

Promote your shortlisted success

Congratulations on being shortlisted for Community Rail Awards 2024. This can provide an opportunity for you to promote your partnership/group to your audience, partners and local media.

We've made some suggestions below on how you can make the most of your shortlisted status in the lead-up to the Awards evening in March.

Use your existing channels

Post on social media

- Use the 'we're shortlisted' graphic provided in the toolkit ([download here](#))
- Use the #CRA24 and #CommunityRail hashtags
- Link back to your website
- Post more than once – you'll have a few weeks before the Awards evening so keep posting throughout that time to catch those that may not have seen your earlier messages – can you focus on a different element of your shortlisted project for each post? See some examples in our [toolkit](#)
- Use the post to highlight other areas of work
- If your project involves other partners be sure to tag them in the post so they can also share, see below on reaching out to partners

Feature it on your website

- Upload a news story to your website, so visitors to your site can see you've been shortlisted
- Use this to tell people more about your shortlisted project – you could use the details you provided in your award submission

Include it in your newsletters

- Write an article for your next newsletter to share the news with your supporters
- Whether your newsletter is based online or not, include a link back to your website where people can find out more about your shortlisted project and the work you do throughout the year

Tell your partners

Send an email to your partners

- Partners such as train operators, community groups, station teams, local schools/colleges you work with, local authority, tourism attractions, leisure businesses etc.
- Include the details of the project that's been shortlisted and the award category
- Thank the partner for their support, whether they have been directly involved, provided funding, or have generally worked with you the past year

- Encourage them to promote your news to their own audiences, you could include a sentence such as: 'We'd really appreciate any extra support you can provide to help amplify our partnership/group so please feel free to share this news within your organisation and to your audience/followers on social media or through your newsletter.'
- Seek support around the Awards evening on 18 March – you could ask them to 'wish you well' for the announcement of the winners
- Although we are not live-streaming the Awards evening, anyone not attending will be able to follow along on our @CommunityRail Twitter feed, where the winners will be announced live throughout the night
- You could use this as an opportunity to reconnect with partners that you may not have spoken to for a while, use it as a conversation starter
- Follow up with your partners after the Awards evening. Whether you won an award or not it is a great achievement to be shortlisted and your partners may appreciate an update on how it went. This is also another chance to thank them for their support

Post on social media

- Tag partners you want to engage with on your social media posts
- Tag local newspaper/media outlets
- Alternatively, you could send a private message to partners/local media on social media – this can be helpful if you're asking them to retweet a recent post of yours, or if you don't have an email address

Local media

Send a press release

- Inform your local media outlets about your shortlisted status by sending them a press release
- Include details of the Awards and, more importantly, this is a chance for you to highlight your shortlisted project and your partnership/group
- Feel free to use the press release template that is featured in the [toolkit](#) – you can adapt and adjust this to suit your own style and tone
- If you don't have specific media contacts, you'll often find an email address of a news desk on their individual websites, where you can send the press release to or contact our [Comms team](#) and they will be able to provide you with local contact details
- Remember to send your press release to local radio news desks as well
- Don't forget to include at least one photograph that you have permission to use, that the media may like to include
- Add your details in case the media want more information or to arrange an interview
- For more advice, see our '[engaging local media](#)' [guidance here](#).

Tell local dignitaries/MPs

Send an email/letter to your local MP/mayor/councillor

- Sharing your success with your local dignitaries, whether you have an existing relationship with them or not, can be a good way to raise the profile of your partnership/group
- You can use this [template here](#) to help you write the letter
- Perhaps you could use this as an opportunity to invite your local dignitaries to your station to get a first-hand account of the work you do throughout the year
- Not only will this help your local dignitaries have a better understanding of community rail within their constituency but also they may provide additional promotion and support for your group through social media

If you'd like advice on promoting your shortlisted status, please contact our Comms & Policy team at news@communityrail.org.uk