marrung)

[Marrung](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/aboriginal/Marrung_Aboriginal_Education_Plan_2016-2026.pdf) is a strategy to ensure that all Koorie Victorians achieve their learning aspirations*.*

#### Global learning and engagement

Australia is one of the most multicultural societies in the world and globalisation places greater emphasis on the need for [[intercultural capability](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/capabilities/Pages/intercultural.aspx)](https://www.schools.vic.gov.au/multicultural-education-programs-resources#intercultural-capability-curriculum). Developing intercultural knowledge, skills and understandings is an essential part of living with others in a diverse and interconnected world.

# Handy tips for preparing a nomination

**The information below will help you to prepare and submit a nomination for the Victorian Education Excellence Awards (VEEA)**

1. **Read the information**

Before starting your nomination, familiarise yourself with the **2025 VEEA Information Pack** including the **VEEA 2025 Terms and Conditions**, which detail:

* eligibility for each award category
* key selection criteria
* key dates, and
* provide step-by-step instructions to submit a nomination.
1. **Nominate online**

Nominations must be submitted online via the VEEA online nomination system, Award Force: <https://veea.awardsplatform.com/>. We recommend using Google Chrome.

* Create a login with a password that you can remember and become familiar with the platform.
* You can ‘***save and exit’*** and come back to your nomination at any time before the closing date.
* After you submit your nomination, you cannot make any changes.
1. **Nominate others**

If you nominate someone else for an award, they need to accept the nomination for it to be valid. They can also provide deeper insight into their work, including scenarios and evidence to support the nomination. Nominations can be made anonymously to the nominee.

When you nominate a colleague or a team of colleagues:

* make sure you put their email(s) in the ***‘nominee’s email’*** section in Award Force.
* an email will be sent to them once the nomination is submitted inviting them to accept the nomination.
* if the nomination is **not accepted, the nomination will not be valid.**
1. **Review and edit the nomination**

It is suggested you:

* draft your responses, review them for content, grammar, punctuation, and word count.
* ask a colleague to review your nomination.
* there is a limit of 400 words for each selection criteria.
1. **Provide specific examples**

Be specific and provide examples that show how you or your nominee(s) have made an impact on student and school outcomes. In your nomination, ensure you:

* outline evidence and examples against each selection criteria.
* when responding to the selection criteria, consider Victoria’s vision for [**The Education State**](https://www.vic.gov.au/education-state) and if you have addressed the priorities relevant to your work.
* describe any programs or initiatives implemented and the evidence that shows they have improved student achievement, engagement and/or wellbeing outcomes.
* be proud of these achievements – you or your nominee(s) deserve recognition.
1. **Seek endorsements**

Except for Principal categories, all nominations require at least 2 endorsements.

The 2025 VEEA Information Pack sets out who must or can endorse nominations for each award category. It is advisable to let your endorsers know well in advance that you would like their support and ensure that endorsements are completed and signed in time for you to upload before closing date. Delays in submitting your endorsements can hold up your nomination.

1. **Remember nomination deadlines**

Applications close at **11.59 pm on Monday 26 May 2025.**

Applications will not be accepted once nominations have closed. Put this date in your diary so you give yourself enough time to finesse your nomination and get the required endorsements.

# Frequently asked questions

1. **What are the Victorian Education Excellence Awards (VEEA)?**

The VEEA showcase the outstanding contributions made by teachers, principals, and education support staff in Victorian government schools. It has the following individual and team award categories:

**Individual Awards**

* Outstanding Primary Principal
* Colin Simpson Outstanding Secondary Principal
* Outstanding Primary Teacher
* Outstanding Secondary Teacher
* Outstanding Early Career Primary Teacher
* Outstanding Early Career Secondary Teacher
* Outstanding Business Manager

**Team Awards**

* Outstanding School Improvement
* Outstanding Education Support Team
* Outstanding Inclusive Education
* Outstanding Koorie Education
* Outstanding Provision for High-Ability – Primary
* Outstanding Provision for High-Ability – Secondary
* Dr Lawrie Shears Outstanding Global Teaching and Learning

The Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education is awarded to the winner of an award category whose contribution to Victorian government school education is judged to be the most outstanding.

1. **Who can nominate a colleague for an award?**

The following Department of Education staff may nominate (as nominator) school-based colleagues for the VEEA:

* Executive and principal class employees
* Teachers
* Education support class employees
* School Council members who are current department employees
* Regional Directors, Regional Executive Directors and Area Executive Directors
* Senior Education Improvement Leaders (SEILs)
* Koorie Education Managers (KEMs), Koorie Education Coordinators (KECs) and Koorie Education Support Officers (KESOs)
1. **Can I nominate a colleague for an award?**

Yes, as long as you are listed as one of the people who can nominate. Before beginning the nomination, review the selection criteria for your chosen award category to ensure that your colleague(s) meets the eligibility requirements.

