Minister’s Message

The National Awards for Local Government present an opportunity to celebrate the role of local governments in improving the lives of Australians.

Local councils are the level of government closest to the community. They have a direct impact on the everyday life of all Australians. As the many entries for the 2017 Awards attest, our local councils deliver projects ranging from infrastructure, health, recreation, arts, Indigenous, multicultural, youth and regional growth.

The Australian Government, through the National Awards for Local Government, celebrates the exceptional local government projects that are making a difference to local communities. These award-winning initiatives demonstrate leading practice, deliver real outcomes for communities and have the potential to be rolled out across the country.

This year’s National Winner, the Wyndham City Council, has partnered with the university and private sector to improve its local community’s understanding of planning and development proposals using technology. WynLens is a game changer. It enhances community engagement and improves planning outcomes by allowing residents to visualise local surroundings using interactive 3D and immersive landscapes.

I would like to congratulate all of our 2017 category finalists. Your hard work and dedication to get the job done in your communities is a reflection of the excellence of local government, in both regional and urban areas across Australia.

As the Minister for Local Government and Territories, I look forward to working with councils across Australia to support their important work. This will help build the kinds of communities our children and grandchildren either want to stay in or come back to.

Senator the Hon Fiona Nash
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Local Government and Territories
Minister for Regional Communications
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About the National Awards for Local Government

The National Awards for Local Government is an annual celebration of Australian local government achievements. The Awards spotlight the important role of local governments in delivering targeted quality services to Australians in urban and regional communities.

Through the Awards, the Australian Government celebrates local government projects that demonstrate leading practice, deliver better outcomes for communities, have the potential to be rolled out across the country and which make a meaningful difference to their regions. The Government recognises that as the closest tier of government to Australians, local governments play a critical role in maintaining and developing the nation’s social and economic fabric, and supports their contributions to innovation, deregulation and smaller government.

From the winners of the following ten categories, the National Award for Excellence in Local Government is chosen by a national judging panel.

- **Arts Animates—excellence in capacity building and innovation** sponsored by the Department of Communications and the Arts
- **Boosting Productivity through Infrastructure** sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
- **Contributing to Regional Growth** sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
- **Digital Innovation in Local Government** sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
- **Disability Access and Inclusion** sponsored by the Department of Social Services
- **Excellence in Road Safety** sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
- **Innovation to Create More Liveable Australian Cities** sponsored by Optus Business
- **Multicultural Australia—Strength in Diversity** sponsored by the Department of Social Services
- **Promoting Indigenous Recognition** sponsored by Woodside Energy Ltd.
- **Youth Economic Participation** sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
National Award for Excellence Winner
In taking out the 2017 National Award for Excellence, Wyndham City Council has demonstrated outstanding and innovative use of technology that could transform how local government engages with citizens, plans built environments and delivers services.

Wyndham City Council is a lead adopter and planner of a technology that delivers an immersive mixed reality, three-dimensional experience which enables stakeholders and residents to visualise a proposed development in an interactive and stimulating way. WynLens is a multi-staged project that uses the immersive properties of the Microsoft HoloLens to provide environment aware experiences and interactivity.

It has the ability to simulate future scenarios and to map sensors across different city systems through holographics. An individual can simulate walking through a building to gain an understanding of the impact of the proposed development. Communities are no longer obliged to read long planning documents in order to make informed decisions.

The technology has tremendous potential for broader application, including to traffic patterns, tree canopies and the use of internet sensors such as smart bins that display the location and fill level of bins. This promises to be a major step forward in the development of ‘smart cities’, with Wyndham City Council playing a leadership role.

Wyndham is also committed to sharing this technology with other Councils, and has already initiated extensive collaboration.
Arts Animates—excellence in capacity building and innovation

The Arts Animates Award category is sponsored by the Department of Communications and the Arts. The Department develops and administers programmes and policies that encourage excellence in art, support for cultural heritage and public access to arts and culture. The funding and support the Australian Government provides helps artists and organisations shape our cultural landscape, increase cultural diversity, and inspire, educate and entertain audiences across Australia and around the world.

About the category

The Arts Animates Award recognises excellence in capacity building and innovation by local governments to:

- leverage arts and culture to improve community sustainability and increase local economic opportunity;
- create vibrant, liveable communities that use arts and culture to support community wellbeing;
- celebrate local identity to both grow and attract creative talent and investment;
- embrace diversity and encourage social inclusion through community participation in artistic activities; and
- support new arts or cultural activities that encourage commercial success for artists and arts organisations, including through promoting cross-sector partnerships, networks or collaborations.

The important role of local governments in arts and cultural activities

The Australian Government believes all Australians, whether in regional areas or major cities, should have access to artistic and cultural activities, performances and exhibitions. Work by arts and cultural organisations and artists can inspire and challenge us, provoke new thoughts and ideas, and give us fresh perspectives on the world.

In sponsoring this category Award, the Department of Communications and the Arts recognises the important role local government has in creating vibrant local communities through arts and cultural activities.
Coorong District Council, SA

Creating Coonalpyn

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This project began with a region-wide arts focus, which arose from the Council’s desire to beautify its new civic centre. Social media was used to seek artworks on loan. The overwhelming response led the Council to allocate $15,000 to alter its new building to provide exhibition space.

