



## City of Vaughan's 2026 Accessibility Champion Awards

# Terms of Reference

### Introduction

- The City of Vaughan operates within a two-tier municipal structure, with York Region being the higher level of government. Vaughan is one of the municipalities within York Region.
- The Accessibility Champion Awards celebrate individuals and businesses in Vaughan that foster inclusivity and demonstrate an exemplary commitment to advancing accessibility throughout the city.

### Objective of the Award

- To recognize and honour businesses and individuals in Vaughan that have shown outstanding commitment to promoting accessibility and inclusivity.
- To raise awareness about the importance of accessibility and encourage more entities to take proactive steps in this direction.

### Eligibility Criteria

- **Geographic Eligibility:** Individual nominees must be located within the city of Vaughan. Groups and businesses may be based in York Region, provided they serve residents of Vaughan. For the post-secondary student category, nominations are accepted from across the province, as long as the student's primary address is in Vaughan.
- Demonstrated commitment to advancing accessibility in the city of Vaughan or their respective institutions (for students).

### Award Categories

- **Individual or Group:** Recognizing individuals or groups who have made significant contributions to advancing accessibility in Vaughan.
- **Small Business (1 to 99 employees):** Honoring small businesses or non-profit organizations that have implemented accessibility measures and fostered inclusivity.
- **Medium Business (100 to 499 employees):** Celebrating medium-sized businesses or non-profit organizations that have shown a strong commitment to accessibility.
- **Large Business (more than 500 employees):** Recognizing large businesses or non-profit organizations that lead by example in promoting accessibility and inclusivity.
- **Students (Elementary, Secondary School, Post-Secondary):** Acknowledging students in elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools who have taken initiatives or shown commitment to advancing accessibility.

## Nomination/Application Process

- **Submission Package Checklist:**
  - Signed consent and conflict of interest form from the nominee or their legal guardian.
  - A detailed description (500 to 1,000 words) of the nominee's initiatives, achievements and contributions.
  - Three to five signed testimonials (up to 500 words each) are encouraged. Testimonials should evidence excellence in areas like leadership, service innovation, invention of a product, collaboration and partnership, public education campaigns, development of accessibility initiatives, commitment to recruiting and impact on the community.
- **Evaluation:** The evaluation committee will assess the entirety of the application and the quality of the information provided. Considerations include community profile, evidence of collaborative partnerships, innovative service improvements, public education campaigns and promotion of full inclusion.

## Evaluation Process

- The City's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) will review all nominations.
- Nominees with the highest scores in each category will be selected for final consideration by the Committee Chair.
- Award recipients will be determined at an AAC meeting.
- In the event of a tie, committee members will vote to make the final decision.

## Award Benefits

- Recognition during an award ceremony.
- Winners' names and contributions posted on the City's website.

## Timeline

- Nominations will be open between January and February every other year.
- The AAC will utilize the March AAC meeting to evaluate and vote on the winners for each category.
- Council will receive the recommendations from the AAC during the April Council meeting with the purpose of ratifying.
- The awards will be presented at a Committee or Council meeting in May to align with National AccessAbility Week.

## Confidentiality and Ethics

- All nominations will be treated with confidentiality.
- AAC members will adhere to ethical considerations and avoid conflicts of interest during the selection process.

## Dispute Resolution

- A designated Committee Chair or the Integrity Commissioner will address any disputes related to the award process.

## Terms and Conditions

- Awardees and nominators must adhere to the guidelines and criteria set by AAC.
- The decision of AAC in the selection process is final.

## Contact Information

- For more information or queries, individuals can contact [accessibility@vaughan.ca](mailto:accessibility@vaughan.ca).

## Annexes

- **Consent and Conflict of Interest Declaration Form:**
  - Conflict of Interest Declaration