



# NATION OF SANCTUARY AWARDS 2026

Do you know an amazing individual or group who deserves a Nation of Sanctuary award? [Nominate them here.](#)

Submit your nomination by 11.59pm on 14 February 2026

### Important information

- You're welcome to nominate someone amazing - but you **cannot** nominate yourself.
- Previous Nation of Sanctuary Award winners **are not eligible** to be nominated again.
- Due to the high number of nominations, we'll only be in touch with shortlisted nominees. Thank you for understanding!
- Nominees **must** be living or based in Wales at the time of submission.
- Feel free to nominate more than one person or group, whether it's in the same category or different ones.
- You can even nominate the same person or group in multiple categories—**just remember to submit a new application for each category.**

Once your application is submitted, you won't be able to make changes, so double-check before hitting submit

## Nomination criteria for Nation of Sanctuary Awards 2026

Award category	Nomination criteria
<p><b>Language Learner</b></p> <p><i>This award celebrates individuals who've shown remarkable personal growth and a real commitment to learning – and confidently using – English or Welsh.</i></p> <p><i>Whether they're taking their first steps with a new language or continuing a journey already begun, nominees should demonstrate dedication, curiosity, and the drive to keep improving.</i></p> <p><i>We're looking for people who use their growing language skills to enrich their personal lives, connect socially, or open new doors professionally.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to individual sanctuary seekers or refugees living in Wales AND over 18 years old</li> <li>• Nominees must <b>not</b> be native English speakers and must have engaged in ESOL classes within the last five years</li> <li>• Nominees should demonstrate how language learning has positively impacted their ability to connect with their community, access opportunities, or contribute to society</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equalities Champion</b></p> <p><i>This award celebrates individuals or groups who work to improve the lives of refugees and sanctuary seekers. It focuses especially on people from diverse backgrounds who face multiple barriers because of their identities or protected characteristics.</i></p> <p><i>We're looking for nominees who use an intersectional approach. They recognise that everyone's experience is different. They make sure all individuals – regardless of background, gender, sexuality, ability or any other personal attribute – can access the resources,</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to individuals or groups.</li> <li>• Nominees must be 18 years or older and can be sanctuary seekers, refugees, or groups directly supporting sanctuary-seeking communities.</li> <li>• Nominees should advocate for individuals and communities facing multiple barriers, including but not limited to LGBTQIA+ individuals, people with disabilities, and others who are underrepresented or marginalised, working to promote</li> </ul>

<p><i>rights and opportunities they need to thrive.</i></p>	<p>equality, inclusion, and social justice for all.</p>
<p><b>Volunteer of the Year</b></p> <p><i>This award celebrates sanctuary seekers and refugees who have made an exceptional impact through voluntary service. It recognises people who show unwavering dedication to supporting others in their communities.</i></p> <p><i>Nominees should demonstrate compassion, selflessness, and a strong commitment to helping those in need. They use their time, skills, and energy to make a positive difference.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to individual sanctuary seekers or refugees living in Wales AND over 18 years old</li> <li>• Individuals must have been a volunteer for at least six months AND currently actively volunteering</li> <li>• Nominees should demonstrate how their voluntary work has supported and uplifted others, fostering inclusion, empowerment, and positive change within the sanctuary seeking and refugee community.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Woman of the Year</b></p> <p><i>This award celebrates the strength, courage and compassion of women who are making a real impact in their communities and beyond. It recognises women who challenge the status quo, break down barriers and help transform lives through their vision and determination.</i></p> <p><i>Nominees should embody empowerment, resilience, and innovation. They inspire others through their actions and achievements.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to individual sanctuary seekers or refugees living in Wales AND aged over 18 years old</li> <li>• Nominations are welcome for individuals who identify as women, regardless of gender history.</li> <li>• Nominees should demonstrate significant accomplishments through community work, career achievements, or personal development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Academic Achievement</b></p> <p><i>This award honours individuals who have achieved something truly special through education. It recognises people</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to individual sanctuary seekers or refugees living in Wales AND over 18 years old</li> <li>• Nominees can be active in any academic subject, course, or level</li> </ul>

