



SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES AWARDS

Categories & Criteria

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SSSA 2023

The Scottish Social Services Awards have been celebrating individuals and organisations who demonstrate best practice in the social services sector since 2017. These awards exist to highlight commitment, innovative approaches, and ultimately raise the profile and value of the sector. Sector partners promote the event and support the judging process.

The Awards invite individual and organisational nominations from across Scotland to showcase examples of best practice in the social services sector. Applications will be scored by a judging panel comprised of Scottish Government policy officials and key sector stakeholders. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an in-person awards ceremony on the evening of 23 November 2023 where winners will be announced.

All shortlisted candidates will be required to take part in a short video outlining their work and the reason they are nominated. Filming will take place in October.

For more information about the Scottish Social Services Awards, please email SSSA@speak.co.uk
For press enquiries, please email: OCSWA@gov.scot

Key Dates

Awards open – 07 August

Entry deadline – 6pm, 01 September

Shortlist announced – Late September

Filming of Shortlisted applications – October

Winners announced – 23 November

If you are experiencing problems with the online entry form or have any questions about the entry process please contact SSSA@speak.co.uk





Award Categories

Category 1: Excellence in Children's Services

The Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach supports children and young people to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected and to realise their full potential. At home, in school or the wider community, every child and young person should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, and included.

This award is open to: Teams and organisations

We are looking for teams and organisations that can demonstrate they:

- Excel in using the GIRFEC approach to support children and families in need in imaginative and child centred ways.
- Apply trauma informed relationship-based practice in action across the service or team and can evidence clear benefits for the child and family from this approach.
- Listen and act on what they hear from children and families.
- Work effectively across disciplines, sectors and services for the benefit of children and families.

Category 2: Excellence in Adult Services

The Health and Social Care Standards seek to support better outcomes for people using health, social work and social care support services. The standards set out the expectation that people should be treated with dignity and respect and that services should be flexible and innovative in how they support people.

This award is open to: Teams and organisations

We are looking for teams and organisations that can demonstrate they:

- Provide excellent, high-quality services for those they support.
- Support people to be independent through flexible, responsive support approaches.
- Promote people's rights and choices and encourage them to be part of their community.
- Work effectively in collaboration with other services, sectors, and disciplines for the benefit of the people they support.

Award Categories

Category 3: Excellence in Mental Health Services

People experiencing mental health problems should get the right support, in the right place at the right time, whenever they ask for help. The [Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy \(2023\)](#) sets out what an effective system to support people's mental health and wellbeing looks like. The strategy recognises the critical contribution of high-quality supports and services to people's recovery and wellbeing.

This award is open to: Teams and organisations

We are looking for teams and organisations that can demonstrate they:

- Provide high quality, timely and effective support to promote and support people's mental health and wellbeing.
- Improve the quality of life for people with mental health conditions.
- Work creatively and effectively with people experiencing mental health problems to help them to live their best lives possible and fulfil their potential.
- Ensure that people with lived experience shape the services and supports they provide.

Category 4: Excellence in Disabilities Services

To make Scotland equal and inclusive disabled people must have equality and be able to fully realise their human rights. [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(UNCPRD\)](#) sets out what disabled people should expect from the system to uphold their rights.

This award is open to: Teams and organisations

We are looking for teams and organisations that can demonstrate they:

- Focus on supporting disabled people to get the right support to live their best lives possible.
- Have human rights/children's rights embedded in their practice/ the way they support people.
- Ensure that disabled people shape the services and supports they provide.
- Focus on removing the barriers disabled people face in their lives. This might include physical access, access to work/education or other barriers.

Award Categories

Category 5: Excellence in Justice Services

The Vision for Justice in Scotland (2022) is for a “just, safe, and resilient Scotland.” To deliver that vision we need justice processes and supports that are fair, proportionate, and effective. We also need interventions that reduce crime and unintentional harm in our communities; tackling societal and structural issues such as poverty, addictions and adverse childhood experiences.

This award is open to: Teams and organisations

We are looking for teams and organisations that can demonstrate they:

- Work together to address the underlying causes of crime and support everyone to live full and healthy lives.
- Promote a society in which people feel, and are, safer in their communities.
- Have effective, person-centred, and trauma-informed approaches to justice in which everyone can have trust, including as victims, those accused of crimes and as individuals in civil disputes.
- Support rehabilitation and work to reduce reoffending and repeat victimisation.

Category 6: Outstanding Residential Care Service

Residential care can provide a safe place for some adults and children who require high levels of support to live their lives. This type of support requires particular skills and commitment to make sure that people’s rights, independence and dignity are upheld and supported. This award celebrates the teams and organisations who provide high quality support in residential care.

This award is open to: Teams and organisations

We are looking for teams and organisations that can demonstrate they:

- Embrace people’s rights and choice in the support they provide, balancing the challenges of competing rights in a group setting.
- Understand and demonstrate relationship based and trauma informed practice, recovery, and development in services and in individual practise.
- Work in collaboration with the community and other services and sectors to ensure the people they support live their best lives possible.
- Are flexible and innovative in their approach to residential care and support.

