

# AONTAS

## The Voice of Adult Learning

### What is the Adult Learners' Festival?

The Adult Learners' Festival is a nationwide celebration of adult learning coordinated by AONTAS – The Voice of Adult Learning. The Festival is about:

- Celebrating adult learning and the achievements of adult learners
- Showcasing the work of adult education providers
- Promoting the work of AONTAS and the adult education sector
- Ensuring that adult education is placed firmly on the political agenda

The sixth Adult Learners' Festival takes place from 20 – 24 February 2012. In the last five years, the Festival has become a firm fixture on the adult learning calendar with events taking place nationwide, including anything from information sessions, taster workshops, sample lectures to small gatherings of people who love to learn.

### How can your organisation get involved?

1. **Nominate a STAR Award.** The STAR Awards (Showcasing Teamwork, Awarding Recognition) are an awards initiative coordinated by AONTAS, The Voice of Adult Learning, as part of the annual Adult Learners' Festival. The awards celebrate innovative and exciting adult learning initiatives taking place throughout the country and are a fantastic way to promote the work of your organisation. Nominations open in early September. Visit [www.adultlearnersfestival.com](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com) for more information or see reverse.
2. **Organise a Festival Event or Activity.** Your organisation can get involved by holding a Festival event or activity during the Festival week (20 – 24 February 2012). Events and activities are held by all kinds of organisations throughout the country such as VECs, Libraries, Universities, IT's, Family Resource Centres, Museums, Galleries, Workplaces, Schools, NGOs and much more! AONTAS provides an 'Event in a Bag' which is packed with promotional materials such as posters, rulers, pens and balloons, which are just a few of the great items available. There is also a wealth of ideas online at [www.adultlearnersfestival.com](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com).

### Why get involved?

The 2012 Festival takes place in the context of rising unemployment, a recruitment moratorium in the public service and an increasing public appetite for adult learning with ever scarcer resources. Despite these challenging times over 411 events were held during the 2011 Festival with organisations promoting their work, providing information and celebrating the achievements of adult learners. Feedback from organizers indicates that their events were a huge success with organisations citing increased awareness of their services, greater media coverage and better relationships with other organisations as a result of their participation. There has never been a better time to highlight the value of the adult learning sector!

### What will happen in the lead up to and during the Festival?

AONTAS will invite you to attend an Information Session in advance of the Festival. Once you send us in details about your event, we'll post them on [www.adultlearnersfestival.com](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com) and provide you with our 'Event in a Bag' which has all you need to promote your event. Our national advertising campaign in advance of the Festival will direct people to your event on the Festival website. Finally, AONTAS will support you to do your own local media work.

AONTAS also designates a particular theme for each day of the week. This may help you plan and promote your event. More information on this year's Festival themes will be posted on [www.adultlearnersfestival.com](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com).

### Where can I get more news about the Festival?

You can follow the Festival Facebook page or follow AONTAS on Twitter to keep up to date with the latest Festival news! Or you can subscribe to our Adult Learners' Festival Update at [www.adultlearnersfestival.com](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com)

AONTAS

Adult  
Learners'  
Festival

20 -24  
February  
2012



# The AONTAS STAR Awards

Showcasing Teamwork, Awarding Recognition

## Nominate an adult learning project

AONTAS - The National Adult Learning Organisation is now accepting nominations for the STAR Awards 2012 as part of the sixth annual Adult Learners' Festival. The STAR Awards are about recognising and celebrating the invaluable collaborative work undertaken by adult learning initiatives in our communities. In the current climate it's extremely important that we continue to showcase the value of the sector in responding to the needs of individuals, communities, society and the economy. Visit [www.adultlearnersfestival.com](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com) for more information

## Who can nominate a project?

Nominations are welcomed from projects themselves or from people involved in the project. You do not have to be involved in the project you are nominating for a STAR Award but it is important to inform the project that you are nominating them. Projects can involve initiatives, resources or group work. Projects may come from adult learning organisations, community and voluntary groups, the private sector, government agencies, statutory bodies and non-government organisations. The outcomes of the learning involved in nominated projects can be personal fulfillment, social change, active citizenship, environmental sustainability, cultural and intercultural awareness and knowledge, skills development, personal development, human rights education, community development, community regeneration, health and well-being and employment in related fields.

## What are we looking for?

Nominated projects should demonstrate the following criteria:

- A high level of **teamwork and partnership** amongst participant groups
- A **learner-centred approach** to education provision
- Adult education **practice and methodologies**
- Clear **evidence or outcomes**

## What are the categories?

Projects may only be nominated in one category. Projects nominated for STAR Awards will fall into the following two categories:

1. Projects that have a nationwide or all-island reach
2. Projects that have a community or provincial reach

Projects which were nominated for awards in previous years are eligible for nomination this year. Projects not eligible for nomination include events such as conferences or exhibitions. If you have any questions about the eligibility of your project, please contact AONTAS on 01 4068220 or visit [www.adultlearnersfestival.com](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com).

## How do I nominate a project?

It's easiest to nominate the project online, as you can click directly on the answers that best apply to you. There is also a word or PDF version of the form available, which you can complete and return to [mail@aontas.com](mailto:mail@aontas.com).

1. Nominate online at [www.adultlearnersfestival.com/starawards/nominate](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com/starawards/nominate)
2. Alternatively, download the Microsoft Word or PDF version of the nomination form and return to [klaing@aontas.com](mailto:klaing@aontas.com).

## What is the deadline?

The deadline for nominating projects/initiatives is **Monday, 21st November 2011** at 5pm. Nominators are encouraged to nominate their projects as early as possible!

## Where can I find more information?

Full details on how to nominate a project for an award, along with a sample completed nomination form are available from <http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com/starawards> or contact AONTAS directly on 01 406 8220. Don't forget to read the FAQs and the tips guide on the best way to complete the form.



AONTAS



STAR AWARDS



2012



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