



THE VIMY AWARD

Terms of Reference

Updated – May 2026

An important objective of the Conference of Defence Associations (CDA) Institute is to help recognize deserving Canadians in the field of National Security, Defence and Armed Forces. Since 1991, The Vimy Award has been presented during Remembrance Week at the Annual Vimy Gala to individuals who have made significant, outstanding and enduring contributions to the defence and security of our nation and the preservation of our democratic values.

Furthermore, the award honours the bravery and sacrifice of the Canadian soldiers – comprising the four divisions of the Canadian Corps – who were victorious in the battle of Vimy Ridge in April 1917.

To ensure that the standards for this prestigious award is maintained in accordance with the highest levels possible, a Selection Committee of prominent Canadians, together with members of the CDA Institute Board and select Strategic partners is assembled every year and tasked to review and discuss nominations and to arrive at a consensus on the Vimy Award Recipient.

This document serves as a reference guide for selected members of the Vimy Award Selection Committee in support of the execution of their responsibilities.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

Awards Nominations Launch	April/May
Nominations Deadline	August 31st, 2026
Vetted Files to Selection Committee	First week of September, 2026
Selection Committee Meeting	Mid-late September
Media Release	Beginning of October
Award Presentation	November 4 th , 2026



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Candidate must be a Canadian Citizen
- Laureate must be available to attend in person the Vimy Gala in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- The nominator must provide correct contact information for their nominee.



AWARD CRITERIA

- Has made an impactful and significant contribution in the promotion of defence, peace and security during their professional career (whether in government, military, academia, NGOs, or the private sector).
- Is a role model for all Canadians through their transformational leadership.
- Is an inspiration for a lifetime of service to the nation.
- Has garnered national and/or international recognition for his/her accomplishments in the field of defence and security, in the pursuit of values including peace, human dignity and security, the respect for international law and norms, and the promotion and protection of democratic institutions.



NOMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Nominators must provide their full names and contact information.

Nominators are asked to inform their nominees of their intent to nominate them and confirm their willingness to accept the award should they be selected. The nominator should also validate with their nominee that there would be no real or perceived conflict of interest in accepting the award.

It is the responsibility of the nominator to validate that their nominees fulfil the eligibility criteria.

Nominators are responsible for ensuring that the file is complete and that the information it contains is accurate and sufficient to allow the Vimy Award Selection Committee to fairly evaluate the nomination in fulfilment of the Award Criteria. Incomplete files will not be retained.

The CDA Institute reserves the right to have the main facts in support of a nomination validated by an outside source, should they deem necessary.

The contents of the nominations and the names of nominees will be kept in confidence.



NOMINATION PROCEDURE

The online nomination form consists of:

- Nominee information
- Nominator information
- Nomination Statement (1,500 words max)
- Upload biography or CV
- Letters of Support (optional), maximum of 3.

NOTE: Nominations can only be made via the online portal on the CDA Institute website www.cdainstitute.ca



LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Letters of support can be submitted by individuals other than the nominator who wish to add their voice in favor of a nominee. These will be provided to the Selection Committee if the nomination has been approved as consistent with the eligibility criteria and award criteria.

These documents should be no longer than 2 pages and should provide real examples and personal insight into the way the candidate is perceived by someone who has observed the candidate's significant contributions to the advancement and support of Canada's national security.



BROUGHT FORWARD NOMINATIONS

The CDA Institute reserves the right to bring forward past nominations for current year consideration to the Vimy Award Selection Committee, when they deem fit, for a period of 3 years after the original nomination.

If a past nomination is to be reconsidered, the original nominator will be informed and invited to update the nomination ahead of the selection process.



CLOSURE OF CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The official deadline will be noted on the CDA Institute website Vimy Award page and subject to amendments.

The Committee Secretary, will then consolidate and forward complete nomination packages, plus the review criteria and a scoring template to the Selection Committee Board for shortlisting.



SELECTION COMMITTEE

To ensure that the standards for this prestigious award are maintained in accordance with the highest levels possible, a Selection Committee of prominent Canadians, together with members of the CDA Institute Board and members of the CDA community will be tasked to review and discuss nominations and to arrive at a consensus on the Vimy Award Laureate.



