

2026 NORTHERN
POWER
WOMEN AWARDS

CATEGORY GUIDE

Co-Headline Partners:



#NPWAwards
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CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

All categories open to all genders.

Each of our categories has its own unique description and criteria for nomination, but all nominees must be individuals/organisations who are actively contributing to a more gender-equal and equitable world, and who are driving lasting, positive change.

Public Profile Spotlight

The public figure(s) or influencer(s) who use their platform as a catalyst for positive change, consistently amplifying voices and championing causes that promote equality, equity and inclusion.

Empowerment Champion

The individual at any career stage who actively empowers others. This awards celebrates those who uplift and elevate others by using their power for good. This can be by using their influence, sponsorship, personal relationships and passion to support others.

Agent of Change

The individual who is personally committed to creating meaningful and lasting change in gender equality, equity and wider inclusivity through leading the way for others whilst making lasting impact.

Disruptor for Good

The individual bravely challenging conventions, standing up for inequality and breaking down barriers. This award celebrates those who boldly defy the status quo and shake things up in pursuit of a more equitable society.

Inclusive Innovation

The group, team, service, product, or organisation that empowers others to contribute, participate and benefit from game changing innovation that has accelerated equality, social inclusion and diversity to benefit all.

This award is now split into two sub-categories:

- ***Tech for good***
- ***People focussed***

Mentor of the Year

The individual who has positively and significantly influenced the success of others whilst championing the values of mentoring beyond their usual responsibilities. Someone who is passionate about their mentee's personal and professional growth.

Outstanding Entrepreneur

The entrepreneur, who is driven with a passion and purpose to grow and develop their business(s) to achieve success whilst making a positive impact in their sector/community.

One to Watch

The individual showcasing exceptional talent and potential in a new role/industry within a community or organisation, with a commitment to championing equity, equality and inclusivity.

Person with Purpose

The individual who is driven by a genuine desire and purpose to create real change in the world and better the lives of both individuals and communities.

This award is now split into three sub-categories:

- ***Charity/CIC***
- ***Private Organisation***
- ***Public Services***

Micro Organisation

1-10 employees

The organisation dedicated to nurturing an inclusive culture as a key component of its growth strategy and creates an environment where diversity thrives, with a sense of belonging and empowerment for every individual.

SME

11 – 250 employees

The organisation that demonstrates a commitment to accelerating gender equality and creating an inclusive workplace. This award recognises forward-thinking strategies in recruitment, development and retention of talent, which promote diversity and create an environment where all individuals thrive.

Large Organisation

251+ employees

The organisation that demonstrates a commitment to accelerating gender equality and creating an inclusive workplace. This award recognises forward-thinking strategies in recruitment, development and retention of talent, which promote diversity and create an environment where all individuals thrive.

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GAME CHANGER DESCRIPTIONS

Game Changers Lists

PoWEr List

Open to people who identify as female.

Recognising experienced individuals who use their position, power and purpose to promote the importance of gender equality, equity and inclusivity in every facet of their work, leaving an undeniable mark on society.

Future List

Open to people who identify as female.

Recognising the trailblazers, change-makers and future leaders who are already leaving a significant impact on their organisations and communities whilst accelerating gender equality, equity and inclusion.

Advocacy List

Open to people who identify as male.

Recognising male allies who are leaders, and influencers committed to advancing gender equality, equity and inclusivity. These individuals actively advocate for gender equality and use their power to create a more equal society.

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

INDIVIDUAL NOMINATIONS

Each of our categories has its own unique description and criteria for nomination, but all nominees must be individuals who are actively contributing to a more gender-equal and equitable world, and who are driving lasting, positive change.

Please ensure you have all the correct details when submitting your nomination(s). When you have submitted your nomination, your nominee will be notified and asked to respond to the questions corresponding to the category you have nominated them for.

You can nominate anonymously so that your details will not be shared with your nominee.

Multiple nominations are welcome.

Your nominee needs to fulfil at least one of the below criteria:

- They live in the North
- They are from the North
- They work in the North
- They work for an organisation in the North

You will need to select a category that you are nominating the person for:

- Agent of Change
- Disruptor for Good
- Empowerment Champion
- Mentor of the Year
- Outstanding Entrepreneur
- One to Watch
- Person with Purpose
- Public Spotlight
- PoWEr List
- Future List
- Advocacy List

What you need to provide (mandatory):

- Nominee First Name *
- Nominee Surname *
- Nominee Company / Organisation *
- Nominee Job Title *
- Nominee Email * (not needed for Public Spotlight)
- Relationship to you *
- Tell us why you want to nominate this person *

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NOMINATOR INFORMATION

ORGANISATIONS NOMINATIONS

Each of our categories has its own unique description and criteria for nomination, but all nominees must be individuals who are actively contributing to a more gender-equal and equitable world, and who are driving lasting, positive change.

