

Spirit of Manchester Awards 2025

Thursday 2 October 2025, 7pm – 10:30pm

The Sheridan, Manchester



Spirit of Manchester 2025

The Spirit of Manchester Awards celebrate the heart and soul of our community – the volunteers, community organisations, social enterprises, supporters and change-makers who make it all happen.

On Thursday, 2 October 2025 we held our 13th Spirit of Manchester Awards at The Sheridan, Manchester. Hosted by Mike Wild (Chief Executive), the ceremony this year was a great success, reaching an audience of over 3,000 people both in person and online.

As always it was a pleasure to welcome so many people from across the sectors to help recognise and celebrate the fantastic work happening within the VCSE sector. The energy and passion in the room truly set the tone for the evening and highlighted the strong sense of community amongst our guests.

Run as an interactive event, all guests voted on the night for the winner of each category (except Young Volunteer of the Year and Dr Sylvia Sham Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Voluntary Sector which were selected by the judging panel).

[Watch the livestream here](#)



Lord Mayor

Councillor Carmine Grimshaw

We were delighted The Lord Mayor of Manchester, Councillor Carmine Grimshaw, joined us on the evening, delivering an opening speech acknowledging the impact the VCSE sector volunteers and organisations play in society and in the life of the city.

The Lord Mayor presented each shortlisted nominee and winner with a certificate and had his photo taken with each organisation/individual.

We thank the Lord Mayor for joining the evening of celebration!



What did you have to say?

On social media



Together Trust

3 October at 17:01 · 🌐



🌟 We won! 🌟

Our [#GMRailAccess](#) campaign proudly took home the Inspiring Campaign Award at the [Spirit of Manchester Awards 2025](#) yesterday!

It was a fantastic night celebrating the passion and power of Manchester's voluntary and community sector.

A big thank you to campaigner Nathaniel Yates, whose tireless work for accessible train stations across Greater Manchester continues to inspire us. 🙌

We've proudly stood with Nathaniel since 2022, and this award is a powerful reminder of what we can achieve together.

We were also delighted to meet Cllr. Grace Baynham of Woodsmoor - a station that's received initial funding for accessibility design, but still needs more to bring those plans to life.

Do inaccessible train stations affect you or someone you support in Greater Manchester? We're gathering local feedback to keep pushing for progress. 🙌

✉ Email: styliana.pasiardi@togethertrust.org.uk

[#SpiritOfManchesterAwards](#) [#GMRailAccess](#) [#SpiritofMcr25](#)



Naeem Ul Hassan is with [Cheetham Labour](#) and [DrNajmul Shah](#). · [Follow](#)

2 October at 23:02 · 🌐



🌟 This evening's Spirit of Manchester Awards started with a powerful moment of silence, honoring our friends and neighbors in Crumpsall who have been impacted by today's devastating attack. 💙 As we gather to celebrate the spirit and resilience of our community, let us also extend our thoughts and support to those in need. Together, we can uplift one another and shine brighter in the face of adversity.

[#SpiritofMCR25](#) [#CommunityStrength](#)

What did you have to say?

On social media

 **Sharston Community Grocery**
10 October at 17:23 · 🌐

🎉 We're 5 years old! 🎉

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us in celebrating our 5th birthday — we hope you loved your little surprise gifts as much as we loved giving them! 🧡

To top off an already amazing week, we had a surprise of our own... we were honoured to win the **Spirit of Manchester** Award for Best Community & Business Collaboration recognising our wonderful partnership with **The Flava People** — and if you look closely, you'll spot Jane proudly lifting our (tiny but mighty!) trophy aloft! 😊

Have a fantastic weekend, and we can't wait to see you all next week! 🎉

 **Niall Love**
2 October at 20:18 · 🌐

YES **John Herstell** wins the **Spirit of Manchester** trustee of the year award for **Supporting People in Need** ❤️
Well done.

👍❤️ 3 4 comments 1 share

👍 Like ➦ Share

View more comments

 **Supporting People in Need**
Thanks Niall. He's over the moon. It wouldn't have happened without the people like yourself who make SPIN what it is.... 🙌

2w Like Reply 🔒

View more comments

 **Adele Owen**
Thank you so much. A wonderful evening of connection and hope.

2w Like Reply 👍

Your night

In photos



Your night

In photos



Partnerships

Meet the Mancunian Podcast



This year we continued with our partnership with the Meet the 'Mancunian Podcast: Social impact stories from Manchester' series hosted by Deepa Thomas-Sutcliff.

Season 11 is dedicated to the Spirit of Manchester awards and celebrating the incredible community champions and the stories of care, courage and commitment.

You can listen to the podcast on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or on the website. Let's discover the heart of Manchester – one story at a time.

Tune in for episodes: www.meetthemancunian.co.uk

Photographers

Anthony Owaeghianye

Thank you to our volunteer photographer, Anthony (Villa5Studioz), for taking the time on the evening to capture the buzz and excitement of the room.

Instagram: @Studio_Villa5

TikTok: @villa5studioz

Website: www.v5s.co.uk

Facebook: @villa5studioz

LinkedIn: owae



Matthew Turner

Thank you to Matthew Turner, a student at Manchester College, for volunteering his time to support photography during the evening.