A Council Arts and Cultural Audit identified further art-based opportunities to pursue strategic, economic and social goals. Funding was secured from Country Arts SA to partner with Raukkan Community Council and hire a full-time arts officer. This spawned the $85,000 Creating Coonalpyn project, including the 30-metre high mural on the town’s grain silos by international artist Guido van Helten. It also included a resident-led arts group, who worked with professional artists to develop five other community projects focussed on mosaic, sewing, horticultural plantings, creative fence installations and an underpass full of refreshed paintings.

Creating Coonalpyn has inspired locally-led outcomes such as a community-organised camping festival at the silos and will soon start selling its own range of merchandise, with profits going back into community projects and local businesses. The Council has also led a significant promotional campaign, attracting massive media and online attention including international coverage (now reaching upward of half-a-billion people worldwide).

The Council has secured funding from the Australia Arts Fund for evaluation of rural renewal and capacity building outcomes and is also working with Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland to secure support for an economic evaluation of Creating Coonalpyn.
City of Albany, WA

Bella Kelly Retrospective

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The Bella Kelly Retrospective developed by Albany’s Vancouver Arts Centre resulted in significant exhibitions in three Western Australian venues over seven months. Its celebration of the Indigenous artist Bella Kelly (1915-1994) contributed to an understanding of cultural history, built partnerships with education and arts organisations, and strengthened relationships with the Menang Noongar people of the Great Southern region.

The project entailed a professionally curated exhibition of 51 landscape paintings by Bella Kelly, who was born in Mt Barker and lived in towns throughout the region. This was the first time that a female West Australian Indigenous artist has been honoured with a retrospective. Indigenous artists from the South West of WA have a unique painting style, the Carrolup Style.

Research uncovered over 250 Bella Kelly paintings in private collections. Oral histories collected from lenders provided insight into Great Southern history, and of policies and attitudes which affected Indigenous communities. A colour catalogue, an online resource and a documentary were produced. Employment was generated for regional professionals, including Indigenous consultants.

The exhibition at the Vancouver Arts Centre was followed by its tour to a major metropolitan venue, the John Curtin Gallery in Perth, and to a regional venue, the NEXIS Narrogin Exhibition Space. Public and education programs were presented at each venue, and an archive of professional photographs of Bella Kelly’s artworks created.

Part funding was obtained from the WA Department for Culture and the Arts and the Department of Regional Development and Lands through Royalties for Regions, with significant in-kind support from Curtin University. The presentation of the exhibition in a major Perth gallery brought Bella Kelly’s paintings to a metropolitan audience.

Appropriate cultural protocols were followed, including working with key members of Mungart Boodja Art Centre, including Bella Kelly’s daughters. The project positioned Bella Kelly as the matriarch of Great Southern Noongar Art. Locally, the project enhanced community pride amongst the Menang Noongar people, raised a flag for diversity and strengthened community relationships. The project attracted interest from local and national media, and can be viewed online at www.bellakelly.com.au.
City of Joondalup, WA

Kaleidoscope Festival

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The inaugural Kaleidoscope Festival was a large-scale lighting and projection cultural event held in the Joondalup City Centre over four days in November 2016. It attracted significant media coverage positioning Joondalup as a Destination City for visitors, engaged the local community, the wider metropolitan Perth community and the arts sector.

Developed by the City of Joondalup, Kaleidoscope was the first festival of illumination held in Western Australia. It explored the use of light to create a visual wonder by featuring over 20 lighting projections and installations ranging from 3-D architectural transformations (Living Buildings), synchronised dance and projection performances, virtual reality, augmented reality, workshops and interactive curated spaces.

A local skills audit helped the City engage with residents, local artists, educational institutions and community groups. Collaborations included an Aboriginal creative director and Noongar artists who incorporated Aboriginal heritage-themed art. Local Indigenous Elders identified Indigenous people living locally and advised how to involve them. Local volunteers and community groups were also consulted and ensured the showcasing of native flora and fauna as part of the event program.

Kaleidoscope aligns with the Australia Council for the Arts Strategic Plan, which includes using "the arts enrich daily life for all" and extension of the arts to new audiences in unexpected places. Kaleidoscope provided an opportunity to strengthen the artistic experiences of young people by facilitating collaboration with more established professional artists. It provided for public and private investments in the arts.

Kaleidoscope provided the community with access to world-class cultural events and attracted visitors from across the Perth metro area. It exceeded expectations by attracting more than 50,000 people across the four nights and delivered estimated expenditure of $1.65 million into the local business community. The inaugural PR campaign generated over $1 million worth of positive publicity and imagery and the video from the event reached over 1 million people across social media platforms. With the inaugural Kaleidoscope Festival such a standout success, the event will move on to its second year in 2017 with an aim of developing and growing the event to become one that attracted national and international attention.

The inaugural Kaleidoscope Festival exceeded expectations in terms of its strategic KPIs, delivered significant economic benefits for local businesses and was a significant drawcard to attract visitors from around the metropolitan area as part of showcasing the Joondalup City Centre as a destination.
The Boosting Productivity through Infrastructure Award category is sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development supports the Australian Government in responding to emerging and critical issues affecting the nation, including: growing demand for infrastructure and transport; improving the social and economic outcomes for Australia’s regions; dealing with the opportunities and challenges presented by projected population and demographic changes; and increasing Australia’s productivity.

