

Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad

1. In March 2012, the Government established the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad. The Award provides recognition by the Irish State for persons living abroad, primarily Irish citizens, those entitled to Irish citizenship and those of Irish descent, who have given sustained and distinguished service to Ireland and/or Irish communities abroad. The Award is not an honours system and does not confer any legal entitlements or benefits upon the recipients, including a right to Irish citizenship.
2. Each year nominees for the Award are drawn from the following areas of achievement:
 - **Irish community support;**
 - **Arts, culture and sport;**
 - **Charitable works;**
 - **Business and education;**
 - **Peace, reconciliation and development;**
 - **Science, technology and innovation.**
3. In order to be eligible for consideration, nominees must be habitually resident outside the island of Ireland and will be required to satisfy the following additional requirements:
 - (i) have rendered distinguished service to the nation and/or its reputation abroad;
 - (ii) have actively and demonstrably contributed to Ireland and/or its international reputation and/or Irish communities abroad;
 - (iii) have a track record of sustained support and engagement with Ireland and/or its international reputation and/or Irish communities abroad over a period of not less than 5 years.
4. A High Level Panel considers all nominations received from abroad and makes recommendations to the Government in respect of no more than **10 individuals** in any one year. The Panel consists of the Secretaries General to the President, of the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade and four external nominees - two nominated by the President and one each by the Taoiseach and the then Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade (current external members are Ms Sally O'Neill-Sanchez; Prof Declan Kiberd; Fr Bobby Gilmore; Mr Kingsley Aikens). A list of awardees in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 & 2016 is attached.

5. The estimated annual cost is in the region of €45,000 – which will cover the cost of awards, the presentation ceremony and the cost of the recipient and a guest travelling to Ireland. For the 2017 Awards, a total of 83 individuals were nominated for consideration. As some were proposed for multiple categories, the number of specific nominations received was 95. The High Level Panel will meet on 22 June to consider the nominations, and their recommendations are then submitted for Government approval. A review of the operation of the scheme will also take place at the June meeting, and some changes to the scheme are expected to be proposed.

6. The Awards Ceremony for this year's recipients is scheduled to take place on 30th November 2017 at Áras an Uachtaráin, followed by dinner hosted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade at Farmleigh.

Presidential Award Recipients 2012

Arts, Culture and Sport:

Pat Kelly (Canada)
Pierre Joannan (France)
Jim Stynes (deceased, Australia)

Business and Education:

Donald Keough (United States)
Andy Rogers (Great Britain)

Charitable Works:

Chuck Feeney (United States)

Irish Community Support:

Sally Mulready (Great Britain)
Sr Lena Deevy (United States)

Peace, Reconciliation and Development

Fr Michael Kelly (Zambia)
Loretta Brennan Glucksman (United States)

Presidential Award Recipients 2013

Arts, Culture and Sport

Mick Moloney (United States)

Charitable Works

Anne Merriman (Uganda)

Sr Cyril Mooney (India)

Business and Education

Craig Barrett (United States)

John Martin (France- OECD)

Irish Community Support

Mary Tilki (Great Britain)

Seamus McGarry (Great Britain)

Rodney Walshe (New Zealand)

Peace, Reconciliation and Development

George Mitchell (United States)

Dan Rooney (United States)

Presidential Award Recipients 2014

Arts, Culture and Sport

Fionnula Flanagan (US)

Thomas Kenneally (Australia)

Charitable Works

Fr. PJ McGlinchey (Korea)

Business and Education

Jim Flaherty (deceased,Canada)

Catherine Day (EC)

Colm McLoughlin (UAE)

Irish Community Support

Mary Allen (Britain)

Avril Conroy (Russia)

Peace, Reconciliation and Development

Niall O'Dowd (US)

Kevin Cahill (US)

Presidential Award Recipients 2015

Arts, Culture and Sport

Gabriel Byrne (US)
Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru)

Business and Education

Fr. Donal Doyle (Tokyo)
Niall FitzGerald (UK)
Charles Handy (UK)

Charitable Works

Sr. Miriam Duggan (Kenya)

Irish Community Support

Fr. Brendan McBride (US)
Maureen O'Rourke Murphy (US)

Peace, Reconciliation and Development

Gareth Peirce (UK)
Tom Moran (US)

Presidential Distinguished Award Recipients 2016

Arts, Culture and Sport

Angela Brady (UK)
Terry Wogan (Deceased - UK)

Business and Education

Robert Kearns (Canada)
Gerald Lawless (UAE)

Charitable Works

Norman McClelland (US)

Irish Community Support

Nora Higgins (UK)
Brendan Fay (US)
Kathleen Walsh D'Arcy (US)

Peace, Reconciliation and Development

Martin von Hildebrand Mulcahy (Colombia)
Sr. Mary Sweeney (Sierra Leone)

Science, Technology and Innovation

Garret FitzGerald (US)