



EDNZ 2026 Excellence Award Nomination

Promoting Excellence - Celebrating Success

Due date for submissions

All nominations are required to be with EDNZ by close of business on Monday 31st August 2026. Please note: The nomination can only be for ONE Award Category and late nominations may not be accepted.

Who can make a nomination?

Award nominations may be drawn to the attention of the Awards Committee in either of the following ways:

1. Any member of EDNZ may sponsor a nomination relevant to one of the Award Categories.
2. Any member of EDNZ may make a self - nomination relevant to one of the Award Categories.

How the Judging Panel will decide?

The Awards Committee will decide on the Awards Nomination having regard to the relevant criteria applying to each class of award. The Awards criteria are as follows:

1. Achieved outcomes

The best practice shows that it has efficiently and effectively responded to the identified issue or challenge. There is evidence of its impact, achieved outcomes and quality of implementation e.g. targets vs actual performance, key performance indicators, before-and-after comparisons, cost-effectiveness metrics and other relevant statistics.

2. Innovativeness

The best practice demonstrates forward-looking approaches or solutions that are original, pioneering and ground-breaking for the organization, the country or the region as a whole. Innovation covers a wide spectrum of initiatives that ranges from continuous improvements and incremental changes, on one hand, and sweeping, far-reaching and cutting-edge transformations, on the other. This is particularly the case in relation to the Innovation Best Practice Award.

3. Robustness

The best practice has a track record to show that its effectiveness is not short-lived nor transitory. Its benefits and added value are well-established and are expected to last. The best practice can be depended upon to deliver predictable results time and again.

4. Replicability

The best practice shares insights on the factors that would be indispensable to its replicability as well as the risks that could stand in the way of its successful implementation. It has the potential to inspire other economic development agencies that are faced with a similar issue or challenge.

5. Sustainable

The best practice has long term benefits and is able to provide learnings and inspiration, along with possibility of being adopted by other regions.

The Awards Committee shall have the discretion to apply the most appropriate Award Category to the nomination, notwithstanding the category under which the nomination is made.

Please note that all decisions made by the Awards Committee are final and discussions will not be entered into.

How will you know if you have won?

If you have been successful in your nomination both the nominee and the Award recipient (if different) will be advised confidentially of that success prior to the Awards Presentations.

The Awards will be presented at the EDNZ Conference Dinner which will be held in Cromwell on 5th November, 2026.

If you have any queries regarding your nomination please contact enquiries@ednz.nz or call Gary on 0274 966 283.



AWARD CATEGORIES

Collaboration

This award celebrates outstanding partnerships between two or more organizations that have joined forces to achieve significant positive economic outcomes. The winning initiative will demonstrate how their combined efforts yielded results far exceeding what could have been accomplished individually, showcasing the power of strategic alliances in driving economic growth and prosperity.

Inclusive Development & Wellbeing

This award celebrates economic development initiatives that have enhanced communities' social, economic, or environmental wellbeing.

Recognizing that true prosperity extends beyond financial growth, this award highlights initiatives that have successfully prioritized inclusivity, ensuring that all members of the community benefit from economic progress. Winning initiatives will showcase how they fostered a holistic approach to development, creating sustainable and equitable outcomes that uplift the entire community.

Integrated Strategy

This award recognizes exceptional strategic planning demonstrating an integrated and unified approach to achieve maximum impact. The winning initiative will showcase how it has seamlessly integrated diverse strategies across departments, levels, or stakeholders, creating a cohesive framework that maximizes efficiency, collaboration, and results.

This award celebrates those who have gone beyond siloed planning to foster a truly interconnected and synergistic approach to achieving organizational goals.

Innovation

This award celebrates an innovative initiative that demonstrates transformative impact. The winning project will showcase a groundbreaking approach that is pioneering and impactful for the organisation or the region.

This award recognises an initiative that pushes boundaries, embraces creativity, and delivers outstanding results through continuous refinements or bold, cutting-edge advancements. The winning initiative will showcase excellence in its own right and inspire others to adopt similar innovative practices, driving positive change and economic impact.