The Department also helps manage the Government’s significant investments in infrastructure, with the aim of improving national and local productivity and increasing the economic, social and sustainable well-being of Australian communities.

About the category

The Boosting Productivity through Infrastructure Award recognises forward-thinking local governments that are contributing to the Australian Government’s plan to invest in more modern infrastructure to boost productivity.

The important role of local governments in boosting productivity through infrastructure

As Australia’s population and economy grow and new opportunities and challenges emerge, the growth in demand for infrastructure and access to transport systems across all modes will intensify in both our urban and regional centres. So too will the challenges in managing increased urbanisation and social and economic pressures in our regions. Therefore, we need to ensure Australia’s infrastructure and transport systems attract the investment needed for a fully functioning, efficient and productive economy.
Gladstone Regional Council, Qld

Waste Powering Gladstone’s Greener Future: The Benaraby Landfill Gas-to-Power Project

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The Benaraby Landfill Gas-to-Power Project captures and extracts potentially harmful gas generated by the Benaraby Landfill and combusts it in a state-of-the-art power facility. This contributes to the region’s energy infrastructure, boosts regional productivity, and minimises environmental risks and liability associated with landfill gas.

Landfill gas is generated during the natural and gradual decomposition of organic waste materials deposited in landfills. In 2011, Gladstone Regional Council (GRC) took a proactive approach by establishing a project that will span 30 years and produce ‘green’ power from the Benaraby Landfill. The project is delivered by a specialist landfill gas supplier through an alliance-type agreement that returns a royalty payment on revenue from power sales, Renewable Energy Certificates, and carbon credits.

The project includes the design, installation, expansion and operation of a landfill gas extraction system, with gas combusted in a purpose-built 1.065 MW power facility. Future plans include commissioning of a second 1.065 MW biogas engine and the development of a 1.5 MW solar PV plant adjacent to the power facility.

Within a year of project implementation, GRC became one of the first Councils to eliminate its carbon liability under the Carbon Price Mechanism and be removed from the national list of liable entities. The project’s success has been due in part to GRC’s collaborative approach in working with key stakeholders, such as the specialist landfill gas contractor (Landfill Gas Industries Pty Ltd), the regional power distributor and retailer (Ergon Energy), the Clean Energy Regulator, and a local government procurement adviser (Local Buy).

Landfill gas-to-power stations operate 24-hours a day, providing valuable baseload energy. By investing in the development of a long-term, green, baseload power project, GRC has diversified the regional portfolio of power sources and helped future-proof its energy infrastructure. The project is a benchmark for regional government initiative in environmental and economic sustainability, and demonstrates how regional governments can achieve industry best-practice for their landfill asset by participating in the emerging carbon and green energy markets.
Logan City Council, Qld

Contributing to Council Priorities – Totally Independent Managed Supply (TIMS)

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TIMS enables urgent maintenance to be undertaken to Logan City’s water supply network with minimal disruption to customers while also contributing to the safety and efficiency of Council staff. Although water maintenance works are most safely and efficiently undertaken during the day, this is not always convenient for customers. Maintenance and repair affect residential, commercial and industrial customers across an entire shut-down area. Public safety concerns necessitate a continuous water supply for such users as health facilities and schools.

This project involves deployment of a transportable 13,000 litre potable water tank, pump unit and power plant to avoid the loss of water supply during an emergency or planned shutdown. Water is provided under pressure to a wide area encompassing many affected properties, while remaining completely independent of the regular water supply network.

Logan City Council provided capital funding of $40,000 to procure components for TIMS. The unit was built in-house, providing an excellent opportunity for Council staff, engineers and contractors to work together throughout development and implementation. Plans are underway to connect TIMS to telemetry, allowing 24-hour remote monitoring of critical readings. This will minimise the operational costs of TIMS providing an all-around reliable service with very low staff involvement. Logan is working to spread awareness of the benefits of this project to other councils.

TIMS has dramatically improved Logan City Council’s customer service experience, having been deployed over 50 times since March 2016. With a nominal budget outlay, it has saved hundreds of customer disruptions cost effectively. Community feedback has been excellent. Affected customers are usually unaware that they are being temporarily supplied by TIMs rather than the normal water supply network.
Contributing to Regional Growth

The Contributing to Regional Growth Award category is sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, contributes to the prosperity of the economy and the wellbeing of all Australians by assisting regions to realise their potential and manage their own futures.

The Australian Government’s approach to regional development is to work in partnership with communities, government and the private sector to foster the development of self-reliant communities and regions, creating the right climate and environment to encourage the establishment of viable enterprises.

About the category

The Contributing to Regional Growth Award recognises councils collaborating on a regional basis to strengthen investment and development opportunities, share resources, build regional competitive advantage and create jobs.

The important role of local governments in contributing to regional growth

Australia’s regions are integral to our values and sense of identity, which come from our unique and diverse culture, landscape, history and people.

As public sector agencies, councils have a responsibility to continually improve their performance to achieve optimal value for their residents, particularly when there are community expectations for councils to do more for their communities. Improved performance can be achieved through greater efficiency by adopting innovative management practices, exploiting the potential of technology, developing more customer-focused service delivery arrangements, and/or collaborating with other councils in the region.
Contributing to Regional Growth

Meander Valley Council, Tas

Valley Central Industrial Precinct, Westbury

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Meander Valley Council’s acute awareness of industry needs and recognition of the limitations faced by landowners in accessing finance and managing complex infrastructure has led to the emergence of the Valley Central Industrial Precinct.