<p><i>whose dedication to learning has driven them to excel.</i></p> <p><i>Nominees should show perseverance, passion, and a real commitment to personal growth. They use education as a tool for empowerment and positive change – in their own lives and in the lives of those around them.</i></p>	<p>of study over the last twelve months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nominees should demonstrate how their dedication to learning has led to notable achievements, whether through academic excellence, skills development, or contributions to their field of study.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Contribution to the Arts</b></p> <p><i>This award celebrates artists and creative groups who use their work to show deep solidarity with sanctuary seekers in Wales. It honours those who use the power of the arts – visual art, music, theatre, literature, dance or any creative medium – to build connection, spark understanding and inspire social change.</i></p> <p><i>Nominees should show how their work has helped raise awareness of the experiences of sanctuary seekers. Their creativity should contribute to a more inclusive and compassionate society.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open to individuals or groups working within the arts in Wales.</li> <li>Nominees must be over 18 years old and can be sanctuary seekers, refugees, or groups whose work directly engages with sanctuary-seeking communities.</li> <li>Nominees may be involved in any artistic or cultural discipline, including music, visual arts, literature, dance, theatre, storytelling, textiles, and multimedia, with a focus on work that amplifies the voices and experiences of sanctuary seekers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Business and Innovation</b></p> <p><i>This award celebrates the entrepreneurial spirit, creative research, and impactful projects led by refugees or sanctuary seekers. It highlights work that brings positive change, supports community development, and opens up new economic opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Nominees should show how their efforts support their own growth while also empowering others in similar circumstances. Their work should help create greater inclusion, more</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open to individuals seeking sanctuary or refugees living in Wales aged 18 or older.</li> <li>Nominees should demonstrate initiative, creativity, and a commitment to fostering positive change through their work, research, or projects.</li> <li>Examples of evidence could include the creation of new businesses or initiatives that support other refugees, research that benefits sanctuary seekers,</li> </ul>

<p><i>opportunity, and sustainable development for the future.</i></p>	<p>successful collaborations, or the development of impactful community projects.</p>
<p><b>Contribution to Sport</b></p> <p><i>This award celebrates the talent, dedication, and achievements of sanctuary seekers and refugees who are actively involved in sport. It recognises individuals who give their all, show commitment and strive for excellence.</i></p> <p><i>It also honours people or groups who create opportunities for refugees and sanctuary seekers to take part in sport. Their work helps build inclusion, connection, and community.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to individuals OR groups from sporting backgrounds in Wales</li> <li>• Nominees must be over 18 years old and can be sanctuary seekers, refugees, or groups working with sanctuary seekers in a sports context (including coaches and instructors)</li> <li>• Nominees must demonstrate significant achievement in a sport OR a commitment to improving the well-being and integration of sanctuary seekers and refugees through sport</li> <li>• The award is open to any competitive or non-competitive sport at a community, amateur, or professional level</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inspirational Young Person</b></p> <p><i>This award celebrates sanctuary seekers aged 16 to 30 who are making a real and positive impact in their communities or fields. It highlights young people whose talents, potential and achievements stand out.</i></p> <p><i>Nominees should show remarkable growth and promise. They inspire others through their actions and contributions.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to an individual sanctuary seekers or refugees living in Wales AND aged 16 to 30</li> <li>• Nominees must be no younger than 16 and no older than 30 at the time of the nomination</li> <li>• Nominees should demonstrate significant achievement, innovation, or leadership in their</li> </ul>

<p><i>They embody hope and resilience, with a bright and ambitious future ahead.</i></p>	<p>education, career, or community involvement, showcasing their potential to continue making a positive difference.</p>
<p><b>Nation of Sanctuary Award</b></p> <p><i>The Nation of Sanctuary Award is the final and most prestigious award of the evening. It recognises a group or organisation that has shown exceptional commitment to supporting sanctuary seekers and refugees in Wales.</i></p> <p><i>This award celebrates work that reflects Wales' vision of being a welcoming, inclusive and compassionate nation of sanctuary – a place where everyone is valued, supported and able to belong.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to organisations, groups, or businesses based in Wales.</li> <li>• Nominees can be from the charity, public, or private sector.</li> <li>• Nominees must have made significant contributions over the past 12 months to the support and inclusion of sanctuary seekers and refugees in Wales.</li> <li>• Nominations should illustrate how the nominee meets the following criteria:</li> </ul> <p><b>Leading Change:</b> Breaking down barriers and introducing new, innovative approaches to global challenges, while fostering inclusivity and equality in Wales.</p> <p><b>Empowering Others:</b> Actively recognising, supporting, and amplifying the voices of sanctuary seekers and other marginalised communities, creating opportunities for them to thrive.</p> <p><b>Influencing:</b> Challenging norms, inspiring systemic change, and engaging other leaders, organisations, and sectors in driving positive transformation for sanctuary seekers and refugees.</p>