

Ontario opens nominations for the 2027 Rural Ontario Inspiration Awards

The Ontario government is opening nominations for the Rural Ontario Inspiration Awards, an annual program recognizing the people, businesses, organizations and communities that are helping to drive economic growth, create opportunity and strengthen rural Ontario.

“In rural communities across the province, people are making a difference every day by stepping up, creating opportunities and helping to build a stronger rural Ontario,” said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Rural Affairs. “The response to last year’s Rural Ontario Inspiration Awards showed us how important it is to recognize and honour those contributions, and we’re proud to continue that celebration in 2027.”

The Rural Ontario Inspiration Awards will recognize outstanding achievements across eight categories:

Rural Inspiration

Rural Community

Rural Entrepreneur

Rural Youth Leader

Rural Economic Innovation

Rural Partnerships

Rural Champion

Rural Heart

Nominations will be accepted until October 23, 2026. You can learn more about the program and submit a nomination at Ontario.ca/RuralAwards.

“Rural Ontario is a driving force behind our province’s economy, and its success is built on the hard work of local leaders, businesses and communities that create jobs, attract investment and build opportunity,” said Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. “Through the Rural Ontario Inspiration Awards, our government is proud to recognize the people and organizations who work tirelessly to strengthen their communities, grow local economies and ensure rural Ontario continues to prosper for generations to come.”

The Rural Ontario Inspiration Awards support the three pillars of Enabling Opportunity: Ontario’s Rural Economic Development Strategy by recognizing contributions to safe and strong rural communities, business development and attraction and a growing rural workforce, all of which help build a strong and thriving rural economy.