



City of Vaughan's 2026 Accessibility Champion Awards

Small Business or Organization

This category recognizes a small business or organization that makes outstanding contributions to accessibility and inclusion. Small businesses or organizations are defined as having less than 99 employees. Nominations should be for initiatives and achievements undertaken in the past two calendar years (2024 and 2025).

To be considered for the Award, the business or organization must fit at least one of the following criteria:

- Provides goods or services to people with disabilities in Vaughan and go above and beyond to enrich the lives of people with disabilities.
- Shows leadership in integrating and providing barrier-free working conditions for people with disabilities beyond compliance required by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- Makes measurable progress in the recruitment, hiring, retention and advancement to leadership positions of individuals with disabilities.

Examples of relevant initiatives or activities may include:

- developing a diversity and inclusion plan that includes disability.
- participating in job fairs or other recruitment targeting talent with disabilities.
- sponsoring internships or fellowships for students or recent graduates with disabilities.
- doing outreach to high schools and colleges to broaden the recruitment pipeline for young people living with disabilities.

Eligibility

To be eligible for this category, nominees must be:

- located in York Region and provide services to residents of the city of Vaughan.
- non-profit or for-profit.
- employing less than 99 individuals.

Nominees are only eligible to be nominated for one category.

Ineligible nominations include:

- elected members of federal, provincial or municipal governments.
- current City of Vaughan committee, board or task force members.
- current City of Vaughan employees.
- current Vaughan Public Libraries employees.
- current members of the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- nominees with a [Conflict of Interest](#) (see below).

Submission Package Checklist

- ☐ Signed consent and conflict of interest form.
- ☐ A detailed description of the nominee's work and initiatives in the established category.
- ☐ Three to five signed testimonials that speak to the contributions and impact of the individual/group to accessibility in the city of Vaughan.

Evaluation

The evaluation committee will consider the entire application and the provided information. To support the nomination, consider providing:

- evidence of work done to increase labour market participation.
- evidence the local community has benefited from the endeavour of the nominee (e.g. advocating inclusion in other areas of the community beyond the labour market).
- demonstrated excellence in minimizing barriers to employment.
- profile or visibility of the nominee within the community as a role model or a leader in accessibility and inclusion.
- evidence of collaboration and partnership results in measurable improvement for people living with disabilities.
- innovation to service with measurable improvement related to access and inclusion for people living with a disability.
- advocacy with measurable improvement related to access and inclusion for people living with a disability.
- description of a product invented with descriptions of intended impact for people living with disabilities.

Testimonials

Nominations require three to five signed testimonials (electronic signature or scanned copy of the signed letter) of support that speak to the business's or organization's contribution and their impact on accessibility and inclusion within Vaughan. Each testimonial will be weighted separately. Testimonials must be from individuals who are not the nominator. The testimonial writers should:

- be able to explain the nominee's work and its impacts.
- support the nomination.

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Testimonials should demonstrate excellence as it relates to accessibility in one or more of the following categories:

- leadership.
- innovation to service for people living with disabilities.
- invention of a product for people with disabilities.
- collaboration and partnership.
- public education and awareness campaigns or activities.
- furthering the development of accessibility.
- demonstrated commitment to recruiting, hiring and training people with disabilities.
- impact on the community and individuals with disabilities.

Additional Information

If you believe any additional information highlights the nominee's contribution, there is a section in the application to upload this material. This may include, but is not limited to, news articles, committee work, and business or non-profit organization profiles.



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Consent and Conflict of Interest Declaration

(To be filled out by the nominee)

The completion of this nomination process and the forwarding of the nomination for consideration require signed consent from an individual with delegated signing authority from the nominated business or organization. This person could be the CEO, Executive Director, Board Chair or a person in a similar position.

Consent is required for the following purposes:

1. The collection of information from a nominator or an individual chosen by the party making the nomination (hereinafter referred to as "nominator"). The nominator will provide testimonials that include information about the business or organization, including, but not limited to, corporate profile, accomplishments, achievements, awards, exemplary standards and/or any other information needed to meet the merit criteria.
2. Have the business or organization's name, reason for nomination and/or information collected shared publicly on the City of Vaughan's website and promote the awards via social media should the business or organization receive the Award.

Participation in this nomination process is voluntary. Should you refuse to provide your consent, the business or organization will not be considered for the Award.

If you do not wish to provide consent or be considered for the Award, please notify your nominator immediately so the business or organization can be removed from consideration.

I, _____, in the position of _____,
NAME TITLE
at the _____, confirm that I have delegated signing authority to
NOMINEE
provide consent on behalf of _____.
NOMINEE

I, _____, confirm that I have read and understand the information
NAME
contained in this document and provide consent for the collection and use of information in support of the nomination and subsequent consideration for the City's Accessibility Champion Awards. I further acknowledge and understand if the business or organization is chosen as the Award recipient, I agree to have the business or organization's name, reason for nomination and/or other information collected made public.

I, _____, agree to declare any conflicts of interests for the
NAME
business or organization as it pertains to the nomination and subsequent consideration for the
City's Accessibility Champion Awards in accordance with [*Municipal Conflict of Interest Act,*](#)
[*RSO 1990, c M.50.*](#)

On behalf of _____ I agree to accept this nomination.
NOMINEE

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____