

## AWARDS & JUDGING CRITERIA

From start-ups to local legends, the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce 2026 Business Excellence Awards shines a spotlight on the many businesses that help make Whitehorse and the Yukon a great place to live, work, play, and do business.

This year, we are proud to celebrate six awards. An independent panel of judges will select two finalists for each award, with one winner announced at the Business Excellence Awards Premiere on April 16, 2026.

The following criteria will be used to judge each award:

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### Small Business of the Year Award

Honours a for-profit business with five (5) or less full-time employees that demonstrates excellence across key areas throughout the **2025 calendar year**. The recipient:

- Demonstrates continual business excellence through positive business growth;
  - Showcases engagement and commitment to their community;
  - Exemplifies superior customer service; and
  - Maintains a strong commitment to quality and operational excellence.
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### Business of the Year Award

Honours a for-profit business with six (6) or more full-time employees that excels in key areas of operations and community impact throughout the **2025 calendar year**. The recipient:

- Demonstrates continual business excellence through positive business growth;
  - Showcases engagement and commitment to their community;
  - Exemplifies superior customer service; and
  - Maintains a strong commitment to quality and operational excellence.
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### Business Leader of the Year Award

Honours an individual who exemplifies visionary leadership and dedication to their business and community. The recipient:

- Holds a prominent leadership role, such as founder, owner, CEO, President, or Senior Executive of a company/companies;
  - Demonstrates exceptional business leadership and vision;
  - Displays a significant commitment to the success of both their business and the region as a whole;
  - Serves as a positive role model or mentor for other business professionals; and
  - Exemplifies leadership in fostering community partnerships.
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### **Greatest Community Impact Award**

Honours a for-profit business that demonstrates outstanding contributions to the community, going beyond typical business practices to foster positive change. The recipient:

- Actively engages in initiatives that promote a diverse, inclusive and balanced community;
  - Creates a lasting and measurable impact within the region through sustainable efforts; and
  - Exemplifies social responsibility by supporting meaningful events, programs, projects, and/or sports teams over the past year.
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### **Excellence in Service and Work Culture Award**

Honours a for-profit business that demonstrates excellence in both customer service and workplace culture. The recipient:

- Excels in providing outstanding and reliable customer service through strategic approaches;
  - Cultivates a positive and inclusive workplace environment that prioritizes employee well-being;
  - Actively recognizes and values employee contributions to the success of the company.
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### **Notable Innovator Award in partnership with Yukonstruct**

Honours a for-profit business that introduces bold new ideas and reimagines how business, community, or systems can operate across the territory. The recipient:

- Demonstrates a willingness to challenge conventional practices, take calculated risks, or pursue untested ideas;
  - Introduces a novel product, service, business model, or way of operating that is meaningfully different from standard practice in the Yukon;
  - Actively questions or reshapes existing norms, systems, or assumptions within their sector or community;
  - Has influence or potential relevance beyond a single customer base, contributing to broader conversations, inspiration or possibly across the Yukon; and
  - Recognizes innovation itself, not business size, revenue growth, customer service excellence, or short-term measurable impact.
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### **Eligibility Note:**

All awards are exclusively open to for-profit businesses operating within the City of Whitehorse and across the Yukon Territory. Non-profit organizations, registered charities, and other entities not conducting activities for profit or gain are not eligible for these awards.

Any business can be nominated, but finalists must be or become members of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce to qualify. The Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce reserves the right to limit the number of selected nominees, and/or withhold an award in any category.

Current board members and winners of the 2025 awards are not eligible to apply.

**QUESTIONS?**

If you have any questions about the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce 2026 Business Excellence Awards, please call the Chamber office at 867.667.7545 or email at [awards@whitehorsechamber.ca](mailto:awards@whitehorsechamber.ca).