EASTSIDE AWARDS

Belfast City Council

The 2026 Eastside Award for Business Start-Up

Who can enter:

Open to individuals, businesses, or social enterprises based in or operating within East or Greater East Belfast that have been trading for less than three years (established after 18 Sept 2023). This award celebrates ambitious new ventures that have turned a strong idea into a promising and purposeful enterprise. We are looking for start-ups that can demonstrate resilience, early momentum, a clear understanding of their customers or community, and the potential to build lasting success. Entrants may be at any stage within their first three years, from recently launched ventures to businesses beginning to scale. Judges will be interested in the journey so far, the challenges overcome, and the ambition behind the next stage of development.

What to include in your submission:

Tell us your start-up story and include:

- Why and how your business idea was created.
- How you launched and introduced your products or services to your customers or community.
- Evidence of your business growth and sustainability so far.
- What makes your start-up stand out from the rest.
- Any other information to strengthen your entry.

How to enter:

Entering the Eastside Awards is simple. Here's how to get started:

1. **Choose Your Category**
   Visit www.eastsideawards.org and select the award category you'd like to enter or nominate someone for.
2. **Check the Criteria**
   Download the category criteria to see exactly what the judges are looking for.
3. **Decide How to Enter**
   You can submit your entry in **two ways**:
   - **Video Submission:** A great choice if you'd prefer to tell your story on camera.
   - **Written Submission:** Perfect if you'd like to provide a written entry.

Video Submission:

1. Fill out your basic details via the online entry form.
2. Upload your video (max. **120 seconds**) telling us why you or your nominee deserves to win.
3. There's no need for a polished production – just focus on **clearly explaining your story** and **meeting the criteria**.

Written Submission:

1. Complete your entry online or download a form and email it to **info@eastsideawards.org**.
2. Written entries should be **no more than 1,000 words** and clearly show how you meet the category criteria.

Helpful hints

- **Use the criteria as a guide** when writing or filming your entry - ensure that you address each point.
- The judges want **evidence of achievements, impact, and contributions** – include details and examples where possible.
- **Judges can only assess what you provide**, so include everything relevant to your success story.
- Whether you choose a written or video entry, **all entries are judged equally** based on how well you meet the criteria.
- If you have any questions or need help submitting your entry, contact: Jessica Higginson at **jessica.higginson@podiem.com** or call **028 9076 1030**.

Important dates

- **Entries Open:** Tuesday, **18 September 2026**
- **Entry Deadline:** Friday, **16 October 2026 (5pm)**
- **Judging:** Late November 2026
- **Finalists Announced:** Early December 2026
- **Awards Ceremony:** Friday, **29 January 2027** at **Titanic Belfast**