



VIRTUAL CONNECT 2026

14 JANUARY

NEW

PHASED SUBMISSION & ASSESSMENT PROCESS

No Changes to Award Categories and Eligibility

Category	For whom	General Criteria	Promising	Outstanding
Infant Educator and Early Years Educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infant Educators teaching 2-18 months Early Years Educators teaching > 18 months to 4 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-service at an ECDA-licensed ECDC / MOE Kindergarten Approved on One @ ECDA Possesses the necessary valid LON (EY1, EY2, L1, L2) and relevant EC qualifications 	3 to 5 years of trained teaching experience	More than 5 years of trained teaching experience
Preschool Educator	Preschool Educators teaching 5 years – 6 years			
EI Professional	EI Educators, Learning Support educators and Educational therapy professionals supporting preschool children with developmental needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-service Possess a valid letter of appointment from organisation Possess relevant qualifications required for the role 		
Early Childhood Leader	Principals of ECDCs / MOE Kindergartens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-service at an ECDA-licensed ECDC / MOE Kindergarten Approved as a Principal on One @ ECDA Possesses the necessary valid LON (L2) and relevant EC qualifications in leadership 	3 to 5 years of trained experience as a Principal	More than 5 years trained experience as a Principal
Outstanding Centre for Teaching & Learning	All licensed ECDCs and MOE Kindergartens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellence track record. For ECDCs, minimally a 24-month licence tenure and compliance with the staffing requirements of the licence tenure. Appointed Principals are ECDA-approved 	N.A	
Early Childhood Innovation	All licensed ECDCs, MOE Kindergartens and EI providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good track record For ECDCs: Minimally a 12-month licence tenure Nominated project must have been implemented in 2025 or same year and completed at the time of nomination 		

Nominees for Individual Awards to be Singapore Citizen or Permanent Resident.

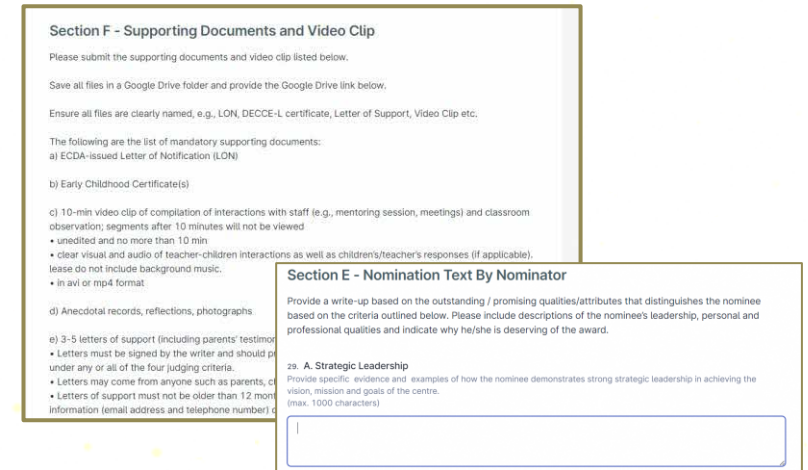
For Individual Awards, there is a time bar of 3 years for outstanding winners before they may be nominated for the same award category. For Outstanding Centre for Teaching & Learning, there is a time bar period of 5 years.



What is it: New Phased Submission and Assessment

Current Single-submission Process

- Extensive write-ups for all categories, based on assessed dimensions (e.g. teaching practices, partnership, professional development) which can be time-consuming
- Rigorous documentation requirements, including portfolio submission (e.g. videos, lesson plan, curriculum plans, children’s portfolio, testimonials)



New Phased Submission and Assessment - Flexible, supportive, & encourages deeper, more reflective process

- **Reduced written submission requirements**, easing burden of extensive documentation & pressure of submitting everything at once
- **Diverse modalities** (e.g photo story, ePortfolio, recorded presentation) offering a richer showcase of skills & impact
- **Phased assessment** reducing pressure and enables more focused evaluation



PHASE 1

- Personal Pitch (i.e on philosophy, video of teaching practices)
- Supporting Information



PHASE 2

Shortlisted Nominees invited to provide more information or attend interviews depending on the award category

From 2026, eligible nominations for all categories (except Early Childhood Innovation Award) will be valid for two-years. More details will be provided at a later date.



