



# 2026 THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS COACHING AWARDS

NATIONAL COACHING AWARDS  
FOR INDIGENOUS EXCELLENCE IN SPORT

Presented by





## AWARD OVERVIEW

Each year the Aboriginal Sport Circle (ASC) presents the **National Indigenous Coaching Award** to one woman and one man Indigenous coach who demonstrates exemplary integrity in their approach to coaching. For the 2026 program year, all nominations will be collected by the ASC and a National Selection Committee will review the nominations and determine the award recipients in the men's and women's categories. The two national recipients will be presented their awards at the 2026 National Indigenous Sports Gala on **October 24, 2026**, in **Ottawa, Ontario**.

## PRINCIPLES

The Aboriginal Sport Circle is committed to supporting sport that fosters the development of the whole individual. The National Indigenous Coaching Awards reflect this philosophy.

In addition to their coaching achievements, recipients will have demonstrated a personal commitment to the principles of sportsmanship, fair play, and serving as positive role models. Recipients will also have shown a commitment to a holistic lifestyle that embraces their physical, mental, cultural, and spiritual well-being.

## ELIGIBILITY

The Awards honour the accomplishments of a coach within a given program year (**May 31, 2025 to May 31, 2026**).

Nominees must meet the following criteria to be eligible:

- Nominees must be Indigenous (*First Nations, Inuit, Métis*)
- **Nominees must be active within the year of nomination (May 31, 2025 to May 31, 2026)**
- Nominees must demonstrate sportsmanship, fair play, and ethics in sport
- Nominees must complete a nomination package and submit to the Aboriginal Sport Circle on or before **July 10, 2026**

## NOMINATIONS

The nomination period is **June 1, 2026 to July 10, 2026**. Nomination forms and supporting narratives must be submitted **before July 10, 2026**. Nominations may be submitted by the nominee or by a third-party nominator.

Nomination information must include the following:

- Nominee's name, age, gender, address, telephone number, sport(s) nominated for, and number of years coaching
- Level(s) of competition achieved as a coach (i.e., community, regional, provincial, national, or international)
- Four to five high-resolution photos of the nominee coaching their athletes, as well as one headshot





Nominations must also include detailed supporting narratives describing how the nominee displays the following qualities:

- Shows a personal commitment to their coaching development
  - Describe the training and/or professional development the nominee has completed and cite any improvements resulting from this training or professional development
- Demonstrates a positive image as an Indigenous coach
  - Provide examples or testimonials of how the nominee's conduct reflects the principles of fair play and sportsmanship in relation to their sport, officials, and opponents
  - Provide written testimonials from program leaders, parents, athletes and/or Indigenous community as to the nominee's positive image
- Demonstrates a commitment to a holistic lifestyle by maintaining balance across physical, mental, cultural, and spiritual well-being
  - Provide up to two testimonials from program leaders, parents, athletes and community
- Lists personal achievements
  - List any coaching awards, levels of achievement, or other recognitions received by the nominee. Proof of achievements is requested (i.e., highest level of competition coached, top rankings and results, most valuable coach recognition)

## AWARD SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria will be based on the following:

- The coach's highest level of competition coached
- The coach's rankings and results
- Other accomplishments such as Coach of the Year
- Commitment to professional development
- Positive role model in sport and the Indigenous community
- Demonstration of fair play and sportsmanship
- Holistic balance across physical, mental, emotional, cultural, spiritual well-being





## AWARDS

One (1) man and one (1) woman Indigenous coach will be selected by a National Selection Committee to receive the national award. The recipients will be presented with their awards at the 2026 National Indigenous Sports Gala, hosted by the Aboriginal Sport Circle, on **Saturday, October 24, 2026**.

The two national award recipients will receive the following:

- Round-trip travel and accommodations for the recipient and one guest to attend the Gala
- A custom National Indigenous Coaching Award
- A \$1,500 bursary to support coaching professional development.

## NOMINATION DEADLINE

Nomination forms must be submitted to the Aboriginal Sport Circle on or before the nomination deadline of **July 10, 2026**. Nominations will be accepted by email at [khodder@aboriginalsportcircle.ca](mailto:khodder@aboriginalsportcircle.ca) or via the online nomination form linked below:

[surveymonkey.com/r/QZ6GLRH](https://surveymonkey.com/r/QZ6GLRH)

