



VIRTUAL CONNECT 2026

14 JANUARY



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 		
Preschool Educator	Preschool Educators teaching 5 years – 6 years		3 to 5 years of trained teaching experience	More than 5 years of trained teaching experience
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

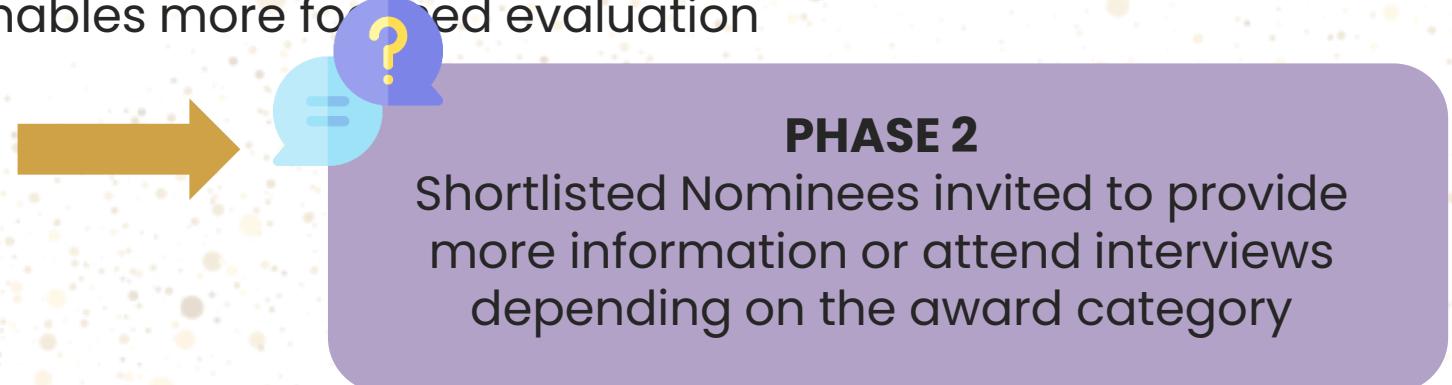
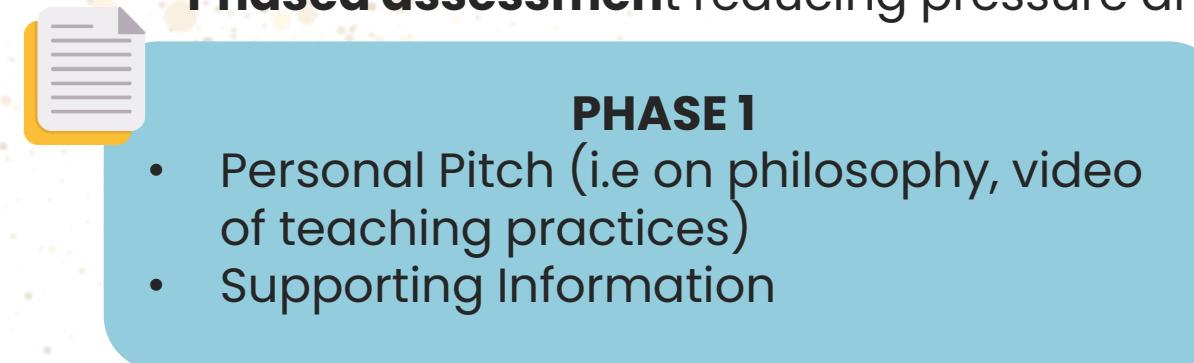
Current Single-submission Process

