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| Higher Education and Skills Group**Participation Branch Memo****Department of Education and Training** |

**TO: NUMBER: 2017/05/16**

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| Learn Local organisations *– ALL*  | ACFE Board | ACFE Regional Councils |
| Adult Education Institutions | Learn Local stakeholders  | Participation Branch staff |

**FROM:** Ryan Collins, Director, Participation Branch

**DATE:** 16 May 2017

**SUBJECT:** *2017 Victorian Learn Local Awards – Nominations close in three weeks!*

**ACTIONS / CRITICAL DATES:**

* Nominations for the 2017 Awards are currently open and will close on 9 June 2017.
* Nomination pack and forms are available at: [www.education.vic.gov.au/learnlocalawards](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/learnlocalawards)

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Nominations for the 2017 Victorian Learn Local Awards will close in just over three weeks on Friday 9 June. As previously advised in [Memo 2017/04/18,](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/training/providers/learnlocal/memo/2017/pbmemo20170418LLawards.docx) information on all of the Award categories and how to nominate is available on the Awards website at [www.education.vic.gov.au/learnlocalawards](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/learnlocalawards)

In particular, you may like to consider submitting a nomination for the new *Learn Local Volunteer Champion* Acknowledgement Award. I’m sure you all have a champion volunteer in your organisation who has assisted you greatly and who deserves recognition. The [nomination form](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/awards/2017vllanominationvolunteer.pdf) for this category only has five short questions that need to be answered so take a look!

There will be eight winners of this category across the state and each of them receive $1,000 as well as being put forward by the ACFE Board for consideration as part of the [Victorian Premier’s Volunteer Champion Awards](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/volunteering/victorian-premiers-volunteer-champions-awards) which are held in December.

There is also still time to prepare and submit a nomination for any of the other Award categories.

A representative from the 2016 winner of the Outstanding Pathways Program Award, Port Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre recently reflected on their participation in the Awards:

*The most valuable aspect of applying for the Learn Local Award for Speaking Out community leadership course was that the process encourages us to reflect on our program and what it achieves for our students. It was really constructive to gather all the information requested and put it together as a coherent whole. It is also really useful for future funding applications, publications and internal reviews.*

*The nomination process for Outstanding Pathways was relatively straightforward and we had no difficulty understanding what information was required. The challenge was to make sure that we were not repetitive in our answers and that the program’s various components were explained in a way that represented the overall experience for our students and the benefits they gained.*

 *In our case, we had the additional outcome of actually winning the award for outstanding pathways! This has had many benefits for our team, students, partnerships and our future direction.*

*One of the wonderful outcomes for the Speaking Out facilitators was it validated our approach and was a powerful morale booster. It gave us a strong sense of professional recognition and has spurred us on to create new courses using the same educational underpinnings of the course with greater confidence.*

*We were accompanied by [six] of our Speaking Out graduates to the award ceremony and they were extremely proud to be a part of the night and themselves! Receiving the award was also a celebration of their individual achievements as graduates and community leaders and how far they had progressed in their own lives. The photos of the awards were shared on our Facebook page and many of our past and present students shared in the excitement. It has also had a positive impact on our partnerships with other organisations and helped us to recruit additional students.*

*So I would encourage other Learn Locals to submit a nomination, as it is a great opportunity to reflect on and celebrate your achievements regardless of the formal outcome.*

*Robyn Szechtman – Speaking Out Course Coordinator and Voices of the South Side Project Manager*

The Awards are a great way for your organisation, learners and practitioners to gain the recognition that you all so justly deserve!

If you have any questions about the Awards, including the nomination process or categories, please contact the Victorian Learn Local Awards team at learnlocal@edumail.vic.gov.au or (03) 9637 2473.

 