



Pressie
Awards

*Celebrating
the best in*
PR/
Experiential/
Social

2026

A word from *The Comms Council:*

The 2026 Pressie Awards come at a critical time. As modern marketing evolves, PR has perhaps never been more important.

As the creator economy matures, as the lines blur between 'real' and 'artificial', and the risks increase for companies to turn a small mis-step into a major breach in trust, the need for trusted advisors to manage brand narratives has never been greater.

Pressie winners celebrate the very best PR practitioners in Aotearoa, across a truly diverse range of skillsets. Corporate PR and crisis management, requiring often deep technical and sector expertise, sits alongside the very best use of partnerships and relationships with media, creators, and events to build brands and business.

At the heart of the Pressie Awards is an appreciation for the immense power of creative thinking. Winners demonstrate that, while there are many fundamentals that enable good practice, it is the leaps of imagination that differentiate the great from the good. In a sea of content, human ingenuity remains

the most powerful competitive advantage.

The Comms Council is delighted to deliver this year's awards programme. And just as the world in which our entrants operate is constantly evolving, so too are the Pressie Awards. We're changing the awards show itself, shifting from a cocktail evening nestled in an already packed pre-Christmas schedule, to a celebratory long lunch to herald the start of the new year. We hope you'll be there alongside us to congratulate the very best of the industry.

Simon Lendrum
CEO
Commercial Communications
Council



A word from *our convenor:*

Celebrating the best of our industry with the Pressie Awards.

Aotearoa has delivered some stand-out PR, experiential and social campaigns this year – and the Pressie Awards will once again recognise the best and brightest from our industry.

The Commercial Comms Council has been running The Pressies for close to a decade, and this year, things are kicking up a notch.

They'll be unveiling a new-and-improved awards format that recognises the most strategic, creative and innovative work, spanning media relations to experiential marketing, non-profit initiatives through to corporate affairs.

And in a first for 2026, The Pressies will be launching a 'PR Team of the Year' category that will recognise a stand-out team for not only delivering excellent work, but

more importantly communicating a compelling vision, contributing to the wider industry and nurturing the next generation of talent.

The best thing about working in this industry is the people – so I'm looking forward to using The Pressie Awards as a chance to gather and celebrate our shared success.

Good luck,
Kelly Grindle
Convenor
2026 Pressie Awards



2026 Pressie *Steering Committee*



Kelly Grindle
Managing Director
Special PR



Chloe Leuschke
Managing Director
FleishmanHillard Aotearoa



Jenny Appel
General Manager
OMD Content



Eleisha Balmer
Client Partner
Eleven



Max Burt
General Manager
One Plus One Communications



Adelle Keely
Chief Executive and
Managing Director
Acumen

Important dates for 2026

On Time deadline:	11:59PM Thursday 24 September
Late deadline:	11:59PM Thursday 1 October
Finalists Announced:	Thursday 3 December
Pressie Awards Show:	Thursday 11 February 2027

ELIGIBILITY PERIOD

All campaigns (& results) that ran in Aotearoa between July 2025 to August 2026 will be eligible to enter.

Entry and Eligibility

ENTRANT ELIGIBILITY

Companies or individuals may submit entries on behalf of themselves or others and may enter as many categories as they would like.

CAMPAIGN ELIGIBILITY

Only campaigns that were produced and run in New Zealand, and therefore have local success and results, are eligible for entry.

ELIGIBILITY PERIOD

All campaigns (& results) that ran in Aotearoa between the beginning of July 2025 to end August 2026 will be eligible to enter.

WORD COUNT

All entries are to be within their word count. Table/graph captions do not need to be included in the overall word count provided each caption is less than 20 words, e.g.: "Figure 1. Market share for shampoo category."

AGENCY BLIND

The Pressie Awards are an agency-blind competition. Therefore, agency names and/or logos should not be shown in the entry form, campaign material, or on any other materials that will be seen by the judges.

JUDGING AND ENTRY OUTCOMES

All decisions of The Pressie Committee in all matters relating to the competition shall be final and binding.

PUBLISHING

It is a condition of entry that The Comms Council reserve the right and shall be permitted at all times to use at their discretion any material or part material submitted for The Pressies on the Commercial Communications Council website, in promotional and educational articles and such other means as they deem appropriate for learning and educational purposes.

When submitting your entry, you will have the opportunity to upload a separate document for publication i.e. your redacted version. If you do not wish to supply a redacted version, your submitted entry will be published. Supporting materials are not offered redaction and must be publishable as submitted.

