



2026 FRONZ awards criteria

(As of March 18, 2026)

Achievement awards	Award	Where to send entries:
Steam Locomotive Restoration Award	Trophy and cash prize	secretary@fronz.org.nz Subject line: Steam Award
Glenbrook Vintage Railway Young Achiever of the Year Award	Cash prize	secretary@fronz.org.nz Subject line: Young Achiever's Award
KiwiRail Infrastructure Improvement Award	\$2000	Karen.Binnie@kiwirail.co.nz Subject line: KiwiRail Infrastructure Award
Tramway Restoration Award	Cash prize	secretary@fronz.org.nz Subject line: Tramway Restoration Award
Pounamu Tourism Group Carriage/Guards Van Restoration Award	Cash prize	secretary@fronz.org.nz Subject line: Pounamu Tourism Award
Goods/Service Wagon Restoration Award	Certificate	secretary@fronz.org.nz Subject line: Wagon Restoration Award
Motive Power Award	TBC	secretary@fronz.org.nz Subject line: Motive Power Award
Glenbrook Vintage Railway Volunteer of the Year Award	Cash prize	secretary@fronz.org.nz Subject line: Volunteer of the Year Award
Rail Heritage Trust Restoration Award	Trophy	railheritage@railheritage.org.nz Subject line: Rail Heritage Trust Restoration Award
NZ Transport Agency Tourist & Heritage Rail Safety Award	\$2000	lan.cotton@nzta.govt.nz Subject line: Tourist and Heritage Rail Safety Award

The fine print

No correspondence will be entered into after the entries close unless initiated by the judging panel.

Unsuccessful entries submitted in previous years will be considered for this year's awards, unless otherwise noted. Should entrants wish to amend or add to their submission they should email the designated contact point and re-submit their entry.

The judges have the discretion not to make any award if, in their opinion, none of the entries meets the required standard.

The judges may also actively seek entries if insufficient have been made and make an award to a vehicle not formally entered if the standard of restoration is such to merit it.

Sponsors are not eligible to enter any Award they are sponsoring.

The Sponsor requests the winner report back on how the money has been spent.

Some Sponsors are still being confirmed. Final confirmation of prizes will be communicated at a later date, but in advance of deadlines.

Photos:

Please attach your photos separately, do not include them in Word documents as it degrades the quality. High-resolution images (1MB or more) are preferred.

If you have any questions:

Please contact Grant Craig on 027 482 2895.

Steam Locomotive Restoration Award

A trophy and cash prize, kindly sponsored by the MOTAT Society

The MOTAT Society Steam Locomotive Restoration Award recognises and encourages excellence in the restoration of steam powered rail vehicles by individual or group members of FRONZ within the railway or tramway, tourism or heritage sectors of New Zealand.

The cash prize is to help the winning organisation with further locomotive restoration and/or mechanical upgrades.

Eligible Vehicles:

Steam-powered railway or tramway vehicles, including but not limited to steam locomotives, steam trams and self-propelled cranes.

General Rules:

- The Award will be judged in accordance with the following rules, the specific requirements are set out below:
- The Award is open to all machines providing the restoration is complete at the time of entry.
- There is no time limit regarding the completion date of the restoration.
- The Award is open equally to operational or static restoration projects.
- Entries will only be accepted from the owner and/or operator of the locomotive.
- An owner or operator may submit more than one entry for the Award.
- Only official entries nominated by the management of member groups will be accepted. No private entries by individuals.

Judging:

- The FRONZ appointed Awards Convenor and panel will judge the award on behalf of the MOTAT Society, with other expertise co-opted as necessary.
- Judges may, in addition to the MOTAT Society Steam Locomotive Restoration Award, grant an additional “Highly Commended Certificate” at their discretion to a restoration project which has not been submitted for the Steam Locomotive Restoration Award.
- Receivers of a “Highly Commended Certificate” are eligible to enter in subsequent Steam Awards.
- Judges may choose not to make an award if they consider the standard of the entries is inadequate.
- Judges may at their discretion seek additional information to assist in their determination.
- Judges may consider the significance of the entry in relation to the size and capacity of the entrant.
- The judge’s decision will be final. No correspondence will be entered into after the entries close unless initiated by the judging panel.
- The Railway, Tramway or Museum must be owned by a financial FRONZ member organisation and have been a financial member for the duration of the project.

Judging will be based on submissions conforming to the following requirements:

The Entry Format:

A full description of the submission (not exceeding 3 x A4 pages) plus not more than 2 x A4 pages of illustrations. The account should cover the project from the condition of the locomotive before restoration commenced through to completion. The emphasis of the account should be on the restoration effort itself and the skill set of the people undertaking the restoration work.

What to include in your description:

The benefits to your organisation of the completed project and how it may also benefit the wider community.

