

Special Award to recognise examples of sustainable inclusion by TidyTown committees towards their local autism community.

Prize €2,000

In 2018 SuperValu began a journey with Ireland's National Autism Charity, AslAm to create more inclusive communities across Ireland. Clonakilty in West Cork became accredited as Ireland's first Autism-Friendly Town. During this process we found that there is amazing goodwill towards the autism community and would like to further strengthen and recognise the valuable work being carried out in communities right across Ireland.

Currently 1 in 65 children in Ireland are registered with the National Council for Special Education as having a diagnosis of autism. *(NCSE, 2013) However it is widely recognised that the actual number of children and adults in the community who are on the autism spectrum is much higher. Autism is a complex invisible condition which a person is born with and that affects the way a person communicates, interacts and understands people and the world around them. Autism is often described as a 'hidden disability', and members of the autism community experience barriers to participation in their communities as a result. AslAm considers barriers of this nature to be an accessibility issue, not unlike the barriers which can be experienced by members of the community who live with physical disabilities.

The Clonakilty Commitment was a standard which AslAm established in 2018 to provide supports around these barriers faced by the autism community. Together, our work continues throughout Ireland creating Accredited Autism-Friendly Communities. The principles applied in designation were: Judgement & Attitudes, Communication, The Sensory Environment, and Predictability & Control. These principles are recognised by AslAm as the barriers to autism inclusion. Each entry for the Inclusive Communities Award will be judged on these four themes.

Examples of entries may include but are not limited to: autism friendly events, the autistic voice, awareness and understanding and lifelong participation. Examples of these can be from one off events activities, communications or changes made to their community in order to evoke changes based on the 4 principles listed above. Committees will need to demonstrate how they have promoted their inclusion of the autism community in their overall TidyTown entry. Special points will be awarded to mainstreaming or normalising the



accommodations required for people who experience autism related barriers to inclusion.

Resources and information regarding autism friendly practices are available on SuperValu.ie, AslAm.ie and AutismFriendlyCommunities.ie

Who can enter the competition?

Any TidyTown Committee, Junior TidyTown Committee, subcommittee or group working closely with a TidyTown committee. Only one entry from each town or village will be accepted.

How will the winner be chosen?

A panel of independent adjudicators will assess all entries. All entrants must have an appropriate Child Protection Policy in place. This is the responsibility of the TidyTown committee. For Child First guidelines and training information please contact **Túsla** at **01 6352854** or the **Department of Children and Youth Affairs** website.

As part of the overall prize, an AslAm spokesperson will visit the winning town to hold a talk on autism in the community.

Application

Village / Town / City / Island:

Contact Name:

Address:

Contact Details:

TidyTowns Committee name:

Are you a member of the TidyTowns committee?

If not, what is your role with TidyTowns?

What is the population of your community?

How many members on your TidyTowns Committee?

Age profile of members – both committee and those who volunteer to carry out work for TidyTowns;

☐ under 18 ☐ 18–40 ☐ 40+

Do you have members of the autism community in your locality, and if so, are they involved in your committee and the work that you do?

Do you work with schools, recreational or local sporting groups to engage conversation around autism. If so, please give examples?

The SuperValu and AslAm Inclusive Communities Award

What efforts have you made to promote awareness and understanding amongst the general public of the autism community in your area?

Do you have a local autism support group in your area? If so, what have you done in relation to collaboration with them? If so, how do you go about this?

Can you give an example of an event or activity you produced that was deemed as autism friendly or inclusive in practice?

What initiatives have you carried out that demonstrate an inclusive approach towards the autism community, and neurodiversity in the general public?

By submitting an application you are confirming that you are adhering to child protection legislation. For further information on your responsibilities to safeguard your underage volunteers please contact **Túsla** at **01 6352854** or the **Department of Children and Youth Affairs** website.

Please email your entry to: tidytowns@drctd.gov.ie

If you have any queries please contact the TidyTowns Unit at 076 100 6938. Late entries will not be accepted.
For further information see www.tidytowns.ie