- 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



Section F - Supporting Documents and Video Clip
Please submit the supporting documents and video clip listed below.
Save all files in a Google Drive folder and provide the Google Drive link below.
Ensure all files are clearly named, e.g., LON, DECCE-L certificate, Letter of Support, Video Clip etc.
The following are the list of mandatory supporting documents:
a) ECDA-issued Letter of Notification (LON)
b) Early Childhood Certificate(s)
c) 10-min video clip of compilation of interactions with staff (e.g., mentoring session, meetings) and classroom observation; segments after 10 minutes will not be viewed
• unedited and no more than 10 min • clear visual and audio of teacher-children interactions as well as children/teacher's responses (if applicable). • lease do not include background music. • in avi or mp4 format
d) Anecdotal records, reflections, photographs
e) 3-5 letters of support (including parents' testimonies)
• Letters must be signed by the writer and should provide evidence of the nominee's leadership, personal and professional qualities and indicate why he/she is deserving of the award. • Letters may come from anyone such as parents, colleagues, etc. • Letters of support must not be older than 12 months. • Information (email address and telephone number) of the writer
Section E - Nomination Text By Nominator
Provide a write-up based on the outstanding / promising qualities/attributes that distinguishes the nominee based on the criteria outlined below. Please include descriptions of the nominee's leadership, personal and professional qualities and indicate why he/she is deserving of the award.
aa. A. Strategic Leadership
Provide specific evidence and examples of how the nominee demonstrates strong strategic leadership in achieving the vision, mission and goals of the centre. (max. 1000 characters)

**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

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

Early Childhood Leader

Current Documents

Phase 1: Personal Pitch & Supporting Documentation

Submission Window:
4.5 weeks

Phase 2: Shortlisted Nominees only

Shortlisted: Final Assessment

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

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

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.)

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Personal philosophy▪ Award Nomination from both Nominee and Nominator▪ Nomination Text by Nominator based on assessed criteria	Supporting Documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Certificates▪ 10-minutes clip lesson/ activity video▪ Corresponding lesson plan▪ For EI Professional: Individualised Plan▪ Testimonials	
Photo Story on Personal Philosophy			
Phase 1: Personal Pitch & Supporting Documentation	▪ Maximum of 5 photos with 20-word captions for each photo Nominator's Endorsement <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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
		<i>*Must be running activity or lesson, not a collation of clips</i>	
Supporting documentation			
Phase 2: Shortlisted Nominees only	Certificates optional, no need to submit if on One@ECDA		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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
E-Portfolio or Recorded Presentation to Showcase Pedagogical Impact			
Submission Window: 4.5 weeks	Content Focus: Nominee's impact across the assessed dimensions, any key achievements, etc.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 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.)			



New Phased Submission and Assessment: Centre Awards

Current Documents

Phase 1: Centre Showcase

Submission Window:
4.5 weeks

Phase 2: Shortlisted Nominees

Outstanding Centre for Teaching & Learning

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 assesses 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

Centre Visit: Tour, Presentation and interview

Presentation and Interview



Other Technical and Administrative Matters To Note

Application

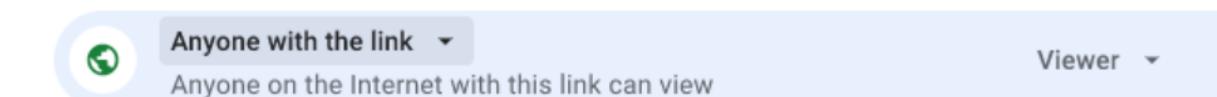
- Submissions are through an online form only
- One submission form per nominee
- Please ensure nominators and nominees read the Terms and Conditions before submission

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.

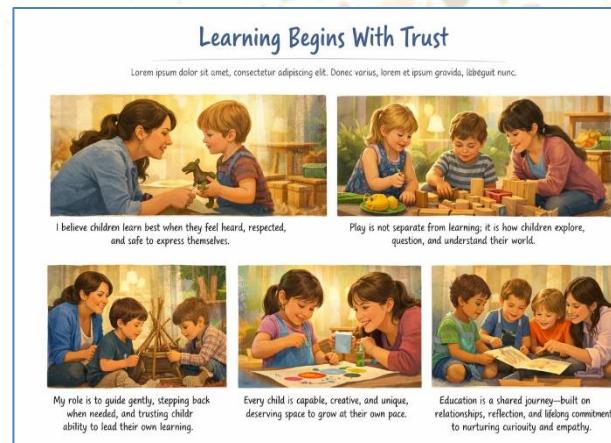


Photo story sample is made with generative AI



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.

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!