



**The Premier's Council  
on the Status of  
Persons with Disabilities**  
**Awards of Excellence**

## Nomination Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to provide information and answer questions about the Awards of Excellence nomination and selection process. More information and nomination forms are available from the Premier's Council office. Call toll free 1-800-272-8841, e-mail to [pcspd@gov.ab.ca](mailto:pcspd@gov.ab.ca) or visit the Premier's Council website at [www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/CSS/premiers\\_council](http://www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/CSS/premiers_council)



## About the Awards

In 2002, the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities published the *Alberta Disability Strategy*. The Strategy noted that full citizenship for persons with disabilities is possible but required the proper support and commitment of individuals, organizations and governments. The Premier's Council Awards of Excellence were created to encourage this support and commitment and to work toward the full integration and inclusion of persons with disabilities in society.

The intent of the program is to publicly honour the efforts and accomplishments of individuals, groups, businesses, and organizations to develop barrier free environments in Alberta. Special recognition is given to individual Albertans who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in making positive, progressive and sustained change towards the full inclusion of persons with disabilities.

The Premier's Council knows that those who affect change are often persons without disabilities. That's why organizations and individuals recognized with an award may or may not be directly involved in disability

programs or services. They will, however, have one thing in common – a commitment to the full inclusion of persons with disabilities as demonstrated by their actions.

Public recognition through the awards program raises awareness among Albertans of the need for and benefits of barrier-free, inclusive environments and provides ideas, inspiration and encouragement to others.

Barrier-free environments are defined as those that enable Albertans, regardless of their physical or mental abilities, to participate in everyday life. Barriers to inclusion may include physical or systemic structures and landscapes, transportation, communication, lack of personal supports, policies and laws, attitudes and behaviours. These barriers may exist at school, work, at home or in the community.

The Premier's Council Awards of Excellence are presented annually. Award winners are formally recognized each year in December as part of the United Nations' International Day of Disabled Persons celebrations. The first Awards of Excellence were presented in 2003.





## Award Categories

There are two types of awards: the Gary McPherson Leadership Award and the Premier's Council Awards of Excellence. An individual, team or organization may receive only one award each year. The Premier's Council reserves the right not to select a winner in one or more categories.

### Gary McPherson Award

Awarded to individual Albertans who have demonstrated outstanding leadership or achievement in enhancing or enriching the lives of persons with disabilities and who exemplify the qualities and values of Gary McPherson. There may be more than one winner each year.

Dr. Gary McPherson has spent his lifetime furthering the ideals of equality and citizenship for all Albertans. His values of hospitality, trust, tolerance, respect, courage and love bring people together for the benefit of individuals and society as a whole.

Dr. McPherson was instrumental in establishing the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities in 1988 and served as its first chair for 10 years. He has an extensive volunteer background, including 20 years in wheelchair sports administration. He continues to have a positive impact on provincial and national policy and programs affecting persons with disabilities.

### Premier's Council Awards of Excellence

Awards of Excellence may be presented for achievement in four categories. Individuals, teams and organizations are eligible to win. The categories are:

- **Education**  
Awarded to a person, team or organization that has made a significant contribution to a barrier-free and inclusive program, classroom or facility within a school or post-secondary institution.
- **Employment**  
Awarded to a person, team or organization that has made a significant contribution to a barrier-free, inclusive environment within the workplace.
- **Community**  
Awarded to a person, team or organization that has made a significant contribution to a barrier-free, inclusive environment within their community. This may be a neighbourhood, village, town, city, county, municipal district or region in Alberta.
- **Public Awareness**  
Awarded to a person, team or organization that has increased the public's awareness of the benefits and value of a barrier-free, inclusive environment. This may be done through public relations, marketing, media, publicity, advertising, promotions or the arts.

## Eligibility Criteria

Any individual, team or organization in Alberta may be nominated for an award except Premier's Council members and staff. To be eligible for an award:

- Nominees must be directly involved in an initiative, project or achievement that has helped created a barrier-free, inclusive environment for persons with disabilities in Alberta. A barrier-free, inclusive environment is defined as one in which any person can access and be a part of, regardless of his or her physical or mental abilities;
- The initiative, project or achievement must have a positive, sustained impact on persons with disabilities and the greater community;
- There must be some objective evaluation or measure of the initiative, project or achievement's impact, value or benefit;
- An individual nominee must be an Alberta resident; and
- A team or organization nominee must have a permanent, established presence in Alberta.

## Selection process

A selection panel appointed by the Premier's Council reviews the nominations and recommends award winners to the Premier's Council. The Premier's Council determines the award winners. Its decision is final and cannot be appealed.

## Awards notification

The Premier's Council will notify award winners on or before November 15. Award winners will be asked to consent to have their name, picture and award information used for promotion and publicity purposes.

## Nominations

Any individual may nominate a person, team or organization for an award. Self-nominations are acceptable. A nominator must:

- Fill out an official nomination form available on-line at [www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/CSS/premiers\\_council](http://www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/CSS/premiers_council) or by calling toll free 1-800-272-8841;
- Provide name(s) and full contact information for the nominee(s) and the nominator;
- Indicate the award category for which the nomination is being made;
- Provide sufficient detail of the nominated initiative, project or achievement. This should include a description of how the initiative, project or achievement developed or significantly enhanced a barrier-free, inclusive environment for persons with disabilities. This background information should be no more than 500 words;
- Provide a minimum of two letters supporting the nomination;
- Sign the nomination form; and
- Submit the nomination electronically, by mail or by fax to the Premier's Council before the deadline.

**Nomination Deadline  
is September 30**

## Awards ceremony

Awards of Excellence are formally presented every December at public ceremonies celebrating the United Nations' International Day of Disabled Persons. The location of the ceremonies may vary from year to year. For information on this year's activities, contact the Premier's Council or visit its website at [www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/CSS/premiers\\_council](http://www.seniors.gov.ab.ca/CSS/premiers_council).