In 2008, Council identified a demand for affordable, suitably zoned industrial land that was purposely located to meet the needs of large volume agricultural processing, manufacturing, transport and logistics-based businesses.

Meander Valley Council embarked on an innovative partnership with three private landholders, committing to cover the upfront costs of crucial infrastructure. The landowners repay these costs from profits made from the sale of land.

In partnership, Council managed a structured implementation process, commencing with a comprehensive feasibility study. This encompassed rezoning, securing support from State and Australian Governments and the delivery of regional consultation across eight municipal areas.

The feasibility study identified two key elements for achieving success. The first was to ensure location was appropriate to industry. The second identified the importance of formulating flexible assessment criteria that cultivated successful industrial development in conjunction with environmental considerations and amenity.

Findings from market research and business interviews established that there was a demand for an industrial precinct, particularly from agricultural, logistics, transport, construction and fuel suppliers.

Valley Central is now a prime, 127 hectare industrial precinct. Ideally located, the site has direct access to major transport routes, airports and shipping ports. Proximal to the township of Westbury, Valley Central is supported by local business and a regional population of 145,000.

Meander Valley Council created rate relief incentives and the Valley Central Industrial Precinct was promoted through the development of a prospectus in partnership with the State Government.

Major new businesses have now been established at the Precinct and an existing business has expanded. Meander Valley outputs have been conservatively projected at $60 million, with an additional $280 million of planned capital expenditure from new business, pending approvals.
Latrobe City Council, Vic

Moe Rail Precinct Revitalisation Project – Stage 1

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Moe Rail Precinct Revitalisation is a long-term urban renewal project undertaken by Latrobe City Council. It revitalises the town using world class infrastructure that provides library and community hub services, and renewed public open space.

The need to invest in Moe’s revitalisation was driven by its increasing inability to meet liveability indicators, and to attract public and private investment. In response, the Council created a precinct that facilitates community interaction with learning facilities, meeting spaces, civic services, public transport, sport, play and recreation areas, all designed to complement each other. Community groups, non-government and government entities, utilities and authorities were all part of the community consultation process.

Latrobe City Council’s own project managers were used so as to minimise cost and maximise staff development. Delivery of the project using local people and suppliers helped it stimulate investment and civic pride. Consistent, regular and positive communications with all stakeholders contributed to the project’s success. The Victorian and Australian Governments helped fund the project.

The new Civic Hub will provide access to a modern learning and research facility for people of all ages and backgrounds. Stage 1, completed in June 2016, includes a library, community meeting rooms, a council services centre, a café, a community kitchen, maternal and child health facilities, a public plaza and a public access green roof.

The new civic plaza building is a vibrant multipurpose space that has the flexibility to host large events whilst maintaining intimacy for day to day activities. Subject to funding, future stages will include a transport interchange, a youth precinct, public parkland, a rail trail connection, revised car parking and further streetscaping. The old shops and disused railway station yards that used to divide Moe’s central business district have been transformed into an inviting gateway.

The project has been overwhelmingly embraced by the local community. Visitor numbers to the library have soared and council and community services and groups are thriving.
Mackay Regional Council, Qld

Dudley Denny City Library

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Mackay’s new Dudley Denny City Library is pivotal to place-making, civic identity and cultural revitalisation. This $8.5 million facility arose from the gift from local identity and businessman David Denny of a centrally located CBD property for community use. The resulting new library is a state-of-the-art facility and meeting place in Mackay’s city centre.

In 2014, a Community Attitude Survey showed that libraries are extremely important assets for Mackay residents. With the donation of a suitable building, the Council had a unique opportunity to make that vision a reality in Mackay’s city centre while also helping local businesses. The Council was able to access reserve funding for the necessary capital works, with the Queensland Government contributing $461,400 and the State Library of Queensland another $270,000.

The library’s design reflects extensive community consultation. Residents now have the opportunity to develop their skills in a high-tech library environment. An Australian-first emotive humanoid robot named Pepper greets visitors, advertises programs and answers questions. Collaborative screens interact with mobile devices, wall-mounted projection mapping equipment and a ceiling-mounted floor projector.

The new library caters for all ages and abilities. Its colourful and interactive children’s space includes an elevated reading pod where children can choose to read quietly or watch a DVD. There are interactive touch tables and an interactive floor mat where users can play virtual soccer, kick leaves, stomp in puddles or dance. For more mature users, there are a news lounge and quiet rooms with TV screens for meetings and study. Accessibility has been maximised by escalators, lifts, stairs and a dedicated carpark.

Average Monday to Friday daily attendance at the old City Library was 500 to 700; at the new library it is up to 1,300 per day.

The Dudley Denny City Library is a collaborative effort of local business, suppliers, community groups, library users, council and the Queensland Government. Community, not-for-profit groups and businesses are being consulted on delivering educational talks and programs in the Library’s flexi spaces. The Council employs a City Centre Coordinator who liaises with nearby businesses to gather feedback on working together with the library.
The Digital Innovation in Local Government Award category is sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, contributes to the prosperity of the economy and the wellbeing of all Australians by assisting local governments to manage their own futures.

About the category

The Digital Innovation in Local Government Award recognises councils that have implemented effective and innovative initiatives to improve services through digital projects.

