

Writing a strong nomination for the Hume Young Leaders Awards

General tips and hints:

- Complete the entire nomination form.
- Try not to repeat yourself across each question. Think about what each question is asking.
- Use strong examples to demonstrate the truth of your nomination. See the example responses below to give you an idea of what this looks like.

Using SmartyGrants:

- Nominations for the Hume Young Leaders Awards are made via SmartyGrants, an online portal.
- If you are a new user, you will need to set up a login before you begin.
- If you have previously used SmartyGrants you can use your existing login.
- Save your work as you go. We also recommend saving your answers elsewhere in your files, such as on a Word or Google document, or an email to yourself.
- Allow plenty of time to complete your application to meet the closing date.
- When you have finished your application click the Submit button. If the Submit button is grey, there is something incomplete or wrong in your answers. Check all sections highlighted red. Once you have submitted you will be sent an email confirmation.
- If you don't hit Submit, we cannot see your application, so it won't be considered.
- You can also refer to the SmartyGrants Applicant Guide for [help](#).

Selecting your category:

- Make sure that you have chosen the category that is most appropriate for you/the young person you are nominating, and that they are eligible for it.
- Please note that the following categories have additional eligibility requirements:
 - Young Group of the Year: only groups (3 or more people) are eligible for this category. A young person cannot be nominated individually for this category. The group may be active in one or more of the other categories (for example, Creative, Sports, Environmental, etc.)
 - Young Refugee/Newly Arrived Leader: only young people who are, or have been, refugees or asylum seekers, or who are newly arrived in Australia (within the last five years) are eligible for this category.

Responding to assessment criteria:

Use the prompting questions to help guide your answers.

How have you/the nominee demonstrated leadership in the selected award category?

- What have been your key roles/responsibilities in your/the nominee's award area? (e.g. mentor, captain, choir leader, speaking at events, representing your community, etc.)
- What community activities, projects, or ideas have you/the nominee been engaged in that benefit the community in the award area? (e.g. fundraising, planting trees, getting signatures for a petition, volunteering, etc.)

How has your leadership in this area had a positive impact on the community?

- What have been the outcomes of your/the nominee's activities/projects? (e.g. community event held with 25 attendees, mentored children reported feeling 'more confident and connected to community', letter sent to local government MP – try to use measurable things, qualitative or quantitative)
- How have you/this young person made a positive impact on the lives of other young people and/or community? (e.g. promoted the voices of marginalised communities, built awareness of a sporting club, helped to make a school environment more inclusive, etc.)

What are the personal leadership attributes that you/the young person and/or groups have shown in the selected award category?

- What skills or values do you/the individual or group demonstrate? (e.g. compassion, equity, good listening skills, ability to work well in a group, valuing other people's perspectives, taking initiative, etc. – provide examples of these being demonstrated)
- What other personal attributes would you like to add to support this nomination? (e.g. always has a positive attitude, always has a kind word to say to other people, always tries their best, etc.)

Example responses:

Example 1: weaker nomination

John Smith is the School Captain at Broadmeadows High School. His duties include speaking at school assemblies, meeting with the school leadership team and helping to plan activities for his year such as the end-of-year formal. He also volunteers locally to look after the environment.

Under John's leadership as school captain, the school has fundraised over \$500 for a charity that fights deforestation. This has greatly helped the local community, something which is very important to John's heart.

John is a strong leader because he always helps other people and tries his best to solve their problems. He is kind to people and will always put his hand up when something needs to get done.

Notes on nomination:

- Although many young people have a variety of interests, it's important to show the strength of a young person in a particular category. For example, this nomination could be for Young Advocacy Leader, or Young Environmental Leader. It would be better to lean into one of these and provide much more detail into their activities in this category.
- The assessment panel will be interested in both elected positions (such as school captains) as well as volunteer roles. Learning more about John's volunteering role, such as the organisation he volunteers at, how long he has been a volunteer there for, and the activities he does there, would have strengthened this nomination.
- The nominator hasn't given much detail on John's specific actions as School Captain, instead just listing the actions that all school captains would be expected to do as part of their role. It would be great to hear how John has gone above and beyond to prove his leadership skills within this role.
- The nominator has provided a list of some nice skills and attributes they see in John, but no specific examples. It would have been great to hear some examples of him helping people to solve their problems or putting his hand up to get something done.
- It needs to be longer to get the detail across – each response can be up to 500 words.

Example 2: stronger nomination

John Smith is a strong champion for environmental issues and shows leadership in this field in several ways. For the last five years, he has volunteered with the Friends of Jackson Creek and has recently been selected by his peers as the junior convener of the group. In this role, he helps to coordinate monthly working bees, meets with and mentors new volunteers, and supports with data collection and surveys of endangered plant species. John also champions environmental issues in his role as School Captain at Broadmeadows High School, where he meets regularly with the school leadership team, speaks at assemblies, and plans school activities. In this role, John has initiated a new recycling campaign at the school and organised a fundraising day for International Day of Forests.

John's leadership in these roles has had a very positive effect on both the environment he cares for, and the people around him. The monthly working bees at Jacksons Creek have cleared a significant number of weeds and invasive species in the area and have also planted over 150 native plants. John has mentored three new young volunteers, helping them to feel comfortable and confident in their new roles as volunteers, and supporting their retention as part of the program. In his role as School Captain, he has initiated a recycling program, which has seen each class appoint an environmental champion and measure the amount each year level can recycle, with a prize for the most efficient year. So far, the school has saved over 25 kilos of waste by recycling it instead. He has also been part of a committee that organised a fundraising event for International Day of Forests, which raised over \$500 and built awareness in the school community of the vital importance of forests and the dangers of deforestation.

John is a calm and kind leader, always seeking the strengths of those people around him and making sure they can shine. For example, one of our new youth volunteers was very shy when they started with the program. John took the time to sit with them and get to know them and learned that they were very good at using Excel. He encouraged them to review the data for annual

surveys and together they developed a new way of capturing data to make our processes much more efficient and effective.

Included documentation:

- Letter of recommendation from CEO of local environmental organisation where he volunteers
- Testimonial from young person they have mentored at local environmental organisation
- School newspaper article about the fundraising day

Notes on nomination:

- It was very clear which category John was being nominated for, and all examples and details supported this.
- Adequate detail was given about the roles and responsibilities John has, as well as the positive impact of his work and leadership in each of these roles. Specific details, such as the amount of money raised, the number of new plants planted, and the actions he took to support new volunteers further strengthened the nomination.
- It could be a bit longer – each response can be up to 500 words.