LinkedIn: MatthewTurner

Instagram: @Matthewfilmtv

Email: mattmattturner08@gmail.com



Nominations and shortlisting

Nomination submissions opened in March 2025 and required a 200 word description along with each application. Closing at the start of June, we received our largest amount of nominations, reaching over 200 submissions.

This year's Spirit of Manchester Awards had 14 categories, two of which were decided in advance by the judges – Young Volunteer of the Year Award and the Dr Sylvia Sham Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Voluntary Sector.

Our team of five judges deliberated and shortlisted three nominations from each category. All shortlisted nominees were asked to produce a one minute film showcasing their nomination. Macc offered a range of support, including filming and editing training. All films form part of the voting process for the winners on the awards night.

[Watch the films here](#)



[View the shortlist here](#)

Meet the judges



From left to right: Jeremy 'Jez' Myers (Chair), John Alexander, Neil Cornthwaite, James Binks, Hyelni Mibwala, Alma Chadfield

[Read our judges biographies here](#)

Winners

Volunteer of the Year

Winner: Paul Arnold

Shortlisted: Tahera Khanam
and Wardeh Alnasir

Volunteering Team

Winner: The SPACE Group Manchester

Shortlisted: Village Angels
and MASH

Volunteer Involving Organisation

Winner: Booth Centre

Shortlisted: Levenshulme Inspire and
LGBT Foundation



Winners

Young Volunteer of the Year

Winner: Hana Salih

Tackling Inequalities

Winner: Contact Hostel

Shortlisted: Irish Community Care Manchester and African Rainbow Family

Inspiring Campaign

Winner: GMR Rail Accessibility Campaign

Shortlisted: Manchester Central Foodbank
Unbound Programme CIC

Creative Community Spirit

Winner: Adele Owen

Shortlisted: Gorton Women's Network
Xincai Tan

Partnership and Collaboration

Winner: Caritas Salford

Shortlisted: Manchester Football Association
The JOBS Project Manchester

Trustee/Committee Member of the Year

Winner: John Herstell

Shortlisted: Ann Potter



Winners

Service User Involving Organisation

Winner: The Getting It Right Team
Shortlisted: Europia
MASH



Social Economy Champion

Winner: Across Ummah
Shortlisted: Manchester Football Association
Unbound Programme CIC

Community Cohesion

Winner: HideOut Youth Zone
Shortlisted: British Muslim Heritage Centre
Cheetham Cultural Festival

Community and Business Collaboration

Winner: Community Grocery and The Flava People
Shortlisted: Westwood Recruitment
Houlihan Lokey

The Dr Sylvia Sham Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Voluntary Sector

Winner: Alan Kwan



Trophies

ELLA M^CINTOSH

Thank you to the talented Ella McIntosh for designing and creating the trophies again for this year's Spirit of Manchester Awards.

Ella McIntosh is based in the Manchester Craft and Design Centre and specialises in contemporary pewter metal work.



www.ellamcintosh.co.uk



ella@ellamcintosh.co.uk



Table names

This year we are proud to mark the 80th anniversary of the 1945 Pan-African Congress, a defining moment in global history that took place right here in our city.

Rooted in the ideals of Pan-Africanism – the belief in unity, solidarity, and liberation for people of African descent worldwide, the Congress brought together activists, thinkers, and leaders who shaped the course of anti-colonial struggles.

To honour this legacy, each table this year was named after a prominent activist, thinker, or change-maker whose work either shaped the Pan-African Congress directly, echoed through Manchester in powerful ways, or influenced the wider Pan-African Movement.

These names represent the spirit of community organising, resistance, and hope that continues to live on in our neighbourhoods today.

Raffle and auction

The raffle was a great success, raising just over £1,800. Every penny will be distributed back to the community through grants that empower local projects and initiatives. It's a beautiful cycle of giving that keeps growing stronger.

£1800.00

To everyone who joined us in the room and those who tuned in online – thank you. Your presence, your energy, and your support made the night unforgettable. Together, we celebrated not just achievements, but the spirit of community itself.

Here's to another year of impact, kindness, and collective strength.

[Read about our Spirit of Manchester Fund grants here](#)



With thanks to our award supporters



Young Volunteer of the Year



Tackling Inequalities



Community cohesion



Volunteer of the year



Creative community spirit



Service user involving organisation



Community and Business Collaboration

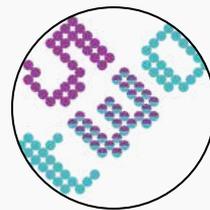
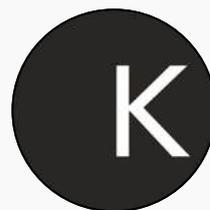


Volunteering team



Partnership and collaboration

With thanks to our raffle supporters



Spirit of Manchester 2026

Thank you to everyone who made our 13th Spirit of Manchester Awards possible.

It was great to see so much celebration of the essential VCSE sector in Manchester.

Make sure to stay connected with us for announcements regarding the Spirit of Manchester 2026!



McrCommCentral



McrCommCentral



SpiritOfManchester



MaccManchester

Would you like to support an award in 2026?

Help support one of our Spirit of Manchester Awards! Get in contact with jo@macc.org.uk for more information.

[Read about how you can support us here](#)