Local governments provide essential services and planning for their communities. Digital innovation in service delivery will make it easier for individuals and businesses to access local government services.

The important role of local governments in contributing to digital innovation

Every day, more and more Australians are choosing to interact with all levels of government on their mobiles, tablets and computers rather than face-to-face or over the phone. Local governments that take up the opportunity to use and engage the digital world will be able to better meet the needs of their local communities.

Going digital offers many opportunities to deliver beneficial change and reshape local government service delivery at a much lower cost. Local governments across Australia have digital strategies in place and are broadening access, system functionality and information for their local communities.
Southern Grampians Shire Council, Vic

Digital Transformation of a rural community – a journey

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This project aims to ensure that the Southern Grampians Shire Council (SGSC) community takes advantage of the opportunities that digital transformation provides. SGSC is leading the establishment of a strong local digital ecosystem to become Victoria’s first Smart Connected Rural Community.

SGSC must use digital transformation to retain population, attract ‘tree changers’, spark innovation and encourage tourism. This poses major challenges: only 65% of SGSC households have internet access, compared to 77% across all Victoria, and SGSC is in the slowest 30% of average ADSL speeds in regional Victoria. Strong community engagement and capacity building is needed to ensure that the community and SGSC undertake the digital transformation journey together.

SGSC developed a partnership with Glenelg Shire Council and accessed funding from the Victorian Government to build a Digital Strategy for both shires. It engaged Telstra to deliver a tailored Smart Cities framework and strategic roadmap.

Many community groups, local businesses and other important stakeholders provided valuable input to the strategy. An ongoing governance group will help oversee digital transformation and encourage community buy-in.

Initial pilots and projects completed or underway are:

- The Greater Hamilton Community IoT Network, using LoRa technology gateways in four townships across SGSC;
- A Land Capability Interactive Map of commodities and their suitability to be grown in the SGSC region from now to 2050;
- 35 datasets published via Open Data, fourth behind Melbourne, Geelong and Ballarat Councils in the number of datasets released by Victorian Councils; and
- Educational and Professional development partnerships with the Academy of Interactive Entertainment.

SGSC has commenced ‘Phase 0’ of the Smart Connected Rural Community project roadmap and has laid the foundation for applying for state and federal funding for further phases.

SGSC staff presented at the 2016 Municipal Association of Victoria Technology Conference on their ‘digital journey’, inspiring and encouraging other councils.
Disability Access and Inclusion

The Disability Access and Inclusion Award category is sponsored by the Department of Social Services (DSS).

The Australian Government, through DSS, is working to improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia by responding to needs across their life course, encouraging independence and participation, and supporting a cohesive society.

The National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 provides a ten-year national policy framework for all levels of government to improve the lives of people with disability. The Strategy seeks to drive a more inclusive approach to the design of policies, programmes and infrastructure so that people with disability can participate in all areas of Australian life and have the same opportunities as other Australians to fulfil their potential as equal citizens. The Strategy was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2011.

About the category

The Disability Access and Inclusion Award recognises local governments that have applied the principles of the Strategy by engaging with people with disability, their families and carers to develop and implement innovative services, practices and/or policies that provide greater opportunities for people with a disability to participate in local community life.

This may include access and inclusion in any sphere or capacity, including but not limited to:

- removing barriers to participation of people with disability in the community;
- strategies and actions that give people with disability a voice in the community and the capacity to influence the design of services, programmes and infrastructure that impact their lives;
- greater access to mainstream services and support; and
- improved access to:
  - the physical and built environment;
  - information technology;
  - social and cultural activities;
  - arts, sports and recreational activities; and
  - employment or other economic opportunities.

The important role of local governments in disability access and inclusion

The successful implementation of the Strategy is the responsibility of all levels of government. A focus of all governments under the Strategy is to improve the accessibility of mainstream services, supports and infrastructure for people with a disability. Local governments play a vital role in implementing the Strategy within local communities.
Brisbane City Council, Qld

Brisbane Access and Inclusion Plan 2012–2017 Implementation

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The Brisbane Access and Inclusion Plan 2012–2017 Implementation Project consists of 107 initiatives to make Brisbane an accessible and inclusive city, where all residents can participate in a rich and fulfilling life. The Plan takes a whole-of-Council approach to inclusion for all Brisbane residents.

Since 2012, Council has invested more than $130 million to address five priority areas for removing barriers facing people with disability:

• Pedestrian mobility and transport, including an accessible bus, the CityCat and ferry fleet, with upgrades to boarding stations and platforms;
• Planning, development and infrastructure, including enhanced open spaces, accessible shopfronts and training for Council Development Services staff on accessible design;
• Public building, venues and outdoor spaces, including the enhancement of council pools, libraries, public halls and community facilities using universal design features such as accessible parking, building entries, toilet facilities and meeting spaces;
• Vibrant and caring communities, including delivery of inclusive mainstream festivals, recreational activities and funding to community organisations that provide improved access to community programs; and
• Internal council strategies such as training in accessible document creation, and training on how staff can engage with people with a disability and Council’s DisABILITY Action at Work employment program.

The Plan and associated projects were developed in response to needs identified via a statistical analysis and literature review; consultation with the community and disability agencies; accessibility audits of Council facilities; and a commitment to the National Disability Strategy. Partnerships with community organisations and residents drove all aspects of planning and implementation. Regular meetings were held with residents, disability service providers, and the Inclusive Brisbane Board, to ensure that the right solutions were delivered.

