



LGFA TAITUARĀ

Local Government Excellence Awards



EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2026

Application information
and entry form



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Morrison Low
Advisory

The LGFA Taituarā Local Government Excellence Awards® recognise outstanding programmes, projects and approaches that demonstrate professional excellence in local government management. Councils are encouraged to enter to gain recognition for their excellent work. All New Zealand councils, or council-controlled organisations (CCO) are encouraged to enter and showcase their achievements.

Award winners will be announced at the LGFA Taituarā Local Government Excellence Awards event in Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington on 18 June 2026.

2026 Awards Categories

The Award for Digital Local Government

How is your council making use of the power of technology?

This category recognises the successful application of digital or technological solutions that transform services, enhance democratic participation, or improve community outcomes. Project learnings must be transferable to other local authorities.

The Award for Excellence in Community Engagement

Are your council's community relationships delivering results?

This category recognises initiatives that demonstrate exceptional community engagement or empowerment beyond statutory requirements. Project learnings must be transferable to other local authorities.

The Award for Excellence in Collaborating for Results

What benefits has your community achieved through your council working with other local or central government agencies?

This category recognises achievements through collaboration with government agencies, community, or private organisations. Project learnings must be transferable to other local authorities.

The Award for Excellence in Placemaking

Is your council making the community a better place to live?

This category recognises programmes or projects that shape vibrant local economies, cultures or societal outcomes. Project learnings must be transferable to other local authorities.

The Award for Excellence in Māori – Council Partnerships

Is your council working effectively in partnership with Māori? Kei te āta mahi tahi rānei tō kaunihera ki a ngāi Māori?

E aro ana tēnei wāhanga ki ngā hōtaka, ngā kaupapa rānei e whakaatu ana i te takohanga mauroa o te mahi tahi ki a ngāi Māori. E wātea ana ki ngā wāhanga katoa o ngā mahi kaunihera ā-rohe, engari me taea te whakaatu i te wāhi ki te ao Māori me te mārama, te

whakatinanatanga hoki o ngā mātāpono o te Tiriti.

This category recognises programmes, projects or initiatives that show a demonstrable and ongoing commitment to working in partnership with Māori. Entries may come from any area of local government activity but must be able to demonstrate the application of Te Ao Māori or an understanding and application of Te Tiriti principles.

The Award for Excellence in Environmental Leadership

How is your council modelling environmental sustainability?

This category recognises programmes, projects, or initiatives that provide tangible benefits to the environment, or showcase leading practice in managing environmental impacts in the local community. Project learnings must be transferable to other local authorities.

The Award for Excellence in Cost Effectiveness

Is your council getting better outcomes through improved efficiencies?

This category recognises programmes or projects that achieve significant cost reductions without compromising outcomes. Project learnings must be transferable to other local authorities.

Guidelines to completing the Entry Form

Project Summary (200 words)

Provide a high-level overview or Executive Summary. This section is not scored but will be used for media purposes if the entry is successful.

Strategic Context (20 marks – 400 words)

Entries must include:

- Evidence of need and rationale
- Anticipated outcomes and linkage between to the project
- Alignment to the council's strategic direction
- Risk identification and mitigation

Project Management – (15 Marks – 300 words)

Entries must include:

- Scope, timeframes, resources, and governance
- Quality assurance systems were used

Relationship Management – (15 Marks – 300 words)

Entries must include:

- Communication tools used
- Audiences engaged
- Engagement with 'hard to reach' groups

Project Success (50 Marks, 1200 words)

Entries must include:

- Before and after comparison
- Success criteria and evidence
- Barriers overcome
- Lessons learned and internal sharing
- Integration into business-as-usual
- Transferability to other local authorities

Important Notes

- Entries must not exceed 2400 words. If an entry exceeds this limit by more than 100 words, Taituarā may:
 - Disregard excess material
 - Return the entry for revision
 - Decline the entry
- Entries must stand alone. The judges will not review attachments or embedded links.
- Entries can only be submitted in one category, entries that divide projects into components for entry into multiple categories will not be accepted.
- Visual aids (photos, diagrams) may be included to support or illustrate points made in the written entry.
- Entrants must have rights to all materials used and agree to indemnify Taituarā against any intellectual property claims.
- To ensure your application is processed promptly, please limit your file name length – we suggest using the format: Council Name – Project Name.



Conditions of Entry

Entry is open to all New Zealand local authorities or CCOs.

Each entry must include:

- Completed and signed entry form
- Proof of ticket purchase for the awards event
- Written entry specifying category and criteria
- A mandatory video (max 3 minutes, 16:9 format, 1080p, via YouTube or Vimeo).
Entries without a video will be disqualified

Submit entries via email to awards@taituara.org.nz by midday on Friday 13 March.
Incomplete entries will be returned.

Entrants agree to present at up to two Taituarā events if selected. Travel costs will be covered. Failure to comply may result in withdrawal of awards.

Entrants confirm all materials used are their own and indemnify Taituarā against any claims.

LGFA Taituarā Local Government Excellence Awards® - Conditions of Entry

<p>Entry Category</p> <p><i>please tick one only for each entry – refer to the information on categories</i></p>	<p>The Award for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Digital Local Government <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Community Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Collaborating for Results <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Placemaking <input type="checkbox"/> Te Tohu Waka Hourua (the Double Canoe) – Excellence in Māori- Council Partnerships <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Environmental Leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence in Cost Effectiveness
<p>Name of Organisation submitting entry</p>	
<p>Name of Project</p>	
<p>Project Summary (word limit – 200)</p>	<p>Send as an attachment.</p>
<p>Strategic Context – 20 marks (word limit – 400)</p>	
<p>Project Management – 15 marks (word limit – 300)</p>	
<p>Relationship Management – 15 marks (word limit – 300)</p>	
<p>Project Success – 50 marks (word limit – 1200 words)</p>	
<p>Checklist of other entry requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A two to three-minute video must be uploaded on YouTube or Vimeo. <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation that at least one ticket has been purchased for the 2026 LGFA Taituarā Local Government Excellence Awards event being held in Wellington on the 18 June 2026. <i>Note if only one ticket is purchased then the ticket holder should be the person listed below (award recipient).</i>
<p>Contact details of person attending the Awards event to accept the award (note awards are announced at the event)</p>	<p>Name:</p> <p>Phone:</p> <p>Email:</p>

<p>Contact details of the person to contact at your organisation in respect to this entry, as well as an alternative contact, or an Executive Assistant, Team administrator if they have one</p>	<p>Name: Phone: Email:</p>
	<p>Alternative contact: Name: Phone: Email:</p>
<p>Signature of your organisation's Chief Executive or Nominee</p>	<p>I, the undersigned, have understood and agree to the conditions of entry into the LGFA Taituarā Local Government Excellence Awards®.</p> <p>Signature: Name: Title: Date:</p>

Entry Instructions

Once completed please print, sign, scan and email this entry to awards@taituara.org.nz.

All applications must be received no later than midday on Friday 13 March 2026.



Taituarā — Local Government Professionals Aotearoa

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