

ELG Awards 2025 Category Descriptions

****NEW** Celebrating Irish Language & Culture**

The Irish language and cultural heritage are at the heart of our national identity, shaping communities and enriching local life. Local Authorities play a key role in preserving and promoting these traditions through a range of initiatives, from language revival programmes and cultural festivals to heritage conservation and support for traditional music, dance and storytelling. This award recognises projects that celebrate and sustain the Irish language, folklore and cultural heritage, ensuring these traditions continue to thrive for future generations.

Communications

Local authority communications and marketing efforts play a vital role in keeping the public informed, engaged, promoting services and projects, supporting local business and enterprise, promoting library services, and encouraging tourism, enterprise and investment. Local authority marketing and communications extend across public awareness, project communications, service promotion, brand development, tourism promotion, internal communications, and other areas. This award seeks to recognise communications and marketing campaigns that support local authorities' strategic objectives and provide a better understanding of the work and role of councils.

Climate Change

Given the growing impact and future implications of climate change, it's evident that all responsible entities must take action to address the crisis. Local authorities have actively participated in these efforts by introducing various innovative initiatives. Their focus is not only on educating but also on taking concrete actions to mitigate the effects of climate change. Through local and regional initiatives, communities have been actively involved in addressing the climate change crisis.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

As communities evolve and embrace diversity, it's crucial that every individual feels valued, heard, and able to engage fully in local society. This category

aims to commend projects that promote inclusivity, improve accessibility, and enhance the overall quality of life for diverse or marginalized groups. Successful initiatives led by local authorities encompass a range of areas, such as encouraging civic participation, providing accessible services for people with disabilities, supporting refugees, and raising awareness about gender equality, even within local government structures and decision-making processes. Community engagement lies at the heart of these initiatives, ensuring that everyone feels empowered and included in shaping their local environment.

Festival of the Year

Festivals serve as excellent opportunities to unite communities in celebration, fostering a sense of togetherness. Likewise, marking landmark occasions and centenaries plays a vital role in strengthening local bonds and instilling pride in the area. This award celebrates the most outstanding and innovative festival or event organised by or in collaboration with a Local Authority, held virtually or in-person.

Initiative through the Municipal Districts

The Local Government Reform Act of 2014 introduced Municipal Districts as a progressive county-wide governance and decision-making system. This award aims to acknowledge initiatives that enhance the role of municipal district members in improving local authority effectiveness. These initiatives are evaluated based on their impact on governance, local representation, council proceedings, community involvement, and overall economic, social, and local development.

Age Friendly Initiative

This award acknowledges outstanding programs implemented by Local Authorities that take the initiative in reshaping perspectives on aging. It highlights efforts to transform how services are conceived and provided, with the goal of fostering communities where older individuals lead lives that are valued and appreciated.

Health & Wellbeing

This award aims to recognise initiatives by a Local Authority aimed at promoting the health and wellbeing of its community. These efforts may encompass various initiatives such as developing active transport infrastructure, implementing health and sports programs, creating outdoor recreational areas, establishing facilities supporting physical activities, conducting awareness campaigns and more.

Supporting Sustainable Communities

This award aims to acknowledge projects led by Local Authorities that foster social awareness and engage communities in enhancing their localities as better places to live and work. This category celebrates initiatives promoting sustainable communities, community development, or contributing to an improved quality of life within an area.

Promoting Economic Development

The partnership between businesses and local authorities significantly impacts the local economy. This award recognises projects that have strengthened this relationship and introduced innovative initiatives. These include supporting women in the workforce, establishing digital hubs to facilitate remote working, and other initiatives aimed at bolstering the local economy through the direct collaboration between local government and businesses, their primary funders.

Supporting Tourism

Tourism plays a crucial role in the Irish economy, bringing positive impacts for communities and businesses. This award aims to acknowledge efforts by local authorities in promoting and expanding tourism offerings within their local areas. Additionally, it recognises initiatives that help residents appreciate the tourism attractions within their communities.

Local Authority Innovation

This award celebrates innovation within Local Authorities, regardless of scale or area. Examples could range from implementing new technologies and innovative service delivery methods to projects that are unique and original in the landscape of Irish local government.

Sustainable Environment & Biodiversity

This award recognises a Local Authority that works to develop, promote and foster initiatives that support the sustainable development of their local environment. Projects in this category should be outward looking and seek to promote sustainable or low- carbon approaches to protecting our environment and might include work on a diverse range of areas, from enhancing biodiversity to reducing waste or improving air quality.

Sustaining the Arts

The arts faced significant challenges during the pandemic. Sustained support for the arts is vital for maintaining the vibrancy of a region's cultural scene and provides a means for communities to find inspiration and celebrate creativity together. Art serves as a vehicle for expressing values, bridging cultural divides, and uniting us despite our differences. This award acknowledges Local Authority initiatives aimed at advancing or promoting the arts within their locality.

Heritage & Built Environment

This category celebrates best in class by a Local Authority to promote public interest in, and knowledge, appreciation and protection of local heritage sites. This can include enhancement or protection of the heritage environment, such as historic sites, promotion of cultural heritage, archaeological heritage and more.

Urban Revival

This award recognises initiatives that enhance urbanism by improving the quality of life in urban environments. Examples of such initiatives may include programs to reduce vacancies in urban cores, renovating buildings for residential purposes, creating pedestrian friendly streets and town centres, implementing sustainable mobility programs, repurposing civic buildings, community art programs, or any other initiative aimed at enhancing urban quality of life.