



The Worshipful Company of Educators



The Educator's Trust

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## ***Robert J. Jones Award 2026*** **Environmental Education**

### **Guidance for Nominators**

The Trust of the Worshipful Company of Educators wishes to confer an award for outstanding and inspirational practitioners in environmental education.

The award is generously supported by Dr Peter Warren CBE, Past Master of the Company and is named after his teacher Robert J. Jones.

The 2026 award is open to full-time or part-time educators who are teaching, supporting, or facilitating educational activities. This year the award will be for education in pre-school, primary and school pre-6<sup>th</sup> Form, and out of school education to age 16, in any formal or informal educational setting. It is, therefore, open to educators working across a wide range of establishments.

The winner of the award will receive a prize of £500. The winner will also receive a certificate and an inscribed crystal glass plaque and will be invited to the Trust's Award Dinner in London along with the Nominator. In addition, they will be invited to apply for a grant of up to £250 for expenses to assist them with professional development.

Nominators may submit more than one candidate, but each nomination must be for an individual not a team. Nominations will be assessed first by a specialist judging panel of environmental educators and then by three judges experienced in educational evaluation. The judges make their assessment based on nominations alone, so the quality of nominations and evidence provided in support is vitally important.

### **Nominations must:**

- a) be **factual** and **balanced**
- b) describe and **provide evidence** of the nominee's outstanding practice (this may qualitative or quantitative)
- c) **demonstrate** the impact achieved by the nominee
- d) **focus** on the nominee's own successes rather than those of the nominating organisation
- e) be written by the nominator and so in the third person
- f) keep to a word limit of **500** words (a small annex of supporting material would be acceptable, though not essential).

## How to apply:

To allow for diverse learning environments, there is no standard application form. Nominators are, therefore, asked to structure their nominations under the following two headings:

### Part 1. Professional Context

- name of employing organisation
- type of organisation
- main characteristics of setting(s) in which the nominee works
- position(s) the nominee has held/currently holds
- how long the nominee has been employed in the role
- any relevant professional education/ training/experience
- brief description of the nominee's role.

**(Part 1 details do not contribute to the following word limit of 500 words)**

### Part 2. Nomination (500-word limit)

Nominations should provide **evidence** of activity which meets at least **some** of the following criteria, depending on the character of the setting, its position in the sector and the career stage of the nominee.

The award will be given to an outstanding practitioner in environmental education which **relates specifically to living organisms, their relationships to each other and, in particular, their responses to the impact of human activities.**

#### Criteria:

The Trust is familiar with the diverse range of settings in which environmental learning takes place. The Trust does not expect nominees to meet all of the following criteria, as these are intended to cover all types of establishments.

However, in this year, for the 2026 award, the award will be open only to full-time or part-time educators of pre-school, school pre-6<sup>th</sup> Form, and out of school education to age 16, in any formal or informal educational setting. It is, therefore, open to educators working across a wide range of establishments including those who are specialist curriculum innovators, as long as personal initiative and practical impact can be demonstrated.

1. The Trustees welcome nominations in respect of candidates who are delivering learning in formal education and also in challenging, unconventional or community settings.
2. Nominators may wish to include teaching by the nominee that demonstrate one or more of the following, depending upon the stage at which the students are being taught
  - (a) sustainable solutions to environmental problems
  - (b) practical, environmental activities including, for example, gardening clubs.
  - (c) the critical importance of systems thinking in understanding the interactions of the different components of ecosystems

(d) understanding of how governance will impact on any proposed solutions, governance being the way in which human society manages its affairs, by way of its legal, political, financial and social frameworks. This may include awareness of the impact of human action on the environment, and the role of society in finding solutions to environmental problems.

3. Nominations will need to demonstrate that the nominee has one or more of the following:
- A robust grounding in one or more of the basic disciplines that contribute to environmental education
  - Familiarity and engagement with multi-disciplinary approaches to environmental education
  - A dynamic, innovative and inspirational approach to teaching and learning, using a range of learning resources
  - A track record of building sustainable collaborative links with relevant organisations in the field
  - Achievement of participants on relevant courses or projects into which the nominee has had significant input (NB Attendance and well-being outcomes may be as relevant as formal assessment and qualifications)

**Timescale:**

- **Deadline for nominations 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025**
- Announcement of winners in February 2026
- Awards presented to winners, with their Nominators, on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at the Trust's Annual Awards Dinner in London.

**Nominations to be sent by email attachment to:**

Professor David Skidmore

The Worshipful Company of Educators

Email: [rjjaward@educatorstrust.org.uk](mailto:rjjaward@educatorstrust.org.uk)

**Robert J. Jones**

*Robert J. Jones was an inspirational teacher who encouraged and set many of his students on to prestigious careers.*

*After army War Service (1944-1947), he went to St Catherine's College, Cambridge where he studied zoology and geology. In 1949, as his first post, he became Biology Master at Whitgift School, where he remained until 1972. A parent of one of his pupils wished his son to study geology and Robert took up the challenge and sat the A Level with his student. They both passed and he was then able to teach the subject formally and many of his students became professional geologists. Moreover, Robert went on, during his Whitgift career, to gain a PhD as an external student at Birkbeck College, University of London researching and publishing on the origins of 'Limestone Pavement' in Britain. He also ran the Whitgift Scout troop.*

*Robert engendered a deep appreciation in his students of biology and geology and the wider environment, indeed of life itself. He was a polymath, exhibiting paintings at the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition and, being an accomplished musician, playing and teaching the French Horn and teaching a new 'O' level in The History of Music. His skill as a teacher was enhanced by the way in which he could do what he taught and widen the horizons of pupils accordingly.*

*The donor of this Award, Peter T. Warren, Past Master of the Worshipful Company of Educators and past Chief Executive of the Royal Society, was a student of Robert J. Jones and was inspired by him to become a geologist and learn of the complexity of our environment and our dependence upon it.*