

Final call for towns and digital champions to enter as deadline extended for ‘.IE Digital Town Awards’

Total prize fund of €100,000 up for grabs across 14 award categories including Digital Changemaker, Digital Rising Star and Digital Hero

- **.IE Digital Town Awards honour local towns and everyday champions who, through digital, have contributed to the betterment of their community**
- **The awards will now accept applications until Friday, 1 April at 5.00pm**
- **.IE comment: “To date, we have received huge interest and applications from a broad spectrum of towns and community leaders across the country, and we would like to take this opportunity to encourage any other local town or project who are considering taking part, to ensure that their application is submitted before the new deadline.”**

Local community groups and projects are being called upon to submit their entries for the .IE Digital Town Awards, an initiative of .IE, the managers of Ireland’s trusted online .ie address as the application date is extended for an additional week.

The awards, which **have a total prize fund of €100,000 across 14 categories**, opened for entries on 21 February and **will now accept applications until Friday, 1 April at 5.00pm**. This decision was made to facilitate the high demand of interest in this year’s awards programme, according to Oonagh McCutcheon, National Director of the .IE Digital Town Programme.

“The .IE Digital Town Awards were created to honour local towns and people who, through digital projects and innovation, have contributed to the betterment of areas such as e-health, digital tourism, community, education, and digital business”, said McCutcheon.

“Since opening the application process, we have been pleased to see such strong interest in applying for the Awards this year. In response, we have made the decision to extend the deadline by an additional week to ensure that all groups and projects have a chance to get their entries in.

“To date, we have received submissions from a broad spectrum of towns and community leaders from across the country and we would like to take this opportunity to encourage any other local town or project who are considering taking part, to ensure that their application is submitted before the new deadline.

“For those seeking inspiration, we have a number of previous winners profiled on our website www.weare.ie to give people a flavour of the type of projects that won at last year’s award ceremony. We have also compiled a full FAQ section to answer any questions that potential applicants might have.

“For groups and individuals who have already started an application, the online portal will remain open for any last-minute changes or additions that they might like to make to their submission until 5.00pm on 1 April.”

“We are delighted to welcome our category sponsors Western Development Commission, Connected Hubs, Vodafone and AIB Merchant Services”

The .IE Digital Town Awards Categories

Ten of the awards will be for digital projects in the areas of education, tourism, health, business, and community, with a further four special awards recognising a Digital Changemaker, Digital Rising Star, Digital Local Hero, and an Overall Winner, which will be decided on by an independent judging panel.

The judging panel for this year’s special awards categories will be looking for digital leaders who show a genuine passion and ambition for their town or community, are self-motivated, and who apply digital thinking to problem solve with creative solutions and innovative ideas that ‘disrupt’ and enhance towns and communities for everyone’s benefit.

Finally, the Digital Local Hero award will recognise the unsung heroes nominated by their peers for their tireless work on community-focused and digitally led initiatives that make a town or a group in the town better.

The winners and runners up will be announced at a virtual gala awards ceremony on 8 June 2022.

The .IE Digital Town Awards is part of a €1 million investment announced by .IE in 2021 and to be delivered over four years, with a particular focus on digital enhancement and adoption in Ireland’s towns as part of its overall .IE Digital Town programme.

ENDS

Note to editors:

- Learn more about [applying for the .IE Digital Town Awards](#).

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About .IE

.IE is the national registry for .ie domain names and the trusted and progressive guardian of Ireland's unique online .ie address. Our purpose is to enable and empower people, communities, and businesses across Ireland to thrive online.

We operate the domain name system ([DNS](#)) for the .ie namespace, facilitate an [independent dispute resolution service](#), and operate a public WHOIS lookup service for .ie domains.

In cooperation with our Registrars, technical partners, and stakeholders, we help advance Ireland's internet ecosystem. Good governance is evidenced in our [policy development process](#) for the .ie namespace, which follows a bottom-up, consensus-driven approach through a multi-stakeholder Policy Advisory Committee.

At .IE we are committed to digital advocacy for SMEs and for local towns and communities. Through stakeholder engagement initiatives such as [.IE Digital Town](#), we work with and support SME organisations to improve their members' online presence and e-commerce capabilities so they can unlock the power of the internet to boost sales.

We also produce fact-based research for the business community and policymakers, such as the [.IE Domain Profile Report](#) and the [.IE Tipping Point](#) report, which charts the attitudes to digital of Irish SMEs and consumers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

There are over 330,000 .ie domain names registered. Since March 2018, it is easier and faster to register a .ie domain. As part of the .ie domain registration process, every applicant must provide tangible evidence of a connection to Ireland.

www.weare.ie