



Alumni Volunteer Awards 2026

Criteria

Introduction

Teesside University's Alumni Volunteer Awards, now in their third year, are a new way for Teesside to recognise, thank and celebrate the many graduates who volunteer their time and expertise, and who do so much to support Teesside.

The Awards are aligned to the University's Corporate Strategy 2027: Ambition Delivered Today – a bold roadmap that embodies seven core values helping all members of our community 'make a real difference to the lives of people and the success of businesses and the economy'.

- Delivering **Excellence**
- Empowering **Individuals**
- Fostering **Creativity**
- Embracing **Diversity**
- Communicating **Openly**
- Committing to **Sustainability**
- Taking **Responsibility**

We're looking for alumni (graduates) who embody these values and are true ambassadors for Teesside University and are all that we stand for in 'making a real difference to the lives of people and the success of businesses and the economy'.

1. Award categories and criteria

The categories for the 2026 Alumni Volunteer Awards are:

1. Rising Star Alumni Volunteer Award
2. Alumni Volunteer of the Year Award
3. Long-service Volunteer Award

1.1 Rising Star Alumni Volunteer Award

Recognising a graduate (from any graduation year), who has recently started their graduate volunteering journey and whose early accomplishments show promise, emerging impact and provide inspiration to others.

1.1.1 Criteria – the following, plus one or more of the subsequent

- Has started to volunteer as a new graduate volunteer within the last year (since previous Award)

and one, or more, of the following:

- Their volunteering, while perhaps limited in frequency, has started to make an impact on one or more of the following constituents:
 - current students or fellow graduates
 - The wider 'Teesside community' including the professions
- Has started to support improved community cohesion
- Has the potential to inspire others to consider volunteering in the future

1.2 Alumni Volunteer of the Year Award

Recognising a graduate who has gone above & beyond in their volunteering activity in the last year or so, delivering a tangible impact through their volunteering commitment.

1.2.1 Criteria – one, or more, of the following:

- Has demonstrably helped raise the confidence of current students or fellow graduates
- Has provided meaningful inspiration to the 'Teesside community'
- Has helped advance the institution (any capacity)
- Has supported connectivity between Teesside University and the 'professional world' *[inclusive of all employment sectors, inclusive of those who work in the charity sector, business, industry, manufacturing etc.]*
- Has engaged in one or more volunteering initiatives

1.3 Long Service Volunteer Award

Recognising a graduate who has made an outstanding contribution over an extended period of time.

1.3.1 Criteria – the following, plus one or more of the subsequent

- Has been a Teesside graduate volunteer over an extended period of time, greater than one-year involvement, ideally covering a number of initiatives during this period

and one, or more, of the following:

- Has evidence of high personal and/or professional standards of business practice
- Can demonstrate impactful community cohesion
- Has demonstrably helped raise the confidence of current students or fellow graduates
- Has provided meaningful inspiration to the 'Teesside community'
- Has helped advance the institution (any capacity)
- Has supported connectivity between Teesside University and the 'professional world' *[inclusive of all employment sectors, inclusive of those who work in the charity sector, business, industry, manufacturing etc.]*

1.3 Type of volunteering

Volunteering takes many forms and is inclusive of those who give their time and expertise, without payment, as guest speakers, panellists, mentors, employability guides, recruitment ambassadors, regional points of contact, governors, board members, curriculum advisors, business engagement facilitators – and similar.

2. Eligibility

- Anyone can nominate a graduate for an Award. This is inclusive of Teesside University staff, current students, fellow graduates, the graduate themselves (self-nomination) or a graduate's employer.
- Graduate volunteers and their volunteering engagement can be based anywhere in the world
- Posthumous awards will not be made
- Nominations will not be accepted for graduates who are active politically eg: serving MPs or local councillors
- The Alumni and Fundraising Office's decision on eligibility is final and is guided by all available qualification records and occupation information

3. Nomination process

- All nomination must be received before 5pm GMT, Friday 16th January 2026
- Nominations and self-nominations are welcome. For either route, successful nominations would typically include evidence as to the impact of the volunteering engagement(s) carried out. This may be best demonstrated through 3rd party testimony and advocacy
- Incomplete nominations will not be shortlisted by the selection panel
- Changes to nominations will not be accepted once nomination deadline has passed
- Nominators can nominate more than one alumnus (graduate)
- Nominators must select only one category at a time when nominating
- Where graduate volunteers are nominated in both categories (unknown to the nominee or self-nomination), the selection panel have final decision on which category they feel the nomination(s) is strongest for. A graduate volunteer can only be shortlisted in one category
- Nominations must be made in English

4. Judging process

- Once nominations close, the selection panel will meet, with Awards subsequently announced in June 2026 (during Volunteer Week)
- The selection panel will be made up of representatives from our five academic Schools, plus individuals from Professional Service Offices who regularly engage with graduate volunteers
- Names and gendered pronouns of nominees will be removed, unless relevant to the reason(s) for nomination, before being shared with the selection panel

- The selection panel will judge each nomination against the criteria set out under each Award category, plus the nomination's alignment with University values
- The Alumni and Fundraising Team reserve the right to carry out due diligence checks on alumni and information provided in the nomination form. Where information provided is found to be incorrect or unsubstantiated, the selection panel reserves the right to discount the nomination

5. Finalists and winners

- Category finalists will be contacted and asked to confirm their wish to proceed in the Awards process. Nominees have full right to decline participation in the Awards process
- Category finalists and winners should be open to providing further testimony for use in University promotions and communications. With agreement, this includes photography and potentially video content
- Category finalists, and eventually winners, will be announced via social media

6. Managing data

- Personal data submitted as part of these Awards will be used to communicate with nominated alumni, and subsequent finalists and winners.
- Personal data submitted as part of these Awards is at the disposal of the Alumni and Fundraising Team and will be used in line with the University's Privacy Policies. For further detail, search 'Data Protection and Privacy' at tees.ac.uk.
- Alumni who wish to amend their communication preferences after submitting details as part of the Awards can do so at any time by emailing alumni@tees.ac.uk or by going online (tees.ac.uk/alumni).

7. General

- Volunteering or work done in a voluntary capacity is indicative of a graduate giving their time voluntarily and without payment. Work done by a graduate volunteer would also encompass those who give their time free of charge, but who may have benefitted from University hospitality, a small incentive or a small gift of thanks in recognition of their efforts at the time.
- The terms alumni, alumnus, alumna and graduate refer to (one or more) former students (of Teesside University) who have completed a board- awarded qualification from the institution. The term(s) does not include those who have only completed an unaccredited CPD courses or equivalent non-board awarded programme of study. The graduate volunteer can have studied via any mode (full time, part time, online etc).