

Meath Volunteer Centre

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volunteer centre

Ionad d'Obair Dheonach Mí

MEATH

PRESS RELEASE

31st August

The Search is on for Meath's Best Volunteers!

Nominations Open for Tenth Volunteer Ireland Awards

Meath Volunteer Centre today (31/08/17) announced that nominations for the tenth annual Volunteer Ireland Awards are now open. The awards are open to volunteers of all ages in the Republic of Ireland. There are ten different award categories, along with the prestigious *Christine Buckley Volunteer of the Year* award.

Speaking at the launch, Meath Volunteer Centre Manager Emma Golesworthy said, "People from all walks of life, all ages and all backgrounds volunteer. These awards provide an opportunity to showcase this diverse group of people and say thank you for their remarkable work. We have seen award nominees from as young as nine to as old as eighty and from as far away as Zambia and East Timor. What connects them all is the immense contribution to Irish society that they make."

"Volunteer Ireland's recent [report](#) on volunteering and well-being showed that a critical factor that contributes to a positive volunteering experience was the feeling of being valued and appreciated. We encourage organisations to show appreciation for their

volunteers every day and these awards shine a light on volunteers around the country by celebrating our local volunteers on a national level.”

“The report also showed that volunteering has a positive impact on volunteers with 55% of volunteers experiencing an increase in their mental health and well-being and 65% experiencing an increase in their self-esteem. Although volunteers reap many benefits from volunteering they typically never look for recognition or shout about what they do. That’s why we need the public’s help. We’re calling on members of the public now to say thank you to their local volunteers by nominating an outstanding volunteer or group of volunteers they know.”

Anyone can nominate a volunteer, and the ten categories are:

- Animals and Environment
- Arts, Culture and Media
- Campaigning and Awareness Raising
- Children and Youth
- Community
- Safety and Emergency Services
- Health and Disability
- Social Work and Social Inclusion
- Sports and Recreation
- Outstanding Group

This year sees the introduction of a new award for groups, to recognise the teams of volunteers across the country that work together to make a difference. There will also be a special commendation for Volunteer Manager of the Year. Last year Meath had finalists in two categories including Volunteer Manager of the Year. Every single person nominated for an award will receive a special ‘thank you’ card from Volunteer Ireland.

All shortlisted applicants are automatically eligible for the overall Volunteer of the Year Award. Nominations close at midnight on Friday 6th October and can be made online at www.volunteer.ie. The Christine Buckley Volunteer of the Year Award along with the ten category winners will be announced at a gala awards ceremony on Friday 1st December in the Radisson Hotel, Sligo. The event fittingly coincides with the closing ceremony that ends

Sligo's year as the European Volunteering Capital. All shortlisted nominees along with their guests will be invited to the ceremony to enjoy a much-deserved night of celebration.

ENDS

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About Meath Volunteer Centre:

Meath Volunteer Centre is a county-wide community based service that offers a recruitment and placement service available to anybody living in County Meath who is interested in volunteering. Meath Volunteer Centre also provides support and training to organisations in County Meath on all aspects of volunteer management in order to encourage best practise across the sector.

About Volunteer Ireland:

Volunteer Ireland is the national volunteer development agency and a support body for all local Volunteer Centres in Ireland. Our vision is every person connected to and participating in their communities to build a better Irish society. Volunteer Ireland works to increase awareness of, access to and quality in volunteering in Ireland. For further information, visit: <http://www.volunteer.ie/>

As part of this year's Volunteer Ireland Awards campaign, one of the shortlisted nominees will receive the Community Hero Award, a lifetime achievement award honouring a volunteer who has – over the course of their life – made an extraordinary contribution to a good cause. The Community Hero Award is a unique collaboration between the Volunteer Ireland Awards and the Charity Impact Awards. More information about the Charity Impact Awards will be available shortly at www.charityimpactawards.ie.