# 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 2 June 2025.
4. Shortlisted nominees 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.
6. The 2025 VEEA presentation ceremony will be held in the evening of Friday 24October 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. This year, the principal award category honours will be based on nominations from peers or colleagues, not self-nominations.
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 2 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.
1. 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.
1. 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.
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