RIGHT TO SUBMIT MATERIALS

All entrants are required to ensure they have the appropriate rights to all materials submitted, such as music, voices, and imagery. This includes any submitted materials beyond the Original Work, such as case studies and the like. Please refer to the Terms and Conditions on page 14 for more information. The Comms Council may ask for confirmation that you hold the appropriate licenses for materials submitted.



Entries that do not adhere to the eligibility requirements may be disqualified.

How to *Enter*

1. Write your entry; each category's sections and weightings are available on the Comms Council website
2. Log into Awardforce and start the entry. Relevant entry fields will become visible once you've selected your category and saved your Entry Title.
3. Fill out all compulsory fields for the entry. You'll be required to submit:
 - the written entry
 - 1 x JPG hero image
 - 1 x redacted entry (where applicable)
 - credits of individual contributors, and
 - up to 5 supporting materials
4. You'll also need to provide the following details with your entry:
 - Your agency,
 - Any supporting agencies, and
 - Comms Council Membership status
5. Submit your entry when ready. You'll be prompted to add your entry to cart and process payment.
6. You'll receive an email confirming your entry details once submitted. Please keep this on file.

ENTRY FORMS

Entries are written and submitted directly into the Pressie Awards Entry Portal. Please refer to the Comms Council website for details on category requirements.

We recommend downloading a blank entry form from Awardforce, to help guide you when writing offline.

You'll be asked to upload up to 5 supporting pieces of campaign material at point of entry. Creative can include video, audio, images, website screenshots and social media content. Your campaign material must be agency blind, therefore please do not use branded material. The following formats are acceptable: PDF, PNG, JPEG, MP3, MP4 or MOV.

HERO IMAGE

This image will be used during the Pressie Awards ceremony, should the entry be awarded as finalist, silver or gold. The image should be 16:9 and high quality.

CREDITS

Each entry will be required to provide credits in the entry portal prior to final submission. You won't be offered an opportunity to change this information, so please make sure it's all correct. We encourage you to credit all strategic and production partners who contributed to the campaign.

You should credit your client. You may credit an additional agency to your own if it was a joint entry. We urge you to think carefully about your partners – Clients, Suppliers, Media Owners etc.

The credit information may appear on screen at The Pressie Awards ceremony as supplied.

Categories

A. BEST USE OF MEDIA RELATIONS

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

This category recognises entries that deliver outstanding earned media coverage. The entry will demonstrate thinking beyond the standard media release; it will show how powerful storytelling and strong content delivered exceptional results in a competitive and cluttered market. Judges will need to understand the challenge and context, and will be looking for a clear strategy, the ‘hook’ and effective execution that resulted in outstanding media coverage.

B. BEST MEDIA PARTNERSHIP

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

This category rewards remarkable integrated PR, Experiential and/or Social campaigns that use media partnerships or sponsorships of events, content or charities to drive awareness and/or engagement. The partnership should be a core component of the campaign, and demonstrate how it was critical to the success of the overall campaign.

C. BEST CORPORATE PR

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

This category recognises outstanding public affairs or stakeholder/ community management campaigns. Focusing on government relations, issues management, social responsibility, community management or a combination. Your campaign must influence public policy, build, maintain or manage a strong reputation, deliver a positive impact for the business or community and/or manage stakeholders. Judges will be looking for clever use of insights and research, along with evidence of how and why stakeholders and/or communities were successfully influenced and impacted by the campaign.

D. BEST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

This category recognises outstanding social media campaigns. We want to know how you brought all the pieces together to drive exceptional results.

Judges will be looking for evidence of what the business challenge was and how you approached it with insights and social media strategy. Judges will look for creativity, innovation, sound communication and, of course, data and metrics, showing how your campaign measured up against objectives.

E. BEST SOCIAL CONTENT CREATOR OR INFLUENCER MARKETING CAMPAIGN

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

This category recognises entries that deliver outstanding celebrity, influencer or content creator campaigns. We want to know how you utilised the influencer for the good of your brand and drove results, not just 'likes'. Judges will be looking for evidence of what the business challenge was and how you approached it using insights - from creative, innovative use of channel, content creation and influencer selection.

Judges will look for alignment between the brand and the selected celebrity, influencer or content creator and consider the strength of creativity, innovation, sound communication and, of course, data and metrics, showing how your campaign measured up against objectives.