New Phased Submission and Assessment: Individual Awards (1/2)

Early Childhood Leader

Write-ups

- Personal philosophy
- Award Nomination from both Nominee and Nominator
- Nomination Text by Nominator based on assessed criteria

Supporting Documentation

- Certificates
- 10-minutes clip on leadership /mentoring
- Testimonials

Current Documents

Phase 1: Personal Pitch & Supporting Documentation

Photo Story on Personal Philosophy for EC Leadership

- Maximum of 5 photos with 20-word captions for each photo

Nominator's Endorsement

- 50 to 100 words write-up

Supporting documentation

- Certificates, if not uploaded on One@ECDA

Submission Window:
 4.5 weeks

Phase 2: Shortlisted Nominees only

Presentation and Interview with Judging Panel

Content Focus: Nominee's impact across the assessed dimensions, any key achievements, etc

- 20 minutes Presentation
- 20 minutes Interview Segment

Maximum of 3 testimonials (e.g. from parents, colleagues, partnerships, etc.)

Shortlisted: Final Assessment

Centre Visit: Tour and Interview



New Phased Submission and Assessment: Individual Awards (2/2)

Infant Educator and Early Years Educator

Preschool Educator

Early Intervention Professional

Current Documents

Write-ups

- Personal philosophy
- Award Nomination from both Nominee and Nominator
- Nomination Text by Nominator based on assessed criteria

Supporting Documentation

- Certificates
- 10-minutes clip lesson/ activity video
- Corresponding lesson plan
- For EI Professional: Individualised Plan
- Testimonials

Phase 1: Personal Pitch & Supporting Documentation

Photo Story on Personal Philosophy

- Maximum of 5 photos with 20-word captions for each photo

Nominator's Endorsement

- 50 to 100 words write-up

No-more than 10 minutes video clip* + corresponding activity plan (optional for IF/EY) or lesson plan

Routines (e.g. mealtime) or activity with infants/ children

Lesson/activities with children

Lesson/activities or intervention session

**Must be running activity or lesson, not a collation of clips*

Supporting documentation

Certificates optional, no need to submit if on One@ECDA

- Individualised Plan with details of child, period of intervention, behaviour descriptors, goals, strategies, etc.
- EI certificates and qualification
- Letter of Appointment from employer indicating start date

Submission Window:
4.5 weeks

Phase 2: Shortlisted Nominees only

E-Portfolio or Recorded Presentation to Showcase Pedagogical Impact

Content Focus: Nominee's impact across the assessed dimensions, any key achievements, etc.

- E-Portfolio: Max 15 slides
- Recorded Presentation: No more than 5 minutes (in AVI or MP4 format only)

Maximum of 3 testimonials (e.g. from parents, colleagues, partnerships, etc.)

Submission Window:
5 weeks

Shortlisted: Final Assessment

Centre Visit: Lesson observation and Interview

Virtual Lesson Observation and Interview



New Phased Submission and Assessment: Centre Awards

Outstanding Centre for Teaching & Learning

Early Childhood Innovation

Current Documents

Write-ups

- Personal philosophy
- Award Nomination from both Nominee and Nominator
- Nomination Text by Nominator based on assessed criteria
- For Inno: Write-up on project on assessed dimensions

Supporting Documentation

For T&L

- 10-minutes video clip on teaching practices, photographs of the environment
- Curriculum plans, teachers learning plans, lesson plans, children's portfolio, daily schedule

For Innovation:

- References, outline of project processes, lesson plans, photographs, videos, reflection

No-more than 10 minutes video* or recorded presentation

Content focus: Teaching and learning practices (including infant care), learning environment design, pedagogy and philosophy

