



Child & Youth Participation Award

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When to Apply

You can submit your application between March 01st and May 01st each year. These exact opening and closing dates will be advertised on the Tusla Newscast and through the Participation Officers for external agencies in January and February.

Applications are open to all Tusla and Tusla funded services including projects in receipt of participation seed funding.

School applications are limited to Primary Deis schools. Home School Liaison Officers will let schools know when applications are open.

To apply you must:

- Complete the application form remembering to select which checklist you wish to be evaluated against.
- Provide evidence photographic or otherwise alongside the application.
- If shortlisted, agree to an online or in-person verification visit from a Participation Officer.

The Application Form

The application form can be found online at www.tusla.ie. Go to the Family support tile on the homepage. You can download the application from here and email it to the Participation Officer. Alternatively, you can have an application form emailed to you directly from your regional participation officer. If you want to, you can print the form and fill it in by hand. In this case you might need to add an additional page to the form to include everything.

There are four criteria for assessing applications. These are:

1. **Space:** Children have a space to express their views. 'Space' includes physical space as well as enough information, time, and support for all children to take part. A good space will allow the children to feel safe and comfortable in telling you what they want, need, feel, and think.
2. **Voice:** Children must have the chance to give their views on decisions that affect them if they want to, however small or big these decisions are. Children must be given a choice about what they want to express their views on and how they want to do this. Adults should support this.
3. **Audience:** Children's views must be listened to and considered. The adults listening should tell them what they will do with their views. Children should know who else will hear their views, how their views will be shared, and what might change.
4. **Influence:** Children must get feedback on what happened or changed because of their views and why. Projects and services must support the children to give feedback on how their views were heard and used.

You must demonstrate competency **in each of the four areas** as all four areas are of equal importance and will be scored as such.

You must select the checklist on the application form to show which checklist you wish to be evaluated against. (see below for more information).

You must show or evidence the participation work you are putting forward for the award. You can do this by sending:

- Your typed/written application form that covers the four areas of Space, Voice, Audience, and Influence.
- Photographs of the participation work as it happens.
- Photographs of a completed project or participation experience.

[Choosing your checklist](#)

The application form shows you two checklists. The first is called "the everyday spaces checklist" and the second is called "the planning checklist".

The **everyday spaces checklist** is recommended if you are an everyday setting such as a classroom, childcare setting, youth services or a creative initiative.

The **planning checklist** is recommended if your application is based on the development of plans, services, programmes or policies.

If in doubt contact your regional participation officer who can support you to choose your checklist.

Verification visit by the Participation Officer

If your application is shortlisted and receives a score of 16 points or higher out of a maximum of 20 * from the evaluation committee you will be contacted by your Participation Officer. They will arrange to visit the service in person to talk to the children and young people that use the service and to verify that the information provided in the application is correct. (* a minimum of three points must be achieved in each quadrant).

What happens next?

After the Participation Officer's verification visit, this and details from your application are reviewed for a final time with the Evaluation Committee. This committee is made up of people from Tusla, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the Ombudsman for Children's Office, Hub na nÓg, the Children's Rights Alliance and An Gaisce – the President's Award. If successful you will be notified of your achievement via email and official letter. This notification will also go to the area manager and the PPFS manager.

What the Award gives your service, organisation or project.

The Award is valid for two years. Successful applicants will receive:

- A digital copy of the Tusla Child and Youth Participation Awards logo for use on your documents/leaflets and letterheads for two-years.
- A framed certificate of achievement and an official letter of congratulations.
- A vinyl window sticker to display your accreditation on entrance to the service.
- A certificate of participation for all the children and young people that took part.
- The opportunity to attend a national award ceremony along with other recipients of the award.
- The opportunity to share the achievement over the following year on Tusla's Child and Youth Participation newsletter, Tusla's Newscast or in publications about child and youth participation.

After two years, services, organisations or projects can reapply for the Award.

Participation Officers will contact unsuccessful applicants and give personal feedback from the committee. A general letter will also issue to all entrants detailing the learnings and best practices observed throughout the year. Unsuccessful applicants are welcome to reapply the following year.

The Child and Youth Participation Awards Journey



APPLICATION



EVALUATION



VERIFICATION



AWARDED

Dates to Remember

January-February Online briefing for all interested applicants. Awards advertised by Tusla, Participation Officers and Home School Liaison Officers

March – May Applications accepted.

May – September Shortlisting followed by evaluation by committee and verification visits by Participation Officers. Final decision by committee.

Sept/ October Notification of award sent to successful applicants.

November Awards Ceremony