



**VICTORIAN ENVIRONMENT FRIENDS NETWORK**  
C/- Victorian National Parks Association, Level 3, 60 Leicester St, Carlton 3053  
ABN 83 870 896 171 INC NO A0056495T  
BFA inquiries and nominations: [vefnbfa@gmail.com](mailto:vefnbfa@gmail.com) (preferred)  
Margaret Hunter 0417 323 460

## **Best Friend Award 2021: Selection Criteria and Nomination Form**

This marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the VEFN Best Friends Award for excellence and dedication in environmental volunteering. Once again, an independent judging panel will make the decisions on all winners. We are aware in 2020, between bushfires in some areas and the Covid-19 lockdowns, volunteering in the last 12 months has looked very different. We have added new sections this year where you can highlight how your nominee has been able to keep your group moving forward in these difficult times.

### **Best Friend Awards**

Best Friend Awards will be given to volunteers who make an outstanding contribution through exceptional dedication as a Friend. Nominations will be accepted from members of a nominating Friends group who believe the nominee has made an exceptional contribution to their Friends group. Nominations should demonstrate that the nominee has made an outstanding contribution in areas listed below and/or other areas that the nominating group consider make them an exceptional Friend. All nominations will be assessed by the judging panel against these criteria. Not all nominees will receive an award. The judging panel may make a special case for additional awards in the event of many exceptional candidates being nominated.

### **Completing the Form**

The nomination form must be completed and signed by an office bearer or recognised representative of the nominating Friends group.

Please read the criteria carefully to ensure that your application is relevant. Please provide **up to the allocated number of words** in each area you feel is noteworthy. Be specific about the scale and impact of the nominee's contribution. A cursory response of a few lines with insufficient supporting material to enable a thorough assessment of the nominee will not be sufficient for the application to be considered. The quality and adequacy of information in the nomination form and attachments will have a bearing on the outcome. That is, it is not just what the nominee has done, but how well understood and presented the information is that will allow the judges to make their decision.

## **Criteria**

The nominee will have made an outstanding contribution under some or all the following criteria or equivalent activities:

1. Support the group's activities by, for example:
  - practising and teaching environmental skills, such as tree planting, weeding, litter collection, citizen science
  - organising group community events (e.g., arranging corporates, morning teas, BBQs, supervising volunteers, and paperwork before events proceed on site)
  - attending network meetings, attending panel discussions on behalf of the group, attending land manager's meetings, and managing OH&S requirements
  - communicating the value of the park/reserve\* and environmental volunteering through websites, blogs, videos, talks and social media.
2. Form strong relationships and partnerships and/or advocate against threats for the protection and benefit of the park / reserve\*.
3. Attract funding for the benefit of the reserve; through local fundraising, seeking support of corporates for events or through grants from government agencies.
4. Show personal dedication and leadership qualities by supporting and encouraging the group to work towards its goals, sharing knowledge and mentoring members to take on various roles within the group.
5. Support sustainability and succession planning for the group, e.g. introducing young people to the reserve or on the organising committee.
6. Make a personal impact in improving ecological condition, protective works and/or visitor facilities in the reserve.

\* The term 'park/reserve' can also refer to species, waterway, or cultural heritage. It is used generically to refer to the purpose of the group.

## **Number of Nominees**

While it is anticipated that there will be only one nominee per group, in some circumstances it is recognised that more than one volunteer may have made an outstanding contribution to delivering a specific project or to enabling the group to fulfil its long-term objectives. In this case, more than one nominee per group will be considered. Each nominee must be a paid-up member of the nominating group. The nomination form must be completed and signed by an office bearer or recognised representative of the nominating Friends group.

### **Length of Service**

It is expected that all nominees will have demonstrated exceptional and regular contributions of volunteering involvement in the work of the group over a period of at least five years (preferably 10 years of service). Those with longer or more intensive periods of environmental volunteering will be preferred. In cases where a nominee's continuous service has taken place with different Friends groups, they can still be eligible provided the nomination is supported by referee reports from each of the relevant groups.

### **Referees**

All nominations must include **three (3)** written references, including a reference from the agency land manager **on their letterhead**, where Friends groups work with an agency or state or local government. As previously stated, in the event of a nominee's service taking place with different Friends' groups, referee reports must be sought from each of the relevant groups.

### **Recent Photograph of the Nominee**

A recent photo of the nominee, preferably working in the field, **must** be included with the nomination.

### **PowerPoint and video presentation for winners**

If your nominated person is a winner, we will need to know for the award ceremony if your group will be able to provide a PowerPoint or short 2-minute video to highlight the work undertaken by the winner. **This will be confirmed by the VEFN due to special arrangements for the ceremony in 2021 to recognise the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the award.**

### **Successful Nominees**

In the event of a nominee receiving a Best Friend Award, any money that may be attached to the award will be paid to the nominating Friends group for the group to decide on how the funds will be spent.

### **Submission of nominations**

Nominations should be sent to: Best Friend Award, email: [vefnbfa@gmail.com](mailto:vefnbfa@gmail.com) with fully supporting documentation attached or posted to VEFN, c/- PO Box 367 Mentone 3194.

**Nominations with all supporting documentation must be received by 5 pm on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Nominations received by email time stamped after 5pm after the deadline will not be accepted. If posted, please allow time for mail to be received by the closing date.**

**Late nominations will not be accepted.**



## Best Friend Award 2021, – Nomination Form

Nominee:

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	

Nominating Friends Group:

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**Group Contact:**

Name:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Email:	

**Date nominee became active in the group:**

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Is the nominee aware he/she has been nominated? Yes      No

Is your group able to make a PowerPoint / video presentation for the winner? Yes      No

**Nominee's involvement in the group:** (What role/s has the nominee fulfilled?) **Max 200 words.**

Insert Word count:

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**Nominee's contribution to the group: (Describe the nominee's achievements with reference to Selection Criteria Number 1) *Max 200 words.***

Insert Word count:

**Nominee's contribution to the group: (Describe the nominee's achievements with reference to Selection Criteria Numbers Two to Six) *Max 100 words.***

**Important Note: please only fill out boxes that apply.**

**Selection Criteria 2: *Max 100 words***

Insert Word count:

**Selection Criteria 3: *Max 100 words***

Insert Word count:

**Selection Criteria 4: *Max 100 words***

*Insert Word count:*

**Selection Criteria 5: *Max 100 words***

*Insert Word count:*

**Selection Criteria 6: *Max 100 words***

*Insert Word count:*

**Any special considerations. For example, how natural disasters and COVID-19 have impacted on your nominee's contribution to your group:**

**Referees:**

All nominations must include three written references, including from the agency land manager, where applicable. Please include contact details for each referee.

<b>Name &amp; Position:</b>	
<b>Phone &amp; Email:</b>	

<b>Name &amp; Position:</b>	
<b>Phone &amp; Email:</b>	

<b>Name &amp; Position:</b>	
<b>Phone &amp; Email:</b>	

**Photo/s attached** **Yes**    **No**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**Send BFA nomination form and all accompanying documentation to:**

Email (preferred): vefnbfa@gmail.com

Postal address: VEFN, c/- PO Box 367 Mentone 3194.

For any questions please do not hesitate to contact Margaret Hunter on 0417 323 460, or Kylie Cohen at vefnbfa@gmail.com.

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