- In AVI or MP4 format only

**Can be a collation of clips*

Nominator's Endorsement

- 50 to 100 words write-up

No-more than 10 minutes video* or recorded presentation

Content focus: Project's innovation, impact and sustainability

- In AVI or MP4 format only

Phase 1: Centre Showcase

Submission Window:
4.5 weeks

Phase 2: Shortlisted Nominees

Centre Visit: Tour, Presentation and interview

Presentation and Interview



Other Technical and Administrative Matters To Note

Application

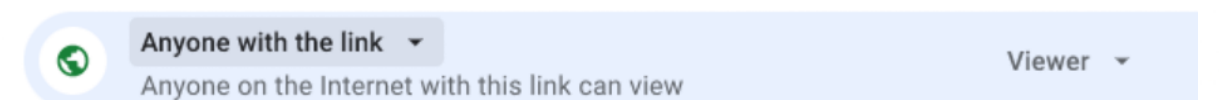
- Submissions are through an online form only
- One submission form per nominee
- Please ensure nominators and nominees read the Terms and Conditions before submission

Documentation Guidelines

- Seek parents / guardians' permission before filming infants and/or children
- Videos to be no-more than 10 minutes
- Videos and recorded presentation to be in avi or mp4 format only
- Clear visual and audio of teacher-child interactions. May place camera in a discreet location to minimise distractions for children
- No background music, filters or stickers
- Recorded presentations: If possible, use a headset or external microphone to enhance sound quality
- For Centre Awards: Video or recorded presentations to be in English only
- For Individual Awards: Mother Tongue language teachers may submit in mother tongue language **but to provide translation** for any documentation (i.e. photo story, nominator's text) and video, if possible

Google Drive

- All documentation to be uploaded on Google Drive folder. The nominee / nominator to provide the link within the form.
- Important: To ensure the sharing settings is set to 'Anyone with the link' can view.** ECDA may reject nominations if we are unable to access the folder.
- Please ensure the link is accessible for at least the next 6 months.**
- Any files uploaded or modified after submission deadlines for Phases 1 or 2 will not be accepted.
- All files to be clearly named.





**SUBMITTING A
COMPELLING NOMINATION**

ECDA Awards 2026

Your Journey, Your Story, Your Impact



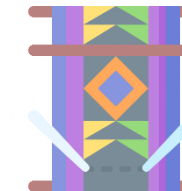
Phase 1: Spark of Inspiration – A Visual Narrative: Capturing the "Spark"

- **Snap the Essence, Not just the Pose:**
 - Focus on the learning rather than staged moments.
 - Every photo or video should reveal the "why" behind the activity.
 - Catch those "lightbulb moments" in real-time.
- **Speak from the Heart:**
 - Share genuine success stories, focusing on challenges & triumphs.
 - Highlight teamwork, resilience & the real impact made.



Phase 2: Crafting the Story – The Evidence Portfolio: Deepening the Story

- **The Medium is Your Message:**
 - Choose the format that best showcases your voice (video, testimonials).
 - Highlight personal values & character beyond skills.
- **The Living Classroom:**
 - Use the site visit to bring your environment to life.
 - The visible enthusiasm & engagement of both your educators & children speak volumes about the quality of teaching & learning.



Final Assessment: Celebrating Excellence – Weaving Consistency and Authenticity

- **Weaving the Golden Thread of Excellence:**
 - Link your Phase 1 "Pitch" to Phase 2 "e-Portfolio".
 - Ensure your philosophy is visible.
- **The Third Teacher:**
 - Practice & portfolio should align.
 - Judges look for a seamless connection between your shared narrative & the environment.

