



Program Guide, Nomination Process & Judging Guidelines

Victorian Men's Shed Association (VMSA)
Annual Awards Cycle

1. Program Overview

The VMSA Annual Shed Awards recognise and celebrate the people, sheds and supporters who strengthen the Men's Shed movement across Victoria each year. The program is designed to be simple to administer, meaningful to winners, and credible to the wider sector and sponsors.

There are two award categories, presented once per year:

1. **Shed Member Champion Award** — recognising an outstanding individual member of a Shed
2. **Innovation Award** — recognising a shed, program or individual that introduced a new idea or approach with real impact

Each category has its own eligibility, nomination criteria and judging approach, set out below. All two awards share the same nomination window, judging panel structure and terms and conditions unless otherwise noted.

1.1 Purpose

- Publicly acknowledge excellence and effort across the shed network in Victoria
- Generate positive media, member and sponsor engagement each year
- Provide a consistent, fair and transparent recognition process

1.2 Annual Cycle at a Glance

Nominations open	Late August
Nominations close	30 September
Judging period	10–20 October
Winners notified and announced	Member Forum – October 21
Award cycle	Annual — one winner per category, per calendar/financial year as determined by the VMSA Board and judges

2. Award Categories

2.1 Shed Member Champion Award

Recognises an individual Men's Shed member who has gone above and beyond for their shed, their fellow members, or their community.

Eligibility

- Must be a current member of a VMSA member shed
- Open to members of sheds
- VMSA Board members and staff are not eligible

Judging Criteria

Criterion	Weighting	What judges are looking for
Personal contribution	35%	The scale and consistency of the individual's contribution to their shed over the past year
Impact on others	30%	Evidence of positive impact on fellow members' wellbeing, skills or sense of belonging
Community reach	20%	Contribution extending beyond the shed into the broader community
Personal story	15%	A compelling, well-evidenced account of the nominee's journey or contribution

2.2 Innovation Award

Recognises an innovative shed program or individual that introduced a new idea, tool, program or way of working over the past year that improved shed operations, member engagement, or community impact.

Eligibility

- Open to any VMSA member shed, shed committee, or individual member
- The innovation must have been introduced or substantially developed within the past 12 months
- Can include (but is not limited to) new programs, partnerships, digital tools, safety practices, funding models, or ways of engaging members and the community

Judging Criteria

Criterion	Weighting	What judges are looking for
Originality	25%	The idea, program or approach is genuinely new to the shed or sector, rather than a minor variation on existing practice
Impact	35%	Demonstrable improvement to member wellbeing, shed operations, or community engagement as a result of the innovation
Transferability	20%	Potential for other sheds across Victoria to adopt or adapt the innovation
Implementation & sustainability	20%	Evidence the innovation is embedded and likely to continue, not a one-off trial

3. Nominations

3.1 Who Can Nominate

- Any current VMSA member shed, shed committee, or shed member
- VMSA Board and staff may nominate on behalf of a shed or member, but may not nominate themselves
- Self-nominations are not accepted for the Member Champion Award, but are accepted for the Innovation Award

3.2 How to Nominate

- Complete the official nomination form for the relevant category
- Attach any supporting evidence — photos, testimonials, media coverage, statistics
- Submit online or by email to the VMSA office before the closing date vmsa@vmsa.org.au
- Nominators will receive email confirmation that their nomination has been received

3.3 Nomination Requirements

- One nomination form per nominee, per category
- Word limit: 300 words for the nomination statement
- A shed or individual may only win one category per year
- Incomplete nominations will not be forwarded to the judging panel

4. Guidelines for Judges

4.1 Judging Panel Composition

The judging panel will comprise between three people to ensure balanced decision-making, and may include:

- The VMSA Chief Executive Officer / Executive Officer (Chair, non-voting in a tie-break capacity only)
- At least one VMSA Board member
- At least one independent representative from outside VMSA (e.g. a partner organisation, health sector representative, or past shed member)

4.2 Conflicts of Interest

- Judges must declare any personal, financial or professional connection to a nominee before scoring begins
- A judge with a declared conflict must not score that nomination; the remaining panel members' scores are averaged in their place
- Judges must not discuss nominations with nominees, nominators or the public during the judging period

4.3 Scoring Process

- Each judge scores every eligible nomination independently against the published criteria and weightings for that category
- Scores are submitted to the Chair, who compiles a weighted average for each nomination
- The nomination with the highest weighted average in each category is the recommended winner
- In the event of a tie, the Chair convenes a short panel discussion and, if still tied, holds the deciding vote
- The panel may, at its discretion, decide not to award a category in a given year if no nomination meets a reasonable standard

4.4 Confidentiality & Fairness

- All nomination content is treated as confidential and is only shared with the judging panel and relevant VMSA staff
- Judges will base decisions solely on the written nomination and any attached evidence — not on personal familiarity with a nominee
- Judges' individual scores and comments remain confidential; only the panel's final recommendation is reported to the VMSA Board
- The VMSA Board retains final sign-off on all winners before public announcement

5. Terms and Conditions

5.1 Eligibility

- Nominees must meet the eligibility requirements set out for the relevant category in Section 2
- VMSA reserves the right to verify any information provided in a nomination
- VMSA reserves the right to disqualify a nomination that is incomplete, inaccurate, or submitted after the closing date

5.2 Decisions

- All judging decisions are final and not subject to appeal
- VMSA reserves the right to withhold an award in any category in any year

- VMSA reserves the right to amend these terms, criteria or the awards calendar for future award cycles at its discretion

5.3 Publicity & Use of Material

- By submitting a nomination, the nominator confirms the nominee has consented to being named publicly if shortlisted or successful
- Winners and finalists may be featured in VMSA communications, media releases, social media, the annual report, and sponsor materials
- Nominators grant VMSA a non-exclusive licence to use submitted text, photos and quotes for award promotion and reporting purposes

5.4 Privacy

- Personal information collected through nominations is used only for administering the awards program and related VMSA communications
- Information will be handled in accordance with VMSA's privacy policy and will not be sold or provided to third parties for marketing purposes

5.5 General

- Participation in the nomination and awards process is voluntary and free of charge
- VMSA is not liable for any loss, damage or dispute arising from participation in the awards program
- These terms are governed by the laws of Victoria, Australia