Please ensure you have all the correct details when submitting your nomination(s). When you have submitted your nomination, your nominee will be notified and asked to respond to the questions corresponding to the category you have nominated them for.

You can nominate anonymously so that your details will not be shared with your nominee.

Multiple nominations are welcome.

Your nominee needs to fulfil at least one of the below criteria:

- They are based in the North
- They have an office in the North
- They were founded in the North

You will need to select a category that you are nominating the organisation for:

- Inclusive Innovation
- Micro Organisation
- SME
- Large Organisation

What you need to provide (mandatory):

- Nominee Company / Organisation Name*
- Nominee Job Title *
- Individual Email Address* (who will respond on behalf of organisation)
- Relationship to you *
- Tell us why you want to nominate the organisation *

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CATEGORY BREAKDOWN

Public Spotlight

Open to all genders

The public figure(s) or influencer(s) who use their platform as a catalyst for positive change, consistently amplifying voices and championing causes that promote equality, equity and inclusion.

Please attach supporting evidence in the form of:

- Social Media Platforms
- YouTube Videos
- Articles

Empowerment Champion

Open to all genders

The individual at any career stage who actively empowers others. This awards celebrates those who uplift and elevate others by using their power for good. This can be by using their influence, sponsorship, personal relationships and passion to support others.

Nominee questions:

- What has been your personal impact on the empowerment of others?
- What specific activity(s) have you led that has accelerated gender equality, equity and wider inclusivity?
- How have you measured the success of your efforts?
- What are you focused on making happen in the next six months in terms of empowering others?

Agent of Change

Open to all genders

The individual who is personally committed to creating meaningful and lasting change in gender equality, equity and wider inclusivity through leading the way for others whilst making lasting impact.

Nominee questions:

- What are the key successes that you have been involved in and how did you measure their impact?
- As an agent of change, what's your motivation to make meaningful and lasting change?
- If you were to win this award, how would you use it to bring about further change and inspire others?

CATEGORY BREAKDOWN

Disruptor for Good

Open to all genders

The individual bravely challenging conventions, standing up for inequality and breaking down barriers. This award celebrates those who boldly defy the status quo and shake things up in pursuit of a more equitable society.

Nominee questions:

- What makes you a disruptor for good who purposefully breaks barriers and why do you do it?
- How do you measure the impact of what you have achieved?
- Who has benefited from your efforts?

Inclusive Innovation: People Focussed

Organisation category

The group, team, service, product, or organisation that empowers others to contribute, participate and benefit from game changing innovation that has accelerated equality, social inclusion and diversity to benefit all. This award is specific to those putting real people at the centre of the development process.

Nominee questions:

- Describe your novel approach to delivering, championing, or investing in inclusive innovation.
- How has your approach to innovation impacted gender equality, diversity, and social inclusion?
- How do you measure the impact of what you do and who has benefited from this?
- What are you focused on innovating in the next six months?

Inclusive Innovation: Tech for Good

Organisation category

The group, team, service, product, or organisation that empowers others to contribute, participate and benefit from game changing innovation that has accelerated equality, social inclusion and diversity to benefit all. This award is specific to those using technology to advance equality, diversity and inclusion.

Nominee questions:

- Describe your novel approach to delivering, championing, or investing in inclusive innovation.
- How has your approach to innovation impacted gender equality, diversity, and social inclusion?
- How do you measure the impact of what you do and who has benefited from this?
- What are you focused on innovating in the next six months?

CATEGORY BREAKDOWN

Mentor of the Year

Open to all genders

The individual who has positively and significantly influenced the success of others whilst championing the values of mentoring beyond their usual responsibilities. Someone who is passionate about their mentee's personal and professional growth.

Nominee questions:

- What's your proudest achievement over the last year as a mentor?
- Why do you believe that mentoring is important and how do you measure your impact as a mentor?
- How have you encouraged others to get involved with mentoring?

Outstanding Entrepreneur

Open to all genders

The entrepreneur, who is driven with a passion and purpose to grow and develop their enterprise(s) to achieve success whilst making a positive impact in their sector/community.

Nominee questions:

- Please Provide:
 - The name of your organisation
 - Your position in the company
 - The year your entrepreneurial journey began
 - The number of employees in the company
 - Your organisation's turnover during the last 12 months
 - Your organisation's mission
- Outline one entrepreneurial highlight from the last year.
- Describe a challenge you have faced, how you overcame it, and what you learnt.
- As an entrepreneur, what have you done to accelerate gender equality, equity and wider inclusivity both in and out of your organisation?
- What's next for you on your entrepreneurial journey?