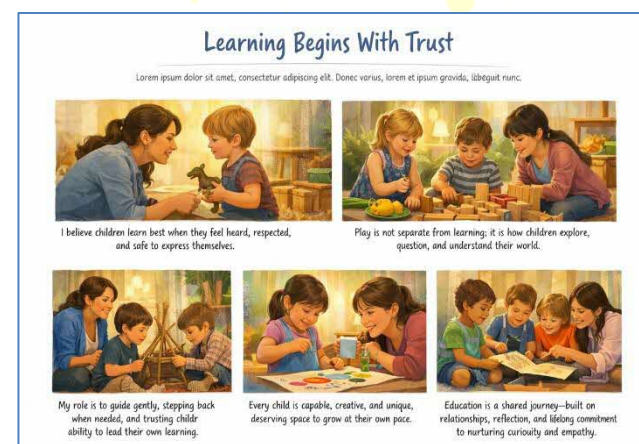


Photo story sample is made with generative AI

ECDA Awards 2026

Your Journey, Your Story, Your Impact



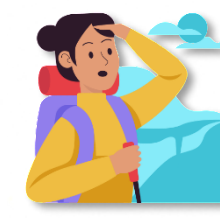
Phase 1: Innovation Pitch – Setting the Stage: The Problem, The ‘Aha’ & The Solution

- **Capture the “Spark” of Intent**
 - Identify the **“Gap”**—the challenge or barrier that sparked creative problem-solving.
- **Narrate the Leap**
 - In your 5-minute pitch, **Bring us on a journey** from problem to solution.



Phase 2: Innovation in Action – The Deep Dive: Impact & Integration

- **Show, Don’t Just Tell**
 - **Innovation isn’t a one-off event**—it’s a fundamental shift in your approach, process or practice.
- **The Before & After**
 - Create a compelling **“Before-and-After” story**. Combine photos, feedback, & data to demonstrate how your innovation has moved the needle.



Final Assessment – The Mountain Hike: Sustainability & Ripple Effect

- **The Legacy of Change**
 - Provide evidence that your innovation is built to last. Highlight **sustainability** & the **ripple effect**.
- **Future-Proofing**
 - Demonstrate how your innovative ideas will remain **relevant, evolve or adapt**.



Considerations

Innovation is Contextual
Champion Process, Not Just Results or Outcomes
Build a Culture of Sharing & Learning
Celebrate Diverse Forms of Innovation
Respect Each Preschool’s Individual Journey & Uniqueness



Increased Prize Quantum from 2026



Increased Prize Value

- Enhances prestige & value of the awards.
- Raises sector's visibility, giving it a stronger presence.



Benchmarking Standards & Excellence

- Aligns awards with national and international benchmarks.
- Positions sector as being one committed to highest standards in ECCE.



Enhanced Professional Development & Supporting Well Being

- Opportunities to attend conferences & workshops to promote a healthy, balanced, & thriving work culture.
- Facilitates professional rejuvenation through knowledge exchange & experiential learning.



Cultivating Leadership & Growth

- Expands the trajectory for leadership & skills mastery.
- Strengthens overall quality & professional standing of ECCE.



Catalysing Innovation

- Inspires a culture of excellence & continuous improvement.
- Fosters an innovation-driven environment, elevating the entire sector to new heights.



Increased Prize Quantum from 2026

Individual Awards	Prize Quantum*
Outstanding	\$5000
Outstanding (Commendation) / Promising	\$2000

Centre Awards	Prize Quantum*
Outstanding Centre for Teaching & Learning	\$10,000
Outstanding (Commendation) Centre for Teaching & Learning	\$3000
Early Childhood Innovation (Distinction)	\$6,000
Early Childhood Innovation (Merit)	\$3,000
Early Childhood (Commendation)	\$2,000

**Recipients are encouraged to use the award for PD and/or their wellbeing. Please note the prize money will be disbursed following the Awards ceremony and official media release. Recipients will also receive a trophy / plaque and certificate.*



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



**Nominations will open on
19 January 2026 (Mon), 9am**



**Nominations will close on
19 February 2026 (Thu), 6pm**



**Shortlisted nominees for Phase 2 will be
notified by March 2026 to provide more
information or be invited for interview***

THANK



We look forward to receiving your nominations!