Economic Development Primary Research

This award celebrates those who have advanced our understanding of economic development through original, impactful research. The award recognises outstanding contributions to the field of economic development through the collection and analysis of primary data. The winning research initiative will demonstrate methodological rigour, insightful analysis, and significant implications for policy or practice.

Sector & Cluster Development

This award recognizes exceptional projects that drive the growth and innovation of sectors or clusters within New Zealand. It celebrates collaborative efforts among forward-thinking organizations that have come together to accelerate economic development.

The winning initiative will demonstrate significant impact, whether at a regional or national level and showcase the transformative power of strategic partnerships in advancing specific sectors of the New Zealand economy.

Innovative Use of Technology

This award recognises initiatives that have harnessed the power of technology in innovative and impactful ways to drive significant improvements in economic outcomes, either internally within an organisation or externally, into a broader context.

The winning project will showcase exemplary use of digital tools, platforms, or processes to achieve transformative results, such as streamlining operations, improving efficiency, enhancing data-driven decision-making, fostering innovation, attracting investment, or creating new economic opportunities. This award celebrates those leveraging technology to catalyse economic growth and prosperity across various sectors and applications.

Distinguished Service Award

This prestigious award recognises an individual who has made exceptional and lasting contributions to economic development in New Zealand. The recipient will have demonstrated outstanding leadership and innovation, either through their professional achievements or through research or practice of economic development in Aotearoa.

This award celebrates those who have played a pivotal role in shaping the economic landscape and prosperity of New Zealand.



AWARDS CRITERIA

- **Innovation:** The initiative's creativity and originality in addressing economic development challenges are paramount. It should implement new methodologies, technologies, or approaches that set it apart from traditional methods.
- **Impact:** The initiative must demonstrate tangible economic benefits, including significant job creation, investment growth, or economic diversification.
- **Sustainability:** The initiative should be designed for long-term success with a clear plan for ongoing funding and resource management.
- **Scalability and Replicability:** The initiative must have the potential to be effectively expanded or replicated in other regions or contexts, with concrete plans for its growth or adaptation elsewhere.
- **Partner Engagement:** The initiative successfully involves partners, local community members and other stakeholders. It should have mechanisms in place for community/stakeholder feedback and participation in decision-making, ensuring that the voices and perspectives of the broader community are integral to the initiative's development and implementation.

What you will need to complete your nomination

These awards are open to any EDNZ organisation member, including research and charity partners.

- All applications must be submitted by the stated deadline.
- Applicants also need to provide the following information:
 - Names of the person(s) who will receive the Award at the Ceremony
 - Names of those who should appear on the Award
 - Overview of the initiative (no more than two pages)
 - Details of the initiative and how it meets the criteria (please see above)
 - Four high-resolution images relating to the initiative.



APPLICATION FORM

Name of Person submitting this nomination: _____

Name of your organisation: _____

Your address: _____

Mobile Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Nominee Details (if different): _____

Name of person, project or organisation: _____

Name of Organisation: _____

Address: _____

Mobile phone number: _____

Email address: _____

If successful what is the name (s) of the person (s) who will attend the Gala Dinner and receive the Award - please note that attending the Gala Dinner to receive the award if your nomination is successful is a condition of entry.

Details of Individual/Project/Organisation: _____

Name: _____

Which category are you nominating for? _____

If a project which agency led the work: _____

Please provide the names of those individual (s) or organisation (s) whose names should appear on the Award:

Are you a member of EDNZ: Yes _____ No: _____

Are you the owner of the nomination material (including written, graphics, drawings)
Yes _____ No: _____

Your Nomination Checklist

Please ensure you email the following information to enquiries@ednz.nz after you have completed and submitted this form before 31st August 2026.

- An overview of the initiative (no more than two pages)
- Detail of the initiative (no more than three pages) and how it meets the Award Criteria
- Don't forget to email your support material to enquiries@ednz.nz
- At least four high resolution images in jpg, png or tiff format.