One to Watch

Open to all genders

The individual showcasing exceptional talent and potential in a new role/industry within a community or organisation, with a commitment to championing equity, equality and inclusivity.

Nominee questions:

- Describe your proudest achievements over the past 12 months, and the impact they have had?
- What makes you stand out from the crowd and why are you one to watch?
- What are you focused on making happen in the next six months?

CATEGORY BREAKDOWN

Person with Purpose: Charity/CIC

Open to all genders

The individual from a charity or CIC who is driven by a genuine desire and purpose to create real change in the world and better the lives of both individuals and communities.

Nominee questions:

- Describe your proudest achievement(s) over the past 12 months and the impact these have had.
- What is your purpose?
- What are you focused on making happen in the next six months?

Person with Purpose: Public Service

Open to all genders

The individual from a public service who is driven by a genuine desire and purpose to create real change in the world and better the lives of both individuals and communities.

Nominee questions:

- Describe your proudest achievement(s) over the past 12 months and the impact these have had.
- What is your purpose?
- What are you focused on making happen in the next six months?

Person with Purpose: Private Organisation

Open to all genders

The individual from a private organisation who is driven by a genuine desire and purpose to create real change in the world and better the lives of both individuals and communities.

Nominee questions:

- Describe your proudest achievement(s) over the past 12 months and the impact these have had.
- What is your purpose?
- What are you focused on making happen in the next six months?

CATEGORY BREAKDOWN

Micro Organisation

1-10 employees

The organisation dedicated to nurturing an inclusive culture as a key component of its growth strategy and creates an environment where diversity thrives, with a sense of belonging and empowerment for every individual.

Nominee questions:

- Please provide:
 - A brief description of what your organisation does
 - Your organisation's status (CIC/Charity/sole trader/Ltd company/ Other)
 - The year your organisation was founded
 - The number of people in the organisation
 - Your organisation's mission
- What has your organisation done to accelerate inclusivity?
- What are your recent highlights?
- What does your organisation do to be a responsible member of your community?
- What are you focused on making happen in the next six months?

SME

11-250 employees

The organisation that demonstrates a commitment to accelerating gender equality and creating an inclusive workplace. This award recognises forward-thinking strategies in recruitment, development and retention of talent, which promote diversity and create an environment where all individuals thrive.

Nominee questions:

- Please provide a brief description of what your organisation does.
- What has your organisation done to accelerate gender equality and wider inclusivity both in and out of your organisation?
- What is the most significant contribution your organisation has made to recruitment, development and retention of diverse talent in the last 12 months?
- What is your organisation doing to contribute to Environmental, Social and Governance and the UN's Sustainable Development goals?
- What are you focused on making happen in the next six months?

Large Organisation

250+ employees

The organisation that demonstrates a commitment to accelerating gender equality and creating an inclusive workplace. This award recognises forward-thinking strategies in recruitment, development and retention of talent, which promote diversity and create an environment where all individuals thrive.

Nominee questions:

- Please provide a brief description of what your organisation does.
- What has your organisation done to accelerate gender equality and wider inclusivity both in and out of your organisation?
- What is the most significant contribution your organisation has made to recruitment, development and retention of diverse talent in the last 12 months?
- What is your organisation doing to contribute to Environmental, Social and Governance and the UN's Sustainable Development goals?
- What are you focused on making happen in the next six months?

GAME CHANGER LISTS BREAKDOWN

PoWEr List

Open to individuals who identify as female

Recognising experienced individuals who use their position, power and purpose to promote the importance of gender equality, equity and inclusivity in every facet of their work, leaving an undeniable mark on society.

Nominee questions:

- What achievements are you most proud of?
- How do you use your power as a force for good in accelerating gender equality, equity and inclusivity in the North?

Future List

Open to individuals who identify as female

Recognising the trailblazers, change-makers and future leaders who are already leaving a significant impact on their organisations and communities whilst accelerating gender equality, equity and inclusion.

Nominee questions:

- What is your greatest achievement and what are you most proud of?
- What would being included on the Future List enable you to do?

Advocacy List

Open to individuals who identify as male

Recognising male allies who are leaders, and influencers committed to advancing gender equality, equity and inclusivity. These individuals actively advocate for gender equality and use their power to create a more equal society.

Nominee questions:

- What is your greatest achievement and what are you most proud of?
- How do you use your power and influence to advocate for gender equality, equity and wider inclusivity?