

John Oates Memorial Award 2026

The Skills/Compétences Canada (SCC) John Oates Memorial Award recognizes the outstanding contributions of volunteers who, like John Oates, dedicate themselves to helping young people develop skills. Awarded annually to one national recipient, it honours John's 40 years of service and belief in the power of skills to transform individuals and communities.

An educator and administrator with the College of the North Atlantic, John served on the Skills Canada Newfoundland and Labrador and SCC Boards for 16 years, including as provincial and national Board President. He later represented Canada at WorldSkills International for five years and, in 2020, joined its Board as Treasurer.

John is remembered for his warmth, generosity, and inclusive leadership, and for a lifelong commitment to advancing skills development across Canada and around the world.

Submission Checklist

- Minimum of 1 letter of support
- Description on the nominees' role
- Description on the nominees' impact
- Description on the nominees' inspiration(s)
- Deadline for submission: March 31, 2026

Nomination Criteria

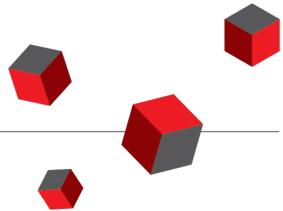
Self-nominations and peer nominations will be accepted. Nominees must reflect the spirit of John Oates through generous, sustained volunteer service, strong advocacy for the skills movement, and a well-established record of selfless commitment. They should be widely regarded as caring, respected individuals who inspire and are admired by others.

Role

Briefly describe the nominee's contributions. If the nominee is selected, this description may be used for distribution in Skills/Compétences Canada's Newsletter and appear in SCC's social media.

Explain how the nominee has shown leadership and the actions they have taken to address the skills movement. Describe how the nominee's actions have benefited youth and made them stronger.





Indicate the number of years the nominee has been volunteering.

Describe how the nominee has shown leadership as a volunteer. Give details about the time, expertise, and resources the nominee has dedicated to helping youth and their skills.

Impact

Impact refers to the depth of the nominee's contribution. Has the nominee identified and addressed a priority in their role as a volunteer? Describe how their contributions have made a lasting difference in the Skills community. Indicate how the nominee has made a lasting difference in the Skills community through their work. Indicate how the nominee has made their volunteer work sustainable (in other words, how will the benefits of the nominee's contribution continue when the nominee is no longer involved).

Inspiration

How did the nominee share their experience and knowledge and who did they share it with?

Describe how the nominee became a role model in the Skills community. Describe how the nominee shared their experience and expertise with youth and other volunteers.

Describe how the nominee has mentored youth and influenced other volunteers.

Confirm that the nominee is eligible

A nominee must meet the following criteria:

- The nominee must have 5+ years of volunteer service within the Skills Canada organization. Nominees may also be retired.

Get the nominee's consent

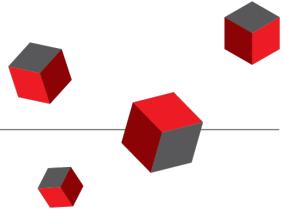
- Consent from the nominee is required to begin the nomination process.

Submitting your nomination

Get a nomination form

- The online submission form:
[2026 John Oates Memorial Award / Prix commémoratif John Oates – Fill out form](#)





Get a letter of support

- Submit 1 letter of support from your provincial or territorial [Skills Canada Member Organization](#) with direct knowledge of the nominee's contributions. A letter of support is a document that highlights the contribution of a nominee. Your nomination package will not be complete without a letter of support. If no letter of support is submitted, your nomination will be deemed incomplete and will not be considered.
- Please submit the letter of support via email to: chantall@skillscanada.com

Recognition of award winner

The recipient of the Skills/Compétences Canada John Oates Memorial Award will be formally recognized at the Skills Canada National Competition (SCNC) 2026 in Toronto to highlight and celebrate their achievements. The recipient may also be asked to participate in SCNC sessions to share experiences and lessons learned from their work. SCC will cover eligible costs related to recipients' attendance at the ceremony.

To promote their outstanding achievements, brief biographies and photos of the award recipient may be shared in SCC's Newsletter, and social media. The award recipient may also be interviewed or photographed.

Privacy notice

The information contained within your nomination form will be shared with the awards selection/evaluation committee, for the purposes of evaluating nominations and selecting the award recipient. Limited information may be shared with SCC's Communication and Marketing Department for internal and external communications purposes to celebrate accomplishments and to promote program awareness.

Participation is voluntary. However, failure to complete the form and/or provide the personal information requested may result in the nomination not being considered for the John Oates Memorial Award.

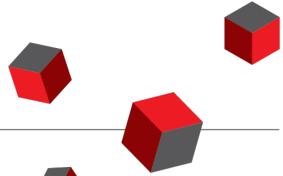
Consent

You or the nominee must consent to the John Oates Memorial Award program collecting, sharing, and disclosing all information related to the nomination with the SCC national office and SCC's John Oates Memorial Award Committee members.

Guidelines for a letter of support

The letter of support must come from a Skills Canada Member Organization with direct knowledge of the nominee's contributions. It should use specific, concrete examples to demonstrate how the nominee meets one or more of the three assessment criteria; explicitly addressing the criteria may improve the score.





The author should include only their name and email or mailing address, along with their role and relationship to the nominee (e.g., how they know the nominee, their involvement in the nominee's volunteer activities, and how long they have known them).

Frequently asked questions

Why has this award been created?

The John Oates Memorial Award has been created to recognize those who make a difference by volunteering their time in helping youth across the country in believing that skills have the power to change lives, just as John did. The award will also highlight exemplary practices in leadership and inspire the values exemplified by John.

Do I have to know the person I nominate?

Yes, you must be directly aware of the contributions made by the individual you wish to nominate. You must know them well enough to be able to obtain their consent to be nominated and to be able to complete a thorough nomination.

Do I need to get consent from the nominee?

You must get consent from the nominee confirming collection of their personal information, their story, information about their accomplishments, their professional achievements and any other information needed to meet the merit criteria as listed.

Can I nominate myself?

Yes, you can nominate yourself.

Can I nominate someone who has passed away?

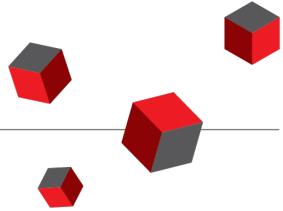
No, posthumous nominations are not eligible.

Although posthumous nominations are not accepted, nominees who pass away in the months between the receipt of their nomination and the decision-making process are eligible to receive an award.

Whom should I ask to provide a letter of support?

The letter of support must come from the Skills Canada Member Organization from your province or territory since they would have benefitted directly from the nominee's volunteer contribution, and who can attest to the valuable leadership the nominee has provided as a volunteer. The letter of support should clearly identify their role and relationship to the nominee, for example: how did the author become familiar with the nominee's activities, and how long have they known them?





Nomination deadline

The nomination deadline is close of business on 31 March 2026. If your nomination is received after the deadline, it will be considered for next year's award.

Selection process

SCC's John Oates Memorial Award Committee will review all nominees, and the chosen recipient will be contacted by SCC's Chief Executive Officer.

Award presentation

The award will be presented during the Skills Canada National Competition in Toronto.