- Identify the person or people whom you consider contributed the most effort to the project. The submission may contain a sequence of black & white and/or colour photographs comprising up to:
 - One photo (where possible) of the locomotive in an original or subsequent working situation.
 - Two taken before restoration commenced showing the extent of the task ahead.
 - Four taken during restoration showing different aspects of work undertaken.
 - One taken on completion.
 - Two of the photographs must be suitable for promotional use. (High Resolution)

The Award winner will be announced and presented at the FRONZ Annual Awards Dinner. Should the winner or a representative not be present arrangements will be made for a local presentation.

Unsuccessful entries submitted in previous years will be held on file for consideration in the next year's award. Should entrants wish to amend or add to their submission they should email the Secretary and re-submit their entry.

Form of the Award:

The winner will hold for one year, a trophy which remains the property of the FRONZ. The trophy must be returned in good condition to a FRONZ representative prior to each Annual FRONZ Conference following its presentation.

The winner will also receive a smaller plaque to be retained in perpetuity, the placement on the exterior/interior of the locomotive/machine should be in a position which acknowledges to visitors the receipt of the award.

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to secretary@fronz.org.nz.
- **Please use the subject line: Steam Award**

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.

Glenbrook Vintage Railway Young Achiever of the Year Award

A cash prize and certificate, kindly sponsored by Glenbrook Vintage Railway

The award celebrates the terrific work of the next generation of enthusiasts, who play such a vital role in keeping our organisations running. The prize money is to promote professional development or higher learning, allowing the successful nominee to meet other groups and enjoy experiences that may ordinarily be beyond their reach.

Award entry conditions:

- Nominated Young Achievers will be under the age of 30 as of 1 June of the current year.
- Your young achiever will have been working with a FRONZ organisation or FRONZ organisations for at least three years.
- Entries must be signed off by the Chair of the nominee's group.

Entry format:

- Your submission should be no more than two pages.
- Please include some background of your nominee, what they have done for your group, and details or photos of projects they have worked on.
- Please include a photo of your nominee if possible.

Prize conditions:

- The Award is to help the winning Young Achiever fund professional development.
- The prize money allows them to pay for travel and accommodation to attend courses, or spend a weekend with another group.
- FRONZ will work with the winner of the award to establish contacts and facilitate this experience at a group of their choosing.

Judging:

- The FRONZ appointed Awards Convenor and panel, including a representative from Glenbrook Vintage Railway, will judge the award.

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to: secretary@fronz.org.nz.
- *Please use the subject line: Young Achievers Award.*

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.

KiwiRail Infrastructure Improvement Award

A trophy and \$2000 cash prize, kindly sponsored by KiwiRail

This Award is to further incentivise FRONZ members who operate heritage and tourism-related railways and tramways to keep on top of vital safety-related infrastructure.

The KiwiRail Infrastructure Improvement Award comes with an Excellence Trophy, donated by Barry Brickell of Driving Creek Railway & Potteries Ltd, and the generous sum of \$2000 donated by KiwiRail to be paid to the winning organisation, to be used for further infrastructure improvement.

Entry format:

- Entries are limited to one per organisation.
- Your entry must be for operations and track infrastructure, associated with a railway or tramway owned by a financial FRONZ member organisation, and have been for a project or item completed in the previous 24 months (1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025).
- A full description of the submission (no more than 2 A4 pages) plus illustrations (two only) is required. Please explain the benefits to your organisation and safety of the completed project.

General rules:

- Whilst rolling stock, locos, tramcars and engineering facilities associated with mechanical engineering are excluded, the entry may cover items as diverse as track upgrades, extensions and renewals, formation, drainage, signalling, overhead, track equipment and tools, innovative way and works methods and/or associated works such as buildings, over-bridges, or pedestrian and level crossing elimination or protection.

The choice is yours!

Submissions:

Entries must be submitted electronically by no later than 30 April 2025. As usual, no correspondence may be entered into regarding your entries and the judge is not obligated to make an award where, in their opinion, the submissions do not reach the required standard.

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to: Karen.Binnie@kiwirail.co.nz (NB: This differs to the address for other awards.)
- **Please use the subject line: KiwiRail Infrastructure Award**

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.

Tramway Restoration Award

Cash prize

This Award is to encourage and recognise excellence in the restoration of tramway vehicles by the members of the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand.

Eligible Vehicles:

Tramway vehicles regardless of motive power.

Award Entry Conditions:

Only official entries nominated by the management of member groups will be accepted. No private entries by individuals please.

- A member group may enter more than one vehicle in each award category.
- There is no time limit regarding the completion date of the restoration.
- The vehicle restoration must be complete at the time the entry is submitted.

To include with your entry:

- Three photographs of the vehicle, showing its condition before, during and after restoration.
- An account of the restoration project not exceeding two A4 pages. You should cover succinctly the history of the vehicle, the effort put into restoration and the results (including notes on the performance of the vehicle after restoration). The bulk of the account should cover the restoration. The name of the person whom you consider contributed the most effort to the project.