F. BEST CREATIVE PR CAMPAIGN

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

In this category we are looking for an epic campaign that features a creative PR idea at its heart. This category is not about simply tacking on a PR element to an advertising idea or platform, it needs to be led with evidence showing how the idea or execution centred on a great PR idea that earned coverage, whether via traditional or social channels. Judges are looking for strong insights and strategic thinking that enhanced the idea and pulled through to the resulting outcomes.

G. BEST EXPERIENTIAL OR EVENT CAMPAIGN

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

This category recognises entries that deliver outstanding experiential campaigns via live events, pop-ups, expos, product launches or large and small-scale publicity stunts and experiential campaigns. The campaign will be physical in its core but can have virtual elements around it.

Judges will be looking for evidence that the experience was the central component of the campaign, rather than campaigns with an experiential/ event component. They will also need to understand how the campaign integrated into the wider marketing strategy and how it was leveraged to deliver outstanding campaign results.

H. BEST INTEGRATED CAMPAIGN

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

In this category we are looking for a campaign that was implemented across a multitude of channels including PR, Experiential and/or Social. This category is not about simply listing multiple channels and executions. Judges are looking for evidence that the campaign was seamlessly, and cleverly, integrated across a multitude of PRES channels.

Entrants will need to show that each channel or activity was deliberately selected to enhance the idea and that the core strategic and creative thinking was adapted appropriately for each channel, that components were designed to coordinate with each other, and that each component played a significant role in delivering the results.

I. BEST STRATEGIC THINKING

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

This category recognises campaigns that demonstrate extraordinary insights and strategic thinking. The winning campaign will need to demonstrate the thinking process, highlight a clear strategic direction and how this directly contributed to the results. Judges will be looking for evidence of research, insight, quality of thinking and development of strategy.

J. DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

This category has a word limit of 2,300.

This category applies to any campaigns, brand or non-profit, whose success was dependent on effectively and authentically connecting with specific cultural, ethnic, or under-served groups or communities (example: Māori, LGBTQIA+, disabled people, Pacific Peoples, etc.).

If the entry had multiple audiences, it is necessary to demonstrate results for the specific audience detailed in the entry. Judges will be interested in not only the direct results of the work, but also the broader impacts of the work including the process of developing the work (e.g. journey you took to ensure authentic and meaningful connection with the community), and the indirect impact of the work (e.g. how the work either challenged or reinforced existing narratives about the community to a broader audience).

Judges may not be familiar with your particular audience, so this is your opportunity to showcase the details that they may miss.

K. NON-PROFIT

This category has a word limit of 1,800.

This category will recognise the most effective work for or by a charity, voluntary or not-for-profit organisation. Particular attention should be paid to the cost-effectiveness of the campaign, and in the case of fundraising activities, to the monies received.

L. YOUNG PRACTITIONER OF THE YEAR

This category is free to enter and has a word limit of 1,800. Please note that there is no entry form for this category. Entry is directly through the website.

This award recognises an individual who has achieved incredible results in the past 18 months and is making a serious mark on the PR, social and/or experiential industry. We are looking for individuals on the rise who are ready to be acknowledged for their contribution today, and more importantly, are likely to be significant change makers and leaders for our industry in the future. Nominees must be under the age of 30 and have less than five year's total industry experience at the time of the entry deadline.

PR TEAM OF THE YEAR

This category has a word limit of 2,300.

This award recognises the PR Team that has demonstrated business success across Culture and Talent, Client Development, Financial Performance and have developed a strong body of work. It's open to PR Teams of any size and is judged by a panel of International Judges.

GRAND PRIX

This category cannot be entered into.

All Gold winners will be eligible for the Grand Prix. This award is given to the campaign that achieved the best results and is considered to be the best example of PRES by the panel of Executive Judges.

The Scrutineering Process

The scrutineering process is conducted by The Comms Council and will review all entries to check only the following:

WORD COUNT

Maximum 1,800 words (or 2,300 where applicable).

Table/graph captions do not need to be included in the overall word count provided each caption is less than 20 words, e.g.: “Figure 1. Market share for shampoo category.”

The entrant has the option to make good their entry and re-submit their entry upon payment of an additional fixed payment of \$150 + GST.

An entry may only be resubmitted once and must be done so within the deadline with all issues resolved.

AGENCY BLIND

Any entry that cites an agency(s) name(s) in any form will be returned. Any entry that has ANY logo will be returned. Please note this includes research company logos and any websites linked in your entry or campaign materials.