Council standards have been shared across government and industry. For example, the design for accessible loading and taxi zones was promoted by Cerebral Palsy League and Spinal Life to the Queensland Government, which subsequently adopted the Council’s design as best practice.

Council has led the Plan with a genuine policy objective of social inclusion, rather than an emphasis on achieving compliance with minimum Australian Standards. As a result, the Plan has not only delivered on its actions but it has also transformed the way in which the Brisbane community values and embraces inclusion.
Tweed Shire Council, NSW

Inclusion Means Toilets – A Partnership Approach to the Access Audit and Upgrade of Designated Accessible Toilets

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For frail older people, people living with a disability, carers and parents accompanying small children, a useable, clean and well maintained accessible toilet means the difference between inclusion in a community space and forced exclusion.

This project was a priority for implementation in Council’s first Access and Inclusion Plan. The first phase, called On the Dunny Run, involved an access audit in 2015 of 34 currently designated unisex accessible public toilets across Tweed Shire. This was conducted by Council staff and two members of Council’s Equal Access Advisory Committee. One member has a visual impairment using a guide dog, the other member a mobility impairment using a motorised wheelchair. The second phase, completed in 2016, involved planning and implementing the upgrade including the installation of signage, adjusting door weight, replacing door handles, taps, toilet pans and toilet seats and installing back rests.

The collaborative approach was central to this project requiring all those involved to share information and put aside assumptions. Decision-making that gives greater weight to technical knowledge and professional judgements over the lived experience of people with a disability can result in barriers caused by design faults. This project demonstrates that lived experience is critical to making good decisions about the accessibility and usability of public infrastructure.

This was the first time community members of the Council’s Equal Access Advisory Committee have been involved as equal partners with Council staff in a project of this nature. By working together and combining knowledge, the audit team was able to make realistic assessments about the usability of each facility rather than just adhering only to the technical standards.

The partnership between technical knowledge and lived experience contributed practical and cost saving information to the outcome, including assessing some older facilities as suitable with minor adjustments. The result of the project is 30 usable, unisex accessible toilets across Tweed Shire servicing large and small parks, sports fields and surf clubs.
The Excellence in Road Safety Award category is sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development contributes to the wellbeing of all Australians through planning and investing in infrastructure, and by fostering safe and efficient transport systems. The Department also supports a strong and liveable Australia by facilitating local partnerships between all levels of government and local communities.

The Department has a range of specific functions that support the Australian Government’s role in road safety. These include: administering vehicle safety standards for new vehicles, administering national road investment programmes, administering the Keys2drive learner driver programme, producing national road safety statistics and coordinating the National Road Safety Strategy 2011–2020.

About the category
The Excellence in Road Safety Award recognises councils that have implemented effective and innovative initiatives to improve road safety in their communities.

Councils may enter any road safety project in this Award category including, but not limited to, projects that:

- improve road or roadside infrastructure with a focus on safety benefits;
- address the specific safety needs of vulnerable groups such as older road users, motorcyclists, cyclists or pedestrians;
- target specific risk factors such as drink/drug driving, speeding, non-usage of seatbelts/helmets, fatigue, distraction or pedestrian intoxication;
- improve road safety for Indigenous Australians;
- address safety issues relating to heavy vehicle transport; and/or
- improve emergency medical response services for road crash victims.

The important role of local governments in road safety
The annual economic cost of road crashes in Australia is enormous – estimated as $27 billion per year – and the social impacts are devastating. Local governments can improve road safety through local community initiatives.
Logan City Council, Qld

Flooded Road Smart Warning System

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The Flooded Road Smart Warning System saves lives by reducing the risk of vehicles being driven into dangerous floodwaters. It also reduces the need for emergency services personnel to undertake dangerous swift water rescues and council staff to erect temporary warning signage under hazardous conditions. A fatality and swift water rescues of 35 people in Logan in 2013 and 2015 were evidence of a serious road safety issue of vehicles being driven inadvertently into floodwaters, particularly on dark wet nights. Council staff proposed an automatic warning system.

This started with global research to determine if a suitable solution already existed. No readily available systems met the requirement for a simple, low cost, reliable and sustainable system that delivered a clear warning to drivers approaching flooded roads. Further research identified 278 locations where roads in Logan were flood prone. The project team developed risk criteria for the assessment and prioritisation of each site.

To have wide application, the system needed to be low cost. Council worked with Substation 33, a local not-for-profit e-waste recycling enterprise that employs and trains disadvantaged members of the community, and with students from Griffith University to develop, manufacture and install the system. The first site was operational from 22 December 2016. Automated amber flashing signs display ‘ROAD FLOODED’ to overcome driver desensitisation to permanent signage and clearly warn of danger ahead. The signs are powered by recycled laptop batteries recharged by solar power.

Other features include notification by SMS and an email to council staff of affected sites for announcement on social media, the Council’s Disaster Dashboard and the State Department of Transport and Main Roads website. In future, the information will be available live to the community and could be used to re-route vehicle navigation systems to avoid flooded roads.

This road safety project meets the goals of the Australian Government’s National Road Safety Action Plan and links to the Queensland Government’s road safety campaign “If it’s Flooded, Forget it.” An information package has been developed to help share its benefits.

