

Rosterfy congratulates the inaugural winners of the New Zealand Volunteering Awards 2025

Winners of the inaugural New Zealand Volunteering Awards 2025, presented by Volunteering New Zealand.

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND, October 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Rosterfy](#), the world's leading volunteer management platform, today congratulates the winners of the inaugural New Zealand Volunteering Awards 2025, presented by [Volunteering New Zealand](#). The awards recognise outstanding leadership, innovation, and measurable impact across Aotearoa's volunteer sector. This year's awards celebrated two standout categories:

Volunteer Programme of the Year – Recognises a volunteer programme that delivers impact for the community and demonstrates inclusive, impactful, and scalable volunteer engagement practices.

Emerging Leader in Volunteer Engagement – Celebrates a rising leader who has delivered meaningful outcomes in the past 12 months through innovative and inclusive volunteer leadership.

After receiving over 60 nominations from all across New Zealand, representing causes such as community services, environment, health, religion, youth and events, the judging panel selected finalists and winners that exemplify



Tūao Aotearoa
Volunteering New Zealand

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the spirit of manaakitanga, best-practice engagement and transformational community leadership.

The 2025 Volunteer Programme of the Year winner is Orange Sky and the Emerging Leader in Volunteer Engagement co-winners are Gary Mitchell (Predator Free Grenada Village) and Nicky Shave (Te Hononga a Iwi - Restoring Rosedale Park)

Orange Sky Aotearoa supports people experiencing homelessness or hardship through its unique approach that brings together laundry, showers, kōrero and connection. Volunteers don't just wash clothes - they create safe, non-judgemental spaces where human connection comes first.

Their programme supports over 500 volunteers with a smart blend of self-directed onboarding and training via MyOS, hands-on learning from experienced team leaders, volunteer voice initiatives, peer-to-peer recognition and a new "Love & Thank" strategy to embed everyday appreciation. In just 12 months, Orange Sky volunteers delivered 3,000 loads of laundry, 2,645 showers and 3,364 hours of kōrero. Their nomination stated "Every role is valued, every contribution has purpose - that's how Orange Sky keeps growing while staying grounded in human dignity."

Emerging Leader in Volunteer Engagement co-winner Gary Mitchell has turned five separate environmental and community programmes into a volunteer ecosystem at Predator Free Grenada Village, a project that's setting standards locally, nationally, and globally. A strategic thinker and servant leader, Mitchell is transforming environmental volunteerism one trap, one tree, and one conversation at a time.

Under Mitchell's coordination, 400+ volunteers are engaged across predator control, marine protection, stream restoration, and neighbourhood safety. Volunteers have removed 19,000+ pests, cleared 250+ tonnes of waste, and planted thousands of native trees. According to his nomination "Gary isn't just coordinating volunteers. He's growing leaders, building ecosystems, and exporting a model of sustainable service."

The other co-winner (Nicky Shave) starting with no ecological background has built one of New Zealand's most innovative restoration projects, Restoring Rosedale Park, from the ground up. Through sheer passion, governance expertise, and community connection, she has transformed a neglected public space into a thriving, climate-positive ecological and social hub.

In just three years Nicky's work has mobilised 5,000+ volunteer hours (Jan-Jun 2025 alone), engaged nine schools, three ECEs, three retirement villages and built a fully bio-organic site with composting, fish surveys, pest control, and scientific monitoring. All of this while leading as a full-time volunteer - baking for the volunteers, mentoring youth, and designing new volunteer recognition tools like commemorative pins. "Everyone who comes to the site knows they matter. They leave with knowledge, confidence, and a sense of purpose." the nomination noted.

Across Aotearoa New Zealand, volunteers dedicate millions of hours each year to strengthening communities and supporting causes they care about. Judges noted that this year's winners stood out for their tangible impact, deep sense of pride and purpose, and their ongoing commitment to innovate and expand the reach of volunteering in their communities.

"We're proud to recognise these exceptional leaders and programmes that are setting new benchmarks in volunteer engagement," said Bennett Merriman, Chief Executive Officer, Rosterfy. "Modern volunteer management must be inclusive, data-informed, and responsive and these

winners reflect that future.”

“The finalists and winners demonstrate what’s possible when organisations centre around people and purpose,” said Michelle Kitney, Chief Executive Officer, Volunteering New Zealand. “We celebrate their contribution, as well as the whānau, communities, and teams behind their success.”

About the New Zealand Volunteering Awards

The New Zealand Volunteering Awards, led by Volunteering New Zealand, honours individuals and organisations that exemplify the values of aroha, manaakitanga, and kotahitanga in service of their communities. The awards celebrate excellence in leadership, programme design, innovation, and measurable community outcomes.

About Rosterfy

Rosterfy is the leading volunteer management software used by nonprofits, events, governments, and enterprises to recruit, screen, schedule, communicate with, and retain volunteers at scale. Organisations in 77+ countries have used Rosterfy to power 150+ million volunteer hours, improving compliance, experience, and reporting across the full volunteer lifecycle. Learn more at rosterfy.com.

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