



**‘How to submit an outstanding entry and showcase your work!’**

# Introduction

Who am I?

- I'm Nicky Forsdike; I've been on the judging panel for the awards since 2012

What is this session about?

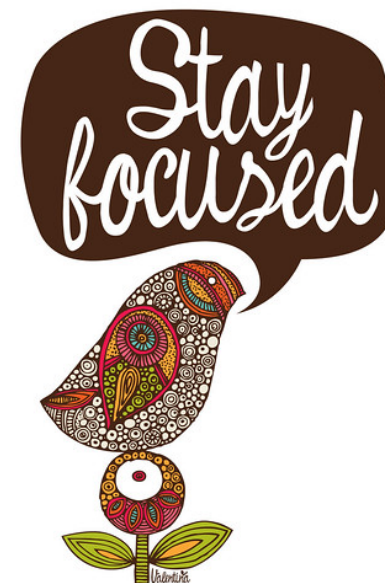
- The session focusses on what makes an outstanding submission for the Community Rail Awards, not what makes a good or outstanding project!



# Key takeaways

If you remember nothing else from today please take away these three key messages:

- Make sure you focus on supplying the information asked for in the specific category criteria for the actual award you're entering for
- Make sure you write up the important details of your project that will help the judges understand how well it meets the judging criteria
- Make sure you understand the judging criteria



# What makes a good submission?



Compliant with rules of entry

Fully meets the brief in the awards entry booklet

Doesn't waffle

Clearly presented

Well evidenced

Within required wordcount

Check the full entry booklet when available, but in general, a good submission will tell us:

- Concept and aims of the initiative
- What happened
- Results

# Let's have a look.....

It's not easy to focus on writing a good entry

It's easier to spot where someone else's weak one can be improved!

So let's have a look at an example

(Note the example I'm about to show you is hypothetical, although to make it more real I've based it on a campaign I ran over 20 years ago. If it bears any resemblance to any more recent campaigns then this is totally co-incidental).



# The 200 word summary .....

Our nomination is for 'Poet on the Line'. Poet on the line was the title we gave to a campaign run last summer as an attempt to generate positive publicity for the Yorkshire Moors Line following a run of negative publicity in local and social media. The Yorkshire Moors Line CRP partnered with a local literature festival and Northern, focussing on poetry as a medium. Central to the campaign was a residency agreed with Mack Illis, a poet nationally famous for his work with children and adults. A number of events were run at the same time as the festival, including on-train events and writing workshops with Northern's staff. Although we initially had trouble getting support for our idea, in the event it proved a winner, getting lots of coverage on local and social media. We're now discussing how we can build on this next year. (146 words)

*Does this tell you:*

- *the name of the project / person / group nominated?*
- *why the project was set up and what / who it involved?*
- *the results of the project?*

# 200 word summary – how could it be improved?



Use 3<sup>rd</sup> person, not 1<sup>st</sup> person - tell the reader which organisation is leading this

Be precise. For example:

- say the campaign ran for four weeks from 1-31 June rather than in the summer
- what does 'lots of press coverage' really mean – better to quantify and give specific examples

Don't assume the reader knows what you know. For example,

- What is a 'residency' – what does this really mean?

Use your word count judiciously – this is 25% under suggesting that perhaps the explanation could be a little fuller?

- Remember, word count cannot be 'rolled over' between sections



# 600 word description



## Tips on writing entries

- Don't duplicate what you said in the 200 word summary – expand on it
- Read the categories and criteria carefully and make sure you respond to those
- Check the rules of entry
- Check the how to submit a good entry
- Use the breakout sessions to ask the judges for further clarification on specific categories

## Category 11 – It's your Station

Make sure you break down your 600 word summary as requested ie:

- Community
- Gardening
- Art & Heritage
- Environment & Sustainability

Remember to use the 'It's your station toolkit' and look out for the drop-in support session in early August



# Writing an outstanding submission



## Presentation

Use section headings based on the judging criteria

## The introduction should

Draw the reader in

Explain why the issue is important eg Support your statements with evidence

## When writing up results, think about the impact – what purpose has it achieved?

- Quantitative results eg number of viewings; financial results; increase in passenger numbers
- Qualitative eg quotations from users emphasizing what they've gained from it
- A mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence

# Supporting evidence (4 images; 4 supporting documents; 1 link)



Might include eg

- Copies of material produced as part of the project eg
  - Links to Youtube videos
  - Screenshots of apps
  - Pdfs of brochures/leaflets
  - Photos of advertising material
- Evidence of impact
  - Photos eg of launch events
  - Press coverage
  - Screenshots of social media coverage
- Costs
  - Copies of bills/receipts
  - Breakdown of costs
- Letters from partners and others
- Survey results

# Key tips

Get someone else to read your entry through afterwards and to critique it – including on how well it meets the criteria

Plan out your word count and stay within the 600 words. Allocate your words to things that will count against the criteria

Think about the presentation of your document

Is it easy to read?

Is it well-laid out?

Does it use headings to guide the judges between sections?

Is additional evidence such as photos clearly linked to the text of the main document?

Are photos and other visual elements appropriate and of good quality?

# Key takeaways and further support

## Takeways

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## Further support

- Look out for drop-in support sessions September/October time



# Any questions?