Ex-cyclone Debbie gave the system a thorough testing at the end of March 2017 when more than 100 roads across Logan were flooded. Unlike previous events, no vehicles drove into the flood waters at the sites where the signs had been installed.

Through Council’s project, Substation 33 has become much more than an e-waste recycling operation and is helping train and rehabilitate many people for entry (or re-entry) into the workforce.
The 40 km/h area speed limit project for local streets in the City of Charles Sturt is a Council-led initiative to address community road safety concerns and part of a commitment to meeting the State Government’s objective of reducing crashes by 30% by 2020. It aims to equitably address these issues without applying physical traffic control measures, which can often be cost prohibitive, have a localised benefit, and often push safety and amenity problems onto adjoining areas.

Between 2010 and 2015 there were 487 casualty crashes and 1500 property crashes on the City’s local roads. The project was conceived in late 2015 in response to continued community requests for traffic management that provided an alternative to physical controls. It involves the installation of speed limit signs at access points to selected local areas bounded by major traffic routes and other significant features, such as rail lines or geographical boundaries. The project has been delivered in parts of seven adjoining suburbs within the City. Delivery in three more adjoining suburbs has been approved for installation by the State Government.

Decisions to install lower speed limits in a particular area are a result of collaboration between Council and residents. Community consultation identifies the level of support and any underlying road related issues prior to a decision being made. Consultation to date has included mail-outs, community open days, information packages and surveys of property owners.

This project has already had an impact on the community and will continue to do so as more City areas have local speed limits reduced. Decreases of 79% and 29% of total crashes in the Woodville West and Bowden areas respectively have been recorded following implementation. The low cost of signs means that improvements render a very high cost benefit ratio. The project also helps to identify locations that still require physical works to address unacceptable safety and amenity issues. This project can be easily replicated by other councils. The City of Charles Sturt has approached the neighbouring Councils of Port Adelaide Enfield and West Torrens, to work together to lower speed limits in suburbs that are shared between multiple road authorities.
The Innovation to Create More Liveable Australian Cities Award category is sponsored by Optus Business.

Optus Business is the business navigator driving innovation and thought leadership and helping local governments deliver smart city solutions that ultimately improve citizen experiences. By leveraging our heritage in providing leading telecommunications and ICT solutions, Optus Business is developing humanistic customer-centric solutions to deliver business outcomes. Optus Business recognises that local governments make a significant contribution to addressing citizens’ needs regarding engagement and connectivity through mobile and social networking platforms.

About the category

Cities and communities today face complex challenges to positively impact the lives of citizens and to transform public services to a customer focus. The concept of smart cities is a response to these challenges.

For this Award, councils could enter projects which involve:

- providing services that connect the community and enable citizen feedback mechanisms;
- delivering a suite of solutions to strengthen safety and security within the community;
- creating applications that leverage available data feeds and provide new information services;
- implementing a holistic WiFi capability that integrates community with external services e.g. retail;
- providing smart lighting and/or smart waste services to improve efficiencies;
- lighting up the community with digital signage and way-finding for tourists and visitors;
- creating a living lab environment to foster innovation in the entrepreneur and development community;
- opening up data feeds for start-up application development; and/or
- running hackathons or data type programmes to foster innovation and excite the community.

The important role of local governments in promoting more liveable Australian cities

Rapid urbanization, demographic changes and the heightened awareness of safety and security is driving a need for better and more efficient urban services. This Award recognises local governments that plan and deliver a customer-centric suite of solutions to their citizens that embrace community feedback and deliver outcomes that enable everyday life.
Innovation to Create More Liveable Australian Cities

Wyndham City Council, Vic

WynLens – Visualization, Analysis and Modelling of a Holographic City

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The City of Wyndham on Melbourne’s western edge faces challenges of rapid growth, ageing infrastructure and effective community engagement. In a government first, Wyndham used holographic data to present a three-dimensional vision of the future city and lay the foundation for a revolutionary decision-making tool.

WynLens is a powerful platform designed for collaboration and engagement that uses the immersive properties of Microsoft HoloLens to create environment aware experiences and interactivity. The presentation of multi-faceted information in a more natural way helps users visualise interconnections between buildings, new developments, streets and open areas.

The purpose of WynLens was to alter the engagement model and transform how city data is presented and used. The solution enables the observation and examination of areas and events unavailable by any other means. For users, the learning curve associated with understanding complicated built environment scenarios is obliterated.

The first use was in engaging with citizens on thirty-plus development proposals across the Werribee CBD. The holographic view of the city allows stakeholders to see first-hand what the future holds. Developers can see all that the city has to offer, decision makers can plan better and residents can share their thoughts on the future.

WynLens is being expanded to provide dashboard holographic views of live city data to solve city problems and improve decision-making. The ability to immerse citizens, staff, politicians and business leaders into a digital environment to explore and understand the city is game changing. Work in the holographic space has only just begun – a space where local government can and should lead the transformation of service delivery.
The Multicultural Australia Award category is sponsored by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

The Department of Social Services works in partnership with other government and non-government organisations to ensure the effective development, management and delivery of diverse policies, programs and services focused on improving the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia. This includes policies, programs and services aimed at providing opportunities for people to participate equitably in Australia’s economic and social life while recognising our cultural diversity.