SELECTION COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

On an annual basis no later than the end of June, the Chair CDA Institute will confirm the final Selection Committee membership. The Vimy Award Selection Committee will consist of up to 15 individuals *reserved for designated and special invited members as follows:*

- Committee Chair: Chair CDA Institute
- Special Standing Invitation: Chief Justice Supreme Court of Canada (or designate)

- Special Standing Invitation: Chief of the Defence Staff (or designate)
- Special Standing Invitation: Deputy Minister of National Defence (or designate)
- Special Standing Invitation: National Security & Intelligence Advisor (or designate)
- Vimy Award Exclusive Sponsor
- CDA Institute Board Representatives
- CDA Institute Honorary Members
- CEO/President of CDA Institute Strategic Sponsors
- CDA Institute Senior Fellows
- Committee Secretary: Executive Director CDA Institute Committee



SELECTION COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The CDA Institute Board of Directors along with external partners will be solely responsible for selecting the laureate of the Vimy Award, ensuring the recipient falls within the outlined criteria and can perform as an active brand ambassador and partner for both the CDA and the CDA Institute.

The Committee's primary responsibilities is to review and discuss nominations with a view to arriving at consensus as follows:

- selection of a primary nominee as the annual Vimy Award recipient;
- identification of an alternate nominee (should the primary be unable to accept);
- identifying nominees not selected but that warrant re-submission in future years;
- Identifying nominees that warrant consideration for other national or CDA and CDA Institute awards.



CONFIRMATION PROCEDURE

The Chair of the Selection Committee will report back to the CDA Institute board of directors prior to notification.

On behalf of the CDA Institute, the board Chair will reach out to the laureate to inform of their selection.

Afterwards, the Chair of the CDA Institute board will reach out to all nominators and thank them for their contribution to the process.



MEDIA RELATIONS

As an important way to reinforce the national importance and prestige of the Vimy Award, and subject to the agreement of individual Committee members, the CDA Institute will, on an annual basis, formally

announce the membership of the Selection Committee including biographical information. Subsequently, once the Committee has met and selected the Award recipient, a press release will be prepared for immediate release with a group photo of the Selection Committee and a photo, biography and award citation for the Award recipient. Members of the Vimy Selection Committee are also invited to attend as VIP guests of the CDA Institute at the Vimy Gala and may be asked to participate in the Award Ceremonies.



CEREMONY

The award will be given during the Vimy Gala, normally hosted in early November in Ottawa. The successful nominator will be invited to attend as a guest of the CDA Institute.

The award laureate will sit at the head table with members of the selection committee and strategic partners of the CDA Institute.

After receiving the Vimy Award, the Gala will conclude with an invitation to the laureate to deliver a short 15-minute acceptance speech. Award winners will be encouraged to focus their remarks reflecting on what the Vimy Award means to them, to reflect on their personal accomplishments that informed their selection, and to provide some closing remarks that serve to inspire the next generation of leaders. In keeping with the CDA Institute's nonpartisan mandate and the spirit of the Gala as a community building event, laureate's will be asked to avoid political commentary.



REVOCAION OF THE VIMY AWARD

At any time, a laureate can ask to be removed from the list of past Vimy Award recipients.

The Vimy Award may be revoked if both the CDA Institute's board and CDA Council determine that a member's actions have brought dishonour to the spirit of the award and to the organization.

The deliberation will be informed by available information, guided by the principle of procedural fairness, and shall only be made after the Council and Board have ascertained the relevant facts relating to the issue under consideration.

Criteria for revocation:

- If the Laureate has been convicted of a criminal offense;
- If the conduct of the person deviates significantly from recognized standards and is seen as undermining the credibility, integrity, or relevance of the award;
- A laureate can be removed if they have been subjected to an official sanction by an adjudicating body, professional association, or other organization.

Revocation Procedure

- A petition must be sent to the CDA Institute (accounts@cdainstitute.ca) requesting that a laureate have their award revoked.
- The petition letter must clearly indicate the reasons for this and how it matches the above criteria for revocation

- The Chair of the CDA Institute, the President of the CDA, and the secretary of the Vimy Award Selection committee will review the request and determine if the demonstration of the criteria is eligible for a broader discussion within the CDA and CDA Institute.
- If the petition is consistent with the criteria, a special meeting of the CDA Institute board and the CDA Council will be called for a decision.
- The laureate will be informed by writing and will be asked to return the award and statuette.
- The decision will be communicated on our newsletter and website.