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to secretary@fronz.org.nz
- ***Please use the subject line: Tramway Award***

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.

Pouナム Tourism Group Carriage/Guards Van Restoration Award

A certificate and a cash prize, kindly sponsored by Pouナム Tourism Group

This Award is to encourage and recognise excellence in the restoration of carriages and guards vans by the members of the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand.

Eligible vehicles:

Non-powered railway carriages and guards vans.

Award Entry Conditions:

Only official entries nominated by the management of member groups will be accepted. No private entries by individuals please.

- A member group may enter more than one vehicle in each award category.
- There is no time limit regarding the completion date of the restoration.
- The vehicle restoration must be complete at the time the entry is submitted.

To include with your entry:

- Three photographs of the vehicle, showing its condition before, during and after restoration.
- An account of the restoration project not exceeding two A4 pages. You should cover succinctly the history of the vehicle, the effort put into restoration and the results (including notes on the performance of the vehicle after restoration). The bulk of the account should cover the restoration. The name of the person whom you consider contributed the most effort to the project.

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to secretary@fronz.org.nz
- ***Please use the subject line: Carriage/Guards Van Restoration Award***

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.

Goods/Service Wagon Restoration Award

A certificate of excellence

This Award is to encourage and recognise excellence in the restoration of goods and service wagons by the members of the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand.

Eligible Vehicles:

Non-powered railway goods and service wagons.

Award Entry Conditions:

Only official entries nominated by the management of member groups will be accepted. No private entries by individuals please.

- A member group may enter more than one vehicle in each award category.
- There is no time limit regarding the completion date of the restoration.
- The vehicle restoration must be complete at the time the entry is submitted.

To include with your entry:

- Three photographs of the vehicle, showing its condition before, during and after restoration.
- An account of the restoration project not exceeding two A4 pages. You should cover succinctly the history of the vehicle, the effort put into restoration and the results (including notes on the performance of the vehicle after restoration). The bulk of the account should cover the restoration. The name of the person whom you consider contributed the most effort to the project.

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to secretary@fronz.org.nz
- ***Please use the subject line: Goods/Service Wagon Award***

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.

Motive Power Award

To be advised

Award is to encourage and recognise excellence in the restoration of Petrol, Diesel, Diesel- Electric, Electric vehicles and Railcars by the members of the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand.

Eligible Vehicles:

Internal Combustion – (Petrol, Diesel, Diesel-Electric, Electric vehicles and Railcars)

Award Entry Conditions:

Only official entries nominated by the management of member groups will be accepted. No private entries by individuals please.

- A member group may enter more than one vehicle in each award category.
- There is no time limit regarding the completion date of the restoration.
- The vehicle restoration must be complete at the time the entry is submitted.

To include with your entry:

- Three photographs of the vehicle, showing its condition before, during and after restoration.
- A typewritten account of the restoration project not exceeding two A4 pages. You should cover succinctly the history of the vehicle, the effort put into restoration and the results (including notes on the performance of the vehicle after restoration). The bulk of the account should cover the restoration. The name of the person whom you consider contributed the most effort to the project.

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to secretary@fronz.org.nz
- ***Please use the subject line: Motive Power Award***

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.

Rail Heritage Trust Restoration Award

A trophy, kindly sponsored by the Rail Heritage Trust of New Zealand

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to: railheritage@railheritage.org.nz (NB: This differs to the address for other awards.)
- *Please use the subject line: RHT Restoration Award*

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.

Volunteer of the Year Award

Certificate and a cash prize, kindly sponsored by Glenbrook Vintage Railway

This Award recognises the significant commitment of time, energy and skill made by an individual to the benefit of their organisation over the last year.

We encourage groups to consider all aspects of their operation, not just the technical and engineering aspects of their group. To run a successful operation there needs to be people with strong administrative, marketing and people skills, and we encourage groups to think of unsung heroes within your organisation that would be deserving of this award.

Judging:

Will be completed based on the information provided in the entry received.

To include with your entry:

- Tell us a compelling story about your volunteer.
- In what aspect of your organisation are they involved?
- Give examples of their commitment to the role and why they deserve recognition?
- Have they helped others within your organisation? Don't forget to include that in your entry?
- Tell us why you would like to see them recognised?
- Please include a photo of the person being nominated (for use at the Awards Dinner)

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to: secretary@fronz.org.nz
- ***Please use the subject line: Volunteer of the Year***

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.

NZ Transport Agency Rail Safety Award

A \$2000 cash prize and plaque, courtesy of NZ Transport Agency/Waka Kotahi

- Criteria and entry form can be [downloaded at this link](#) (Click File>Download)

Where to send your entry:

- Email your entries to: ian.cotton@nzta.govt.nz (NB: This differs to the address for other awards.)
- ***Please use the subject line: Tourist and Heritage Rail Safety Award***

Deadline:

- Entries must be submitted no later than 11.59pm on 1 May, 2026.