

GUIDEBOOK FOR IPWEA SOUTH AUSTRALIA EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Introduction

As the peak body for public works engineers, IPWEA South Australia annually recognises and celebrates the best in public works engineering in South Australia. All councils and engineers are encouraged to nominate their best projects, programs and people. IPWEA's Excellence Awards encourage everyone to share best practice with peers in the industry and highlight best practice partnerships with suppliers and contractors in the sector.

IPWEA South Australia now invites nominations for the 2026 Excellence Awards. Nominations should not be constrained by project size, as each project will be judged on its merits.

The 2026 Awards are related to achievements during 2025 and up to the closing date of applications i.e. the project must be completed and implemented, or the outcome presented to and supported by management during this period.

Finalists will be announced in August 2026 with the awards presented at the 2026 Excellence Awards Gala Dinner held on Thursday, 12 November 2026, at the Adelaide Convention Centre with a nominee representative expected to attend the dinner.

Aim

The overall aim of the IPWEA South Australia Excellence Awards is to:

- Recognise public works practitioners who achieve innovation and best practice.
- Create awareness of the level of expertise, innovation, development and management of public works projects.
- Create awareness of the quality and diversity of public works projects in New Zealand.
- Recognise excellence demonstrated by IPWEA South Australia members and individuals employed in the public works field.

Benefits of Nominating

There are many benefits of being an IPWEA Excellence Awards nominee. These include:

- Recognition of your leadership, your team and your organisation.
- Recognition of innovation in the design, implementation and delivery of your project.
- Recognition of excellence of your team and your organisation by the professional sector.
- Recognition and acknowledgement of the effort and personal achievement of your staff involved in the project.
- Award winners will automatically be qualified for entry for the IPWEA Australasia Excellence Awards at the International Public Works Conference in Perth, 2027; and
- Finalists will be publicly recognised.

Excellence Awards Categories

- Best Public Works Project Under \$2.0M
- Best Public Works Project Between \$2.0M - \$5.0M
- Best Public Works Project Over \$5.0M
- Excellence in Asset Management
- Excellence in Project Innovation
- Excellence in Water Project
- Excellence in Road Safety
- Excellence in Environment & Sustainability
- Excellence in Green Infrastructure
- Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion
- Young IPWEA Emerging Leader
- Professional of the Year

Eligibility Requirements

The 2026 Awards are related to achievements during 2025 and up to the closing date of applications (31 July 2026) i.e. the project must be completed and implemented, or the outcome presented to and supported by management during this period.

The nominating organisation must have responsibility for design or delivery of a key component of the works being sought to be recognised as “excellence in public works”. The applicant must have responsibility for the works being submitted for consideration, and, where appropriate, ownership of or significant input into the intellectual property involved.

No project is too large or too small, with consideration being given to the size and resources of the organisation and its staff.

Councils/organisations may only submit one entry into a maximum of two categories.

Category Descriptions and Guidelines

Best Public Works Projects: 3 Categories

- Under \$2.0M
- Between \$2.0M and \$5.0M
- Over \$5.0M

In these categories the “Project” definition includes the concept development stage, detailed design, construction and, where appropriate, landscape establishment, and these costs must be included when determining the category of the submission.

Excellence in Asset Management

In this category asset management projects include projects which contribute to enhanced asset management within, or across the organisation or public works engineering sector, including:

- Development of asset management plans.
- Innovative data collection and analysis techniques including GIS solutions or GIS linked systems.
- Comprehensive asset management services, i.e. integration of asset management principles across the organisation, particularly where the outcome influences the council/organisation’s service levels.
- Asset management projects (excluding civil works) which may have been constructed in response to asset management principles or plans also apply.

Excellence in Project Innovation

Innovation involves deliberate application of information, imagination and initiative in deriving greater or different values from resources and includes all processes by which new ideas are generated and converted into useful products. This award recognises innovation that creates significant advancement and improvement within the industry. The innovation can relate to a product, program, service and/or other initiative. The innovation must be replicable and of broad benefit to the industry and/or the community.