Complete the online nomination on their behalf, respond to each of the selection criteria and organise endorsements for the nomination.

Once you have submitted the nomination, an email will be sent to your nominee inviting them to review and accept the nomination. Your nominee must complete this step, or the nomination will not proceed. If you have selected to remain anonymous your details will not be revealed to the nominee.

When nominating colleagues for a team award, enter all the required information online for each team member in the ‘Team members’ tab.

A step-by-step process for nominating colleagues for individual and team awards can be found in the nominations section of this Information Pack.

1. **Can I nominate myself or my team for more than one award?**

Yes, provided that you meet all selection criteria for each award category. All team nominators should make sure that each person in the team meets the eligibility criteria for the award.

1. **I am a principal/teacher in a P-9/P-12 college. Do I nominate/can I be nominated for the primary or secondary principal/teacher categories?**

Principals employed at P-9/P-12 schools can be nominated (they cannot nominate themselves for a principal category) in either the primary or secondary award categories. This decision is left to the discretion of nominators and nominees. It is recommended that you focus your response to the selection criteria for the level you have been nominated for.

Teachers employed at a P-9/P-12 schools can nominate/ be nominated in either the primary or secondary award categories. This decision is left to the discretion of nominators and nominees. It is recommended that you focus your response to the selection criteria for the level you have chosen/been nominated for.

1. **I am an assistant/campus principal. Am I eligible to be nominated for the Outstanding Primary/Secondary Principal awards?**

Yes. All Victorian government principal class employees who meet the category selection criteria are eligible to be nominated for the Outstanding Primary/Secondary Principal Awards.

1. **My team and I would like to nominate for the Outstanding Koorie Education Award. However, we do not identify as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. Are we still eligible to nominate for the award?**

Yes. The Outstanding Koorie Education Award is open to all teams that meet the award criteria.

1. **Can previous VEEA winners nominate or be nominated for a 2025 VEEA?**

Previous VEEA winners are ineligible to nominate for the VEEA (in any category) until the third year after their win. To check eligibility for the 2025 VEEA, please refer to the 2025 VEEA Terms and Conditions [and](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/veea) this Information Pack.

1. **What do judges look for in a nomination?**

The judges will assess the extent to which the written application meets each selection criteria based on the response and evidence provided. Judges consider all criteria equally when assessing nominations.

Some tips for writing a successful nomination:

* The nomination must address each selection criteria.
* Describe what makes the nominee’s contribution outstanding. It may be helpful to think of the nomination as a job application.
* Be specific about the nominee’s strengths and provide clear examples.
* Support statements with evidence and examples of how outcomes were improved.
* Stick to the word limit. Dot points will be included in the overall word count.
1. **Can I nominate for the Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education?**

No. The Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education winner is selected from the winners of each award category by an esteemed panel of judges.

1. **If I win and receive a professional learning grant, is there a time limit on how long I have to use the money?**

Yes. Award recipients in 2025 should spend their professional learning grant before 31 March 2027. Award recipients who only spend part of their grant amount prior to 31 March 2027 may forfeit the remainder of their professional learning grant.

The recipient of the Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education receives an additional 12 months to spend their $20,000. This grant should be spent prior to 31 March 2028, or the winner may forfeit the remainder of professional learning grant.

1. **Can I submit a late nomination?**

No, late nominations will not be accepted.

# For more information

See the VEEA website: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/awards/Pages/veea.aspx>

If you have further queries about the 2025 VEEA, contact the VEEA team via email: excellence.awards@education.vic.gov.au

# 2025 Victorian Education Excellence Awards – Terms and Conditions

These terms and conditions relate to the 2025 Victorian Education Excellence Awards (VEEA). The VEEA is the premier employee recognition program for staff in Victorian government schools. By submitting a nomination or agreeing to a nomination being submitted on their behalf, award nominees agree to be bound by the terms and conditions outlined in this document.

## Privacy compliance

1. Consistent with its [Information Privacy Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/pages/privacypolicy.aspx), the Department of Education (the Department) is committed to protecting the personal information that it collects and uses. Private and personal information supplied will be used by the selection panels only to assist decision-making.
2. Information will not be disclosed or used for any other purpose without the express consent of the person to whom the information relates, unless otherwise required by law.

## Key dates

1. Applications open 9:00 am Monday 31 March 2025.
2. Applications close 11:59 pm Monday 26 May 2025.
3. The online shortlisting judging process commences Monday 9 June 2025.
4. Nominees shortlisted for an interview will be contacted in the week commencing Monday 7 July 2025. Unsuccessful nominees will also be contacted at this time.
5. Shortlisted nominees may be invited to attend an online panel interview between Monday 14 July and Friday 25 July 2025. If invited to attend an interview, the shortlisted nominee(s), rather than a delegate(s), must attend. The judging panel will confirm the list of finalists and determine the winners after interviews are completed.
6. The 2025 VEEA presentation ceremony will be held in the evening of Friday 24 October 2025. Finalists must be available to attend.

