

Global Search & Rescue Excellence Awards

Global
Search
& Rescue
Excellence
Awards

Friday 15th May 2026, One Great George Street, Westminster

The second annual Global Search & Rescue Excellence Awards - organised by *FIRE* magazine publisher Fire Knowledge and the Institute of Search and Technical Rescue - will take place at One Great George Street on May 15, 2026.

The Global Search & Rescue Excellence Awards recognises and celebrates the achievements of search and rescue teams, volunteers, organisations and suppliers who work so tirelessly to ensure we can respond in someone's moment of need.

We are pleased to announce that two new categories have been added to the awards: Volunteer/Voluntary Organisation of the Year, and Community Engagement of the Year.

As events around the world have demonstrated, the invaluable assistance provided by search and response teams is not only life-saving but brings the global community of first responders together to help improve response to future emergencies.

Recognising the outstanding contribution of individuals, teams and organisations to the invaluable role played by those on the frontline, the Global Search & Rescue Excellence Awards shines a spotlight on the unsung heroes responding to disasters and emergencies globally. The awards recognise the wider global search and rescue community across all disciplines including aviation, mountain and cave rescue, and maritime response.

To be held on May 15 at One Great George Street, Westminster, the Global Search & Rescue Excellence Awards in partnership with the Institute of Search and Technical Rescue and will highlight the best in global response and celebrate frontline responders and those working tirelessly behind the scenes to improve disaster response and save lives.

David O'Neill MBE, Operations Director of the Institute of Search and Technical Rescue, said: *"From our own experience, we know that the activities of search and technical rescue are often undertaken through a selfless devotion to duty. Those choosing to work or volunteer in these activities do so for the good of others and rarely seek recognition for their actions. Therefore, holding an event that recognises the outstanding contribution of individuals, teams and organisations, who often risk their own lives and comforts for the good of others is invaluable and one in which we are delighted to be a partner."*

FIRE Editor Andrew Chilvers said: *"Following the success of the inaugural Global Search & Rescue Excellence Awards in celebrating search and rescue personnel around the world, we are delighted to return to the Institution of Civil Engineers to host the second edition. The awards shine a spotlight on personnel, recognise everyday unsung heroes, share best practice and promote innovation and collaboration."*

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Award Categories



New Category

Volunteer/Voluntary Organisation of the Year

Sponsored by Frequentis

The award will be presented to a volunteer individual or a voluntary organisation that has demonstrated exceptional commitment and dedication to search and rescue efforts. The winner will evidence unwavering service, such as responding to a high volume of calls or delivering significant improvements in terms of contributions, organisational development or operational effectiveness.



Innovator of the Year

Sponsored by UK Emergency Robotics Responders Org



The Innovator of the Year award will be presented to an individual, team or organisation that has developed innovative technology or a way of working that has made a significant difference to search and response extrication. The winner will demonstrate improved safety measures which have or will improve intervention, produce significant cost savings, or improved the overall provision of search and rescue response.

New Category

Community Engagement Award

Sponsored by The Institute of Search and Technical Rescue

The award will be presented to an individual, team, or organisation that has demonstrated outstanding efforts in educating and engaging their community in search and rescue preparedness and safety. Activity may include initiatives that have raised awareness, provided crucial training and engendered community resilience.



Supporter of the Year

The Supporter of the Year award will be presented to the individual, team or organisation that has provided timely and effective support for search and rescue operations whether through fundraising, supplying equipment, providing logistical support or operational input.

Technical Rescue of the Year

Sponsored by Technical Rescue International

The Technical Rescue of the Year award will be presented to a team which has demonstrated perseverance, ingenuity, innovation and effective response to effect a successful extrication over a protracted period and under difficult circumstances.



Project of the Year

Sponsored by Elite Safety, Training and Rescue

The Project of the Year award recognises collaborative working to improve operational response, whether on the frontline or through logistical and strategic support. The winner will demonstrate effective intervention, improvement of service, innovation and best practice.



Search and Rescue Mission of the Year

Sponsored by Ferno Rescue

The Search and Rescue Mission of the Year award will be presented to the search and rescue team that has demonstrated a resourceful and effective response.



Unsung Hero Award

Sponsored by Frequentis

The Unsung Hero Award will be given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to search and rescue over the last 12 months. The winner will demonstrate a sustained contribution to improving search and rescue response, evidencing ingenuity, determination and excellence.



Team of the Year

Sponsored by VimpeX

Presented to the search and rescue team that has demonstrated ingenuity, resourcefulness and effective response whilst reducing risk, saving life and ensuring the safety of the team and supporting personnel. The team will have demonstrated excellent response at one or more incidents.



Most Influential Individual

Sponsored by The Blue Light Show

The Most Influential Individual award will be presented to the individual who has demonstrated a sustained, positive and effective contribution to search and rescue in the last 12 months.



Training Provider of the Year

The Training Provider of the Year award will be presented to an individual, team or organisation that has delivered exceptional training for search and rescue personnel. The winner will have demonstrated transference of learning, exceptional feedback, organisational improvements and innovation and best practice.

Lifetime Achievement

Sponsored by Smith Myers

The Lifetime Achievement award will be presented to a leading search and rescue figure who has made a significant, positive contribution to frontline response, including leading teams and saving lives, over a sustained period.



To find out more about sponsorship for the Global Search & Rescue Excellence Awards 2026, and the different packages available, contact Sales Manager **Beverley Rees** at beverley.rees@fireknowledge.co.uk or **01273 434957**, or Marketing Manager **Cathy Clark** at cathy.clark@fireknowledge.co.uk or **+44 (0)7852 524076**.

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