Excellence in Water Project

This category seeks to recognise innovations in water projects (stormwater, wastewater and water supply). “Project” definition includes the concept development stage, detailed design, construction and, where appropriate, landscape establishment. Nominations may be made for any of the following types of projects: Operations, Maintenance, Capital Works, Management and Design and/or Construction.

Excellence in Road Safety

Road safety projects include civil works, community education programs, an integrated traffic management plan or other measures designed specifically to provide an improved road safety outcome through increased traffic flow or improved vehicle and/or pedestrian safety or other activity that improves road safety.

Excellence in Environment & Sustainability

This category includes projects with open space or community facility components where key outcomes have included environmental remediation and/or amenity enhancement and public accessibility and/or utilisation improvement. This category also encourages solutions and improvements in the sustainability of public works and services by showcasing and celebrating the latest innovations and success stories.

This can include any new or refined project (i.e. approach, strategy, policy, application, project, model, service) or a product that has demonstrably improved the surrounding environment of public infrastructure and/or sustainability of public infrastructure or the sustainability of communities through public works and services (e.g. sustainable infrastructure, sustainable communities, responding to climate change).

Excellence in Green Infrastructure Asset Management

This award recognises excellence in the application of asset management principles to Green Infrastructure assets and systems. The award celebrates organisations and projects that demonstrate leadership in integrating Green Infrastructure into asset management frameworks, lifecycle management, performance monitoring, and continual improvement of Green Infrastructure to deliver sustainable environmental, social, economic and community outcomes.

Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion

This award would recognise an individual, team or organisation that has made a demonstrated and meaningful contribution to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging within the public works and engineering profession.

Young IPWEA Emerging Leader Award

The Young IPWEA Emerging Leader Award seeks to inspire excellence and dedication in public works by recognising the achievements and potential of young public works professionals.

Professional of the Year

The Professional of the Year Award recognises the performance of an individual IPWEA member for leadership in the delivery of public works excellence.

Awards Submissions

All submissions must be lodged online via these links:

[Project Award Submission](#)

[Individual Award Submission](#)

Tips & Tricks

- Entry quality is important. Your entry should be well written, accurate and to the point. A winning entry is a well-told, good story. It is up to you to convince the judges why your application is the best option in your submission form.
- Start early - it takes time to write a good entry.
- Your 'business-as-usual' might be so excellent that it takes the award home, don't be discouraged from entering if your day-to-day operations are best-in-class.
- Think strategically. Play to your strengths.
- Involve members in your team and wider organisation in your entry.
- We suggest that prior to submission you prepare your application, gather and reference your supporting images, and review before submitting.

Assessment Criteria - Individual Awards

Young IPWEA Emerging Leader <i>500-word limit per criteria</i> <i>(Score out of 10)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active within the Institute• Shows strong / active leadership• Exerts a positive influence in the industry• Demonstrates they are giving back to the industry• Outstanding contribution to the industry• Under 35 at the time of nomination
Professional of the Year <i>500-word limit per criteria</i> <i>(Score out of 10)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shows strong and active leadership• Exerts a positive influence in the industry• Demonstrates they are giving back to the industry• Outstanding contribution to the industry• Active within the Institute

Assessment Criteria - Project Awards

Executive Summary	Project Objectives & Outcomes	Innovation	Community & Environment	Sustainability	Asset Management Integration
<i>1000-word limit</i>	<i>500-word limit (Score out of 10)</i>	<i>500-word limit (Score out of 10)</i>	<i>500-word limit (Score out of 10)</i>	<i>500-word limit (Score out of 10)</i>	<i>500-word limit (Score out of 10)</i>
Overview of the initiative and why it was undertaken.	How and why was the project developed?	Evidence of originality or new approach.	What are the economic, financial, social, environmental, safety and community benefits?	How did the project demonstrate it meets sustainability objectives?	Evidence of alignment with asset management principles.
Supporting Material: High-resolution images, testimonials, data, case studies, policies and engagement outcomes.	Evidence of measurable outcomes and benefits achieved.	How does the project demonstrate excellence and/or innovation?	Evidence of real benefits of the project. Quantify if applicable.	How effective were environmental issues managed?	Lifecycle planning and service outcomes.
		Can the innovation be transferred/shared?	Who were the beneficiaries?		<i>*Applies to AM based awards only</i>