## Eligibility

1. Awards are open to all executive and principal class, teachers, business managers and education support class employees currently employed by the Department.
2. The following awards are not open to executive and principal class employees, education support class employees or teams of teachers:
* Outstanding Primary Teacher
* Outstanding Secondary Teacher Award
* Outstanding Early Career Primary Teacher
* Outstanding Early Career Secondary Teacher
1. Principals can no longer self-nominate for Principal award categories and will be based on nominations from peers or colleagues.
2. The Outstanding Early Career Primary Teacher Award and the Outstanding Early Career Secondary Teacher Award are only open to individual teachers in the first 5 years of their teaching career.
3. Nominees for the Outstanding Business Manager Award must be currently undertaking the role of business manager or equivalent, within a Victorian government primary, secondary, P–12 or specialist school.
4. Individual awards cannot be shared between 2 or more people unless those people are sharing a single role.
5. For team awards, up to 10 members of a team can be named in the nomination process.
6. Individual award recipients are ineligible to be nominated for another award in any award category until the third year following their win. For example, a person who received an award in 2022 is not eligible to be nominated until 2025.
7. Team award recipients are not eligible to nominate for the same award category until the third year following their win. For example, a team that received an award in 2022 is not eligible to be nominated in that same category until 2025.
8. Members of a team that have won an award are ineligible to nominate in any award category until the third year following their win, either individually or as part of a team. For example, team members who received an award in 2022 will not be eligible to be nominated until 2025.
9. Award recipients of other state, national or international professional awards are eligible to nominate for the VEEA.

## The nomination process

1. Applications must be submitted online via the VEEA online nomination system, Award Force: <https://veea.awardsplatform.com/>
2. All nominees (including each nominee for a team award) must be employed by the Department at the time of nomination. This includes employees who are on approved leave.
3. Except for Principal categories, applications must be accompanied by at least 2 endorsements as outlined in the VEEA Information Pack and VEEA Nomination Endorsement Form. The Nomination Endorsement Form is available on the VEEA website and online nomination system.
4. The Outstanding Koorie Education Award requires endorsement from a school’s Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and/or local Aboriginal community organisation or group.
5. Additional, non-compulsory endorsements may also be provided, up to a total maximum of 4.
6. For the purposes of the nomination endorsement process, a ‘community business partner’ is broadly defined as encompassing the full range of organisations that schools are likely to have working relationships with, which may include not-for-profit organisations and commercial businesses.
7. Applications can be made on behalf of colleagues. However, those nominated must consent to the nomination. Consent is obtained via the online nomination system.
8. Nominators cannot endorse their own application.
9. Where the nominator is a principal, and principal endorsement is required for that award, the nominating principal must obtain at least two endorsements (either from a principal-class colleague at the nominee’s school (e.g. an assistant principal) or from the additional endorsements list).
10. Applications are assessed against the selection criteria outlined in the VEEA Information Pack and replicated on the online nomination system. Chance will not play a role in determining the shortlisted finalist selection.
11. Nominators must be current employees of the Department. This includes employees who are on approved leave.
12. The judges’ decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
13. Applications will not be accepted after 11:59 pm Monday 26 May 2025.
14. Incomplete applications, applications that do not comply with the application conditions, or applications in respect of ineligible nominees, will be rejected at the absolute discretion of the Department.

## Shortlisting

1. Judges will review each of the applications within their allocated award category via the online award system.
2. Judges score applications against each selection criteria as outlined in the VEEA Information Pack to determine the shortlist of nominees who may be invited to attend an interview. Those interviewed will be considered shortlisted nominees.
3. A legal check and a conduct and ethics check will be undertaken by the Department for all shortlisted finalists. The Department may elect to not confirm a nominee as a finalist should these checks raise concerns.

## Finalist selection and determining winners

1. Shortlisted nominees for each award category will be notified by phone and in writing.
2. Shortlisted nominees may be invited to an interview with the category judging panel. Interviews will take place online via Webex or Microsoft Teams.
3. The judging panels will confirm the finalists and determine the winners of each award category, which will be kept confidential until the VEEA presentation ceremony.
4. A separate, esteemed judging panel will select the winner of the Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education from the winners of each award category.
5. The Department reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to conduct further conducts and ethics checks, if deemed necessary.
6. The Department reserves the right, in its sole discretion, not to allocate an award in any category or to remove a nominee’s finalist status, without giving reasons.