Award Categories

Category 7: Bright Spark in Social Work

Do you know a great social work student or newly qualified social worker (NQSW)? This award celebrates the achievements and potential of new entrants to the profession.

This award is open to individuals.

- Social Work Students undertaking practice placements (or who have completed practice placement(s) in the last year.
- Social workers within their first two years of practice.

We are looking for people who can demonstrate they:

- Make a real difference to those they work with.
- Bring enthusiasm and commitment to their practice in social work.
- Understand and apply their social work studies effectively and creatively to their practice.
- Are proud of being a social worker and are ambassadors for the profession and the work they do.

Category 8: Bright Spark in Social Care - In Partnership with CCPS

Do you know of a great worker in care and support who is new to their role? This award celebrates the achievements and potential of someone new to working in social care support.

This award is open to: Social care workers who are new to the sector (within 2 years of entering the sector).

We are looking for people who can demonstrate they:

- Make a real difference to those they work with.
- Understand and apply their learning effectively and creatively to their work.
- Bring enthusiasm and commitment to their practice in social care support.
- Are keen to learn, to develop themselves and to continue to work in the sector.
- Are proud of the work they do and are ambassadors for their area of work.

Award Categories

Category 9: Leadership Award - In Partnership with SWS

Effective leadership enables workers to do their best work and is a key factor in ensuring that social work and social care support works well for the people we support.

There are six capabilities that make up effective leadership in social work and social care including vision, creativity and innovation, self-leadership, collaborating and influencing, motivating and inspiring, and empowering (SSSC). These capabilities recognise the skills required to navigate the increasingly complex operating context for the sector and the need for collaborative, systemic and compassionate leadership for change.

This award is open to: Individual leaders across the social services sector.

We are looking for individual leaders who can demonstrate:

- The SSSC's six leadership capabilities in their practice.
- Navigate the complexities of the sector, collaborating effectively with others.
- Inspire teams, workers, and organisations to make positive change and improvement.
- Put staff wellbeing at the forefront of their practice.

Category 10: Social Care Worker of The Year

Do you know someone working in social care and support who has demonstrated excellent practice to provide the best support possible to the people they work with?

This award is open to: Individual SSSC registered workers in social care and support.

We are looking for people who can demonstrate:

- Social care and support practice that is led and shaped by the people they support.
- Upholding people's human rights in the support they provide.
- Going above and beyond in their role to support people.

Award Categories

Category 11: Social Worker of The Year - In Partnership with SASW

Relationship-based practice is at the heart of what social workers do. Social work has always had a strong human rights and ethical basis that emphasises the importance of building a positive, professional relationship with those accessing support as well as with multidisciplinary colleagues. Social workers skilfully balance any tensions between the rights and responsibilities of the people who use services and the legitimate requirements of the wider public.

This award is open to: Individual registered social workers.

We are looking for people who can demonstrate:

- Exceptional service which has improved the lives of the individuals they work with.
- The importance of social work within the wider public service.
- Use of their skills in relationship-based practice to work with those accessing support and colleagues in multidisciplinary settings to play to each other's strengths to achieve best possible outcomes.
- Effective balancing of the tension between meeting the needs of the people who they work with and the legitimate requirements of the wider public.

Category 12: Outstanding Contribution to Social Services

This Award recognises those who have demonstrated a deep commitment to social services and excelled in a career supporting the most vulnerable in our society. Open to any individual who is registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (so anyone working in social work or social care). We encourage organisations and individuals to nominate their long-serving colleagues for this lifetime achievement award.

This award is open to: Individuals registered with the Scottish Social Services Council.

We are looking for people who can demonstrate:

- They made a major contribution to an organisation or community and have devoted their time and energy to achieving sustained positive change, over the span of their working life.

Terms & Conditions

Have permission to enter

If you are entering as an individual, you must have permission from your organisation and if you are nominating someone else you should also obtain their permission in writing. You will not be able to complete your online application unless you can confirm that you have permission.

Be registered with the SSSC

Or work for an organisation which is inspected by the Care Inspectorate.

Fall within the timeframe

Entries must be current and you should be able to provide evidence of practice or work carried out within the last two years (up to 31 July 2023). You will also be asked to provide details of any awards your entry has already won.

Use plain English

Avoid the use of jargon, use of acronyms or social services words and phrases – imagine that you are explaining it to a stranger.

Have to be within the word count

No more than 600, or you risk being disqualified.

Be on time

Entries must be submitted before the deadline of 6.00pm on Friday 01 September 2023.

Attend the Awards if shortlisted

You should be able to send a representative to the ceremony on Thursday 23 November 2023.

Give permission to be published

We may mention you in press releases sent to the media, if shortlisted.

Be contactable

Cooperate to produce a short promotional film, agree to being filmed at a location of your choice and provide supporting information (pictures and logos) if shortlisted.

Judging process

Entries are judged by a panel comprised of Scottish Government policy officials and key sector stakeholders. They will meet to judge and agree a shortlist of three finalists in each category. The shortlist is expected to be announced late September.