**About the category**

The Multicultural Australia Award recognises local initiatives that promote the benefits of and/or respond to opportunities and challenges arising from Australia’s cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

For example, councils could enter projects for this award which involve:

- improvement of local employment outcomes and opportunities for culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
- development of inclusive programs which engage and support youth throughout the community;
- innovative approaches to bring people together to build local social cohesion and community harmony; and/or
- promotion and celebration of local cultural diversity, such as through multicultural policies and interfaith/intercultural initiatives.

**The important role of local governments in promoting a multicultural Australia**

Local governments can provide a supportive community through projects which will improve the wellbeing of people and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in their community while building a cohesive society, celebrate and recognise the diversity of their community, and which are inclusive in their design, development and implementation.
City of West Torrens, SA

Summer Festival

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The City of West Torrens Summer Festival is a series of seven events delivered over January and February offering a diverse program of outdoor cinema, live music, international food, workshops, market stalls, and activities for children and young people. With most events being free, it enables people of all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds to enjoy themselves in an inclusive environment.

West Torrens recognises that one of the most effective ways to reduce discrimination is to help to create a vibrant and inclusive social and cultural environment that values diversity. Encouraging interaction through activities that bring people together is an important way to achieve this.

The 2017 Festival included a multicultural event called All Together Now which presented entertainment from a wide variety of cultures represented in West Torrens. 600 attendees watched Greek, Italian, Afro fusion, Afghan, Indian, Spanish, Chinese and South African performances. Children and young people enjoyed an interactive story telling installation, giant games, free henna, art workshops and face painting. Market stalls were provided by community groups and movies were offered with captioning for people with disabilities.

The Summer Festival culminated in ‘Fork by Fork West’, the second ‘Fork on the Road’ event held in West Torrens. This was a huge success, with approximately 4,500 attendees enjoying food trucks, children’s entertainment, music, a classic car display and a rock ‘n’ roll event. Summer Festival was especially popular amongst young families attracted by the range of activities provided for children and flexibility in seating, food and timings.

The Summer Festival was also used to launch the Council Mobile Promotional Vehicle, a 1950’s retro caravan. This was where people came for information and was the centrepiece of the Summer Festival Engagement Project. A new software program called QuickTap was used with iPads to smooth the surveying of participants by maximising personal interaction and minimising data entry.
The Promoting Indigenous Recognition Award category is sponsored by Woodside Energy Ltd. Woodside is an Australian oil and gas company with a global presence, recognised for its world-class capabilities – as an explorer, a developer, a producer and a supplier.

Underpinned by 60 years of experience, we are Australia’s most experienced liquefied natural gas (LNG) operator and largest independent oil and gas company. Wherever we work, we are committed to living our values of integrity, respect, discipline, excellence, working together and working sustainably. Our operations are characterised by strong safety, environmental and social performance in remote and challenging locations. We recognise that meaningful long-term relationships with communities are fundamental to maintaining our licence to operate, and we work to build mutually-beneficial relationships across all locations where we are active.

About the category

The Promoting Indigenous Recognition Award acknowledges local government initiatives that promote recognition of the unique place and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia (such as through Constitutional recognition), through engaging Indigenous peoples in local communities.

In general terms, this Award involves acknowledging in local communities that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are the first inhabitants of this nation, that their unique culture and history is valued and recognising their contribution. Meaningful engagement involves listening to Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the community, bringing them together to discuss the best way of recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and history in the community, and implementing this together.

The important role of local governments in promoting Indigenous recognition

Local governments have the potential to inspire individuals and groups to strengthen relationships with each other and to promote Indigenous recognition. Engaging through local government is about meaningful two-way interaction, including bringing together Indigenous people and the wider community.
Sutherland Shire Council, SA

Nganampa Kililpil: OUR STARS

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Nganampa Kililpil: OUR STARS – Art from the Anangu Pitjanjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands was a major 2016 exhibition project held at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre, the leading cultural facility of Sutherland Shire Council. This was in collaboration with over 100 artists from seven major Aboriginal art centres from the APY Lands in remote South Australia. This was the first major exhibition from the APY Lands held in Australia.

Nganampa Kililpil: OUR STARS included new works by senior and emerging artists in media ranging from painting and printmaking to ceramics, fibre work and installations. Featuring more than 70 works from public and private collections across the country, the exhibition became the catalyst for four large-scale collaborative works by APY Lands artists. This brought the artists together as a family and shared knowledge between generations.

The opening festival day included song and dance performances by the artists, activities for children, artist talks, demonstrations and workshops. Hazelhurst also hosted a ten-day exhibition of young and emerging artists from the APY Lands. Other significant public programs included masterclasses, workshops, demonstrations, a children’s studio, guided tours, education tours and workshops, tours for people with dementia, as well as a weekly film club and events with the Friends of Hazelhurst.

Nganampa Kililpil: OUR STARS attracted 20,062 visitors over eight weeks. The over 100 artists, their 7 art centres and Hazelhurst attracted critical acclaim and an overwhelming community response. The APY Lands and artists gained invaluable exposure with strong media coverage. Major art works were acquired by state galleries and emerging APY artists made over $60,000 in sales in a companion exhibition ‘Our Rising Stars’.

The project also provided artists with training in project management, workshop facilitation, and the display of their work. The exhibition was supported by a short film featuring artist interviews, an exhibition-specific website built by the Hazelhurst team (www.ourstarshazelhurst.com) and a free exhibition brochure.

The project was made possible by project partners