## Finalists

1. Finalists will be notified in writing via email to the email address included in the nomination.
2. Upon being accepted as a finalist, finalists agree to:
* participate in any audio, photographic and video requirements for the VEEA presentation ceremony and award promotion
* provide permission to the Department for ongoing use of images/recordings of themselves for promotional purposes.
1. The Department reserves the right to use all, or part of any material, including submissions and photographs, for any publicity campaign related to government education in Victoria. Copyright of any materials produced during, or as a result of, the award is owned by the Department.
2. VEEA recipients agree to be ambassadors for public education and promote Victoria as the Education State.
3. VEEA finalists and winners may be invited to provide input on Departmental initiatives should their expertise be relevant.

## Award categories

1. A professional learning grant of **$20,000** is available for each **individual award** **category**:
	* Outstanding Primary Principal
	* Colin Simpson Outstanding Secondary Principal
	* Outstanding Primary Teacher
	* Outstanding Secondary Teacher
	* Outstanding Early Career Primary Teacher
	* Outstanding Early Career Secondary Teacher
	* Outstanding Business Manager.
2. A professional learning grant of **$25,000** is available for each **team award category:**
	* Outstanding School Improvement
	* Outstanding Education Support Team
	* Outstanding Inclusive Education
	* Outstanding Koorie Education
	* Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students – Primary
	* Outstanding Provision for High-Ability Students – Secondary
	* Dr Lawrie Shears Outstanding Global Teaching and Learning.
3. Award category winners are eligible for consideration for the Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education. The recipient(s) of this award will receive an **additional $20,000**.

## Professional learning grants

1. The professional learning grant provided to award recipients can only be used to fund professional learning and associated costs. This can include staff replacement costs and reasonable travel/accommodation costs to participate in the nominated activity. The total amount provided by the Department will not exceed the dollar value specified above. A list of endorsed professional learning options is provided in the VEEA Information Pack.
2. Recipients may use their grant to fund professional learning activities that benefit others, such as an individual award winner choosing a whole-of-school professional learning activity. However, only employed staff of the school are eligible to be included in the activity.
3. All recipients must prepare a Professional Learning Budget Plan and provide this to the Department within 8 weeks of receiving their award, unless otherwise agreed with the Department. The Professional Learning Budget Plan must be approved by the Department prior to a recipient undertaking professional learning against their award grant. The Professional Learning Budget Plan will be included in a Grant Pack sent to award recipients following the VEEA presentation ceremony.
4. Recipients may seek to undertake other high quality, reputable professional learning not listed in the VEEA Information Pack. To do so, recipients need to detail their proposed learning in their Professional Learning Budget Plan, which is submitted to the Department for approval.
5. Should the proposed professional learning involve interstate or international travel, travel will be approved according to the Department’s Travel Policy. Note that award recipients should consider any potential coronavirus pandemic travel restrictions when developing their Professional Learning Budget Plan.
6. Recipients can propose to undertake professional learning that exceeds the amount of their award grant, provided they are able to fund the additional costs above the amount of their award grant from other sources.
7. Funding for all activities approved on the Professional Learning Budget Plan will be administered via the Department’s Schools Targeted Funding Portal.
8. Team award recipients will self-determine how funding will be allocated across team members. Disagreement around funding allocations across team members will be resolved at the local level by the school principal (or regional director where applicable).
9. Recipients will be required to provide a full acquittal of their award grant funding and are responsible for recording and documenting their professional learning grant expenditure. This includes, but is not limited to, credit card receipts and statements, and provider invoices.
10. Recipients who do not spend their award grant amount or spend only part of their grant prior to 31 March 2027 forfeit the remaining professional learning grant amount, unless otherwise agreed with the Department.
11. The recipient of the Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education will receive an additional 12 months to spend their $20,000 professional learning grant. Recipient/s who do not spend their award grant amount prior to 31 March 2028 forfeit the remaining professional learning grant amount unless otherwise agreed with the Department.
12. A request for an extension of time to use the award grant must be made in writing by no later than 1 December 2026. Applications will be considered on merit and granted at the sole discretion of the Department.
13. Recipients of each award category are expected to remain employed by the Department for at least one year post the completion of their professional learning. If they do not remain so employed by the Department they may, at the discretion of the Department, be required to repay all monies to the Department.

## Award alumni

1. Award recipients will be required to provide a final report as evidence of their research or professional learning activity. This report can be used to share findings with the wider school system.
2. Award recipients will share and promote the outcomes of their professional learning activity with relevant local networks and across the Victorian education system.
3. Finalists and winners may be invited to provide input on Departmental initiatives should their expertise be relevant.

## Queries

1. All queries relating to the VEEA can be sent to: excellence.awards@education.vic.gov.au
1. The Outstanding Koorie Education award requires endorsement from a school’s Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and/or local Aboriginal community organisation or group. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The definition of a ‘community business partner’ broadly encompasses the full range of organisations that schools are likely to have working relationships with, which may include not-for-profit organisations and commercial businesses. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)