**Asset Management Integration category criteria applies only to Excellence in Asset Management and Excellence in Green Infrastructure Asset Management Awards.*

Assessment Criteria – Diversity & Inclusion Only

Executive Summary	Project Objectives & Outcomes	Innovation	Community & Environment	Sustainability
<i>1000-word limit</i>	<i>500-word limit (Score out of 10)</i>	<i>500-word limit (Score out of 10)</i>	<i>500-word limit (Score out of 10)</i>	<i>500-word limit (Score out of 10)</i>
Overview of the initiative and why it was undertaken.	How and why was the project developed?	Evidence of originality, leadership, collaboration, or new approaches to advancing DEIB within public works and engineering.	Demonstrated benefit to staff, industry, stakeholders, or the broader community.	Evidence the initiative is embedded into organisational culture, policy, strategy, recruitment, leadership or operations.
Supporting Material: High-resolution images, testimonials, data, case studies, policies, engagement outcomes.	Evidence of measurable outcomes and benefits achieved.	Can the initiative be replicated or scaled?	Who benefited and how?	What mechanisms ensure ongoing impact?
	Could include workforce diversity improvements, engagement, retention, accessibility, cultural outcomes, community participation, or inclusion outcomes. Quantify where possible.		Consider social, cultural, accessibility, Indigenous, gender, disability or age-related outcomes.	

Terms & Conditions

Eligibility & Submissions

- Entries must be submitted via the Online Submission Form. No extensions will be permitted.
- A project can only be nominated in a maximum of two categories.
- Third party award nominations are allowed but must be with the full knowledge and cooperation of the nominated organisation.
- The lodgement of this award does not automatically indicate you will be a finalist in your category.
- The Primary Contact and/or employing organisation must have responsibility for design or delivery of a key component of the works for which they are seeking recognition in the nomination. Mere involvement in a project is insufficient; the applicant must have responsibility for the works being submitted for consideration and, where appropriate, ownership of and/or significant input into the intellectual property involved.

Entry Requirements

- Nomination material should include project images in high resolution as a JPEG file. The organisers have permission to use this image in association with the event.
- All finalists are required to submit and/or participate in the production of audio-visual material supporting their entry, for broadcast at the awards ceremony.
- Entries cannot be amended after they have been submitted, so please ensure all information is accurate and correct before submitting.
- The judges reserve the right to request additional material to support claims made in any nomination.

Judging Process

- Each entry will be judged on the material in the entry form using the experience of the judging panel. The material must be accurate and complete (i.e. not misleading by omission), and this must be certified by the person submitting the entry.
- The judging panel can, at their discretion, choose to move an award between categories if they deem that there is a more suitable category for the project.
- It is at the judges' discretion as to whether an award or commendation will be awarded, or the category withdrawn.
- The judges' decision is final, and no subsequent correspondence will be entered into.
- The judges observe the confidentiality of entries where required and declare or avoid any potential conflict of interest.

Finalists & Awards Gala Dinner

- Should the entrant be announced as a finalist, it is required to have a nominated representative attend the Gala Dinner, at their own expense to receive the award if successful.
- Registration fees will not be reimbursed in case of no-show.
- If entrants choose to purchase tickets to the Gala Dinner on the assumption that they will win an award, and the entrant is not a winner, IPWEA will not refund the registration fee.

Publicity & Confidentiality

- The organisers reserve the right to publish information contained in the nomination at the time of finalist and winner announcements. They will advise finalists of any planned publicity. Information that companies do not wish publicised should be clearly marked ("commercially sensitive, do not share"), in which case it will only be viewed by those involved in the judging process and it will be treated as confidential.