



NATIONAL FORUM
FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING
AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION



Student-Led Teaching Heroes Awards - Students' Union Officers and Student Representatives' Guide

Key messaging around the Teaching Hero Awards

The Teaching Hero Awards are Ireland's only national, student-led awards for all those who teach in higher education. The Awards are organised by the National Forum in collaboration with the Union of Students in Ireland and other students' unions nationwide.

- The Teaching Hero Awards provide an opportunity for students across the country to recognise and celebrate outstanding teaching in our higher education institutions
- In this context, teaching staff includes lecturers, tutors, lab assistants, technical staff, librarians, and supervisors
- While students can nominate any member of teaching staff that has taught them during their time in higher education, this year there is an emphasis on individual teaching staff that have supported students in the adjustment to online/remote learning
- Teaching Heroes are nominated by individual students, who submit a short personal piece (150 words) that explains why the person is their 'Teaching Hero'. Based on student nominations, all Teaching Heroes identified, with their agreement, will receive national recognition.

Partnering in the Teaching Hero Awards

Past winners of the Teaching Hero Awards value that the awards are student-nominated and student-led. To continue to be student-led, we need your support, as Students' Unions and Student representatives, to complete the award process for this year. We are asking for your support, in collaboration with the National Forum Student Associates, to:

1. Promote the Teaching Hero Awards to your students and promote the conversation about Teaching Heroes both locally and nationally
2. Encourage students to nominate their Teaching Hero during the nomination period (November 17 to December 22, 2020)
3. Continue to work in partnership with us to acknowledge and recognise all this year's nominees in a meaningful way
4. Celebrate all our Teaching Heroes.

Key Dates

Phase One: Promotion and Collection

5 November 2020	Students' Union Officer briefing
17 November 2020	Launch with SUs on social media & open nominations
17 November -	
21 December 2020	Social media campaign
22 December 2020	Nominations close

Phase Two: Reviewing nominations and recognising our Teaching Heroes

Mid-January	Meet again in partnership to discuss how best to recognise all nominees
Spring 2021	Nominees and stakeholders informed

Promoting the Teaching Hero Awards

To assist with the promotion of the Teaching Hero Awards, the following resources and media will be available from the National Forum's website:

1. Soft copies of Teaching Hero posters
2. Promotional videos
3. Templates for Instagram, Facebook and Twitter posts/stories
4. Copy for posts/emails to promote the Teaching Hero Awards and to encourage students to nominate

You will also have a National Forum Student Associate/s within your institution to assist you in the promotion of the Teaching Hero Awards. If you are unsure about who your institution's student associate is, please email us on studentsuccess@teachingandlearning.ie and we will put you in contact.

Things to think about when promoting the Teaching Hero Awards

- Be sure your message includes the how and when of nominating
- Use examples (videos/written quotes) to get students thinking about their Teaching Hero
- Testimonies from previous winners may also be effective in motivating students to nominate their own hero: there is a list of past winners on the [Forum website](#)
- Try not to limit the definition of a Teaching Hero to lecturing staff - include supervisors, tutors, librarians, technicians, etc.
- Try and ensure all those who teach are aware of the initiative too
- Presentations to Class Rep Council and other student groups about the initiative worked really well in previous years
- Include information about the Teaching Hero Awards in your SU all student email, class rep emails and club/socs emails, if possible
- Think about having a designated week/s to promote the awards to accommodate pre-Christmas exams, other campaigns you may have already planned for November/December.

Promoting the Teaching Hero Awards via social media

Like many of your campaigns this year, it is likely that we will be relying mostly on social media to promote the Teaching Hero Awards. Here are some ideas that may be helpful:

- Share from the National Forum and USI stories and posts to your accounts
- Use the hashtag: #TeachingHeroAwards and tag the National Forum and USI into your posts/stories
- Short videos of students speaking about their Teaching Hero have been a very effective promotional tool, especially when shared with a link to the nomination form
- Try to keep messaging short with directions to the Forum, USI or SU website for further details
- Think about using countdown widgets to count down to key dates such as open and close of the nomination period
- To be inclusive, please use the Alt Text function for photos and images when available
- And remember, there are social media templates and assets available in Resources and Media section of the Forum's website.

Maximising existing student networks including the Class Rep System

In previous years, working in partnership with student reps has been effective in promoting the Teaching Hero Awards. Think about:

- Asking faculty and class reps to send a message to their class group.
- Similarly, have club, society, postgraduate and equality officers etc. share the message with their constituents.
- Bring the Teaching Hero Awards to the Class Rep Council for discussion.
- Think about adding the Teaching Hero Awards as a point of information on Union council/ Senate agendas.

On campus promotion

If it is safe to do so and it complies with the institution's Covid-19 procedures, you may wish to have some on campus promotion, for example in study areas, accommodation and/or the library:

- Upload the Teaching Hero Awards poster/video to show up on the digital screens
- Place posters on the entrance and exit side of doors.

Collecting nominations

The online nomination form will be open to students from November 17 to December 22, 2020. November 17 is the International Day of the Student – this date was chosen to launch the Teaching Hero Awards as the awards are student-led and aim to recognise the impact of transformative teaching on students' lives. We are asking for your assistance with promoting the Teaching Hero Awards during this time and to encourage as many students as possible to nominate teaching staff.

Students can nominate one Hero via the online nomination form on the Forum's website. The url for the Teaching Heroes nomination form will be shared with you in advance of the nomination period opening. There is also a direct link to the nomination form, which will be shared with you. This is useful for sharing with text/in emails that describe the Teaching Hero Awards.

Phase Two

The Forum, USI and other Students' Unions will arrange to meet again in January 2021 to discuss how we can best acknowledge and recognise the nominations received in a meaningful way. We will continue to work in a student-led, partnership approach.

Students' Unions and Student Representatives FAQs

Phase One - Participation

- **Do all institutions have to participate?**
No, Students' Unions and representatives are invited to participate.
- **We already have Teaching Awards. How can we participate?**
We are aware that some institution already have student-nominated teaching and learning awards. There will be an opportunity to put forward staff nominated through an institutional process to these national awards alongside staff nominated through this national call.
- **Our institution is part of a larger institution, how can we participate?**
The 'parent' Students' Union will sign up on behalf of all its members. If this is not the case other arrangements may be made on a case by case basis. Contact us at studentsuccess@teachingandlearning.ie

Phase One – Collecting Nominations

- **Do we collect the nominations on behalf of the National Forum?**
No. Students are asked to nominate their hero directly via a link on the National Forum's website. We will share this link with Students' Unions and student representatives.
- **Is there a minimum amount of nominations we need to collect?**
No, once you are satisfied students have had the opportunity to participate.
- **Will we know how many nominations have been submitted for our institution?**
Yes. We will be able to keep you informed of how many staff who teach at your institution have been nominated during the nomination process and a final number when the nominations close.
- **What if a staff member who is not teaching staff is nominated?**
In the unlikely event this happens their nomination will be deemed ineligible.
- **Why does the nomination form ask for class size?**
Research has shown that class size can influence the impact a teacher has on students. To take account of this the Forum applies a weighting scale depending on the class size.

- **Why does the nomination form ask about gender and age?**

Data from the nomination form will be used by the Forum to build a picture of how students define excellence in teaching and whether or not there are differences depending on student gender or age. Students will have the option to choose not to declare their gender and/or age.

Phase Two – Recognising and celebrating our Teaching Heroes

- **How will we recognise our Teaching Heroes?**

We will meet again in January 2021 to determine how best to acknowledge and recognise all the Teaching Hero Award nominations received this year.