An entry that does not pass scrutineering and is not successfully resubmitted will not move forward to judging.

CAMPAIGN MATERIAL

No more than five pieces of supporting campaign material, or pictorial elements, can be submitted through the portal. This includes videos, illustrations, screenshots of press coverage.

Should we find any entries that do not meet the entry requirements above, that entry will be returned to you.

Entry fees and payment

FEE TYPE	ON TIME ENTRY DEADLINE	LATE ENTRY DEADLINE
	11:59PM Thursday 24 September	11:59PM Thursday 1 October
Comms Council Members & Pressie Awards Sponsors	\$390 + GST	\$515 + GST
Non-Members	\$450 + GST	\$570 + GST
Scrutineering Charge	\$150 + GST	

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Entry fees are due on entry submission. All payments are facilitated through Awardforce. Payment can be made by bank transfer or credit card.

There will be a 3% charge for credit card. Details for credit card payment will be on the invoice.

Entries will not be processed until all monies are received.

Entry Fees are non-refundable.

Terms and Conditions

By submitting an entry, the entrant agrees to be bound by and comply with the terms set out in this document, including the following terms and conditions (collectively, the Terms). The Comms Council reserves the right to vary these Terms from time to time. Notice of the change will be provided by uploading the updated Terms on the PRESSIE Awards pages of the Comms Council website.

ENTRIES

1. The Comms Council and the judging panel reserves the right, at its sole discretion:

(a) to move an entry to another category if it is deemed to have been entered into the wrong one; and

(b) to withdraw an entry from the competition if the entrant's conduct and / or the content of the entry is contrary to the spirit or intention of the competition, or the entrant otherwise fails to comply with the Terms.

2. The decision of the judging panel is final and under no circumstances will debate or correspondence be entered into.

3. By submitting an entry, the entrant confirms they are eligible to do so. The Comms Council may require the entrant to provide proof that they are eligible to enter the PRESSIE Awards.

4. The campaign must comply with all legal requirements. Non-complying campaigns will be ruled ineligible. Entries that have had a complaint upheld

against them by the ASA will be ineligible unless the case study can demonstrate that any specific executions detailed in the upheld complaint had a minimal impact on results.

The creation of campaigns and entries should be in line with all relevant and applicable advertising Codes and Regulations.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The entrant confirms and warrants that:

(a) they are the sole legal and beneficial owner of the copyright and any other intellectual property rights within the entry, including in relation to images, video, music, and other media contained within their entry, together with all supporting material submitted, such as case studies, presentation boards, and any additional material; or

(b) if their entry contains copyrighted works or other intellectual property that is owned by a third party, the entrant has been granted all relevant licences to reproduce and use that work in their entry. The Comms Council reserves the right to require the entrant to provide proof they hold such licences;

(c) use of the entrant's entry on the PRESSIE Awards website, partner websites, hype videos, and other public domains will not infringe any third party rights; and

(d) they waive all moral rights conferred to them under the Copyright Act 1994 (Act) in relation to their entry.

5. The Comms Council reserves the right to withdraw an entry from the competition if it considers, at its sole discretion, an entry contains material that is owned by a third party and the entrant does not have the rights to use that material.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PUBLICATION

6. The name of the winner and other identifying information relating to a winning entry will be published on the PRESSIE Awards website and other public domains.

7. The entrant grants the Comms Council a perpetual, non-exclusive, irrevocable, royalty-free licence to show the entry at the PRESSIE Awards show, publish the entry on the PRESSIE Awards website, use it in promotional material, articles and for historical reference, and at any other times as it deems appropriate in the Comms Council's sole discretion.

LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY

8. The entrant indemnifies the Comms Council against all liabilities, costs (including legal costs calculated on a full indemnity basis) expenses, damages, and losses suffered or incurred by the Comms Council arising out of or in connection with any claim relating to the Terms, including, but not limited to any breach of a third party's intellectual property rights associated with the entrant's entry.

9. The Comms Council will not be liable for entries that are corrupted, not successfully completed or transmitted, lost, mislaid, damaged or delayed in sending, regardless of cause, including, for example, as a result of equipment failure, technical malfunction, or website, systems or software failure of any kind.

NEW ZEALAND LAW

10. The Terms, and any claims arising out of or in connection with them or the PRESSIE Awards competition, will be governed by New Zealand law and the New Zealand courts have exclusive jurisdiction in relation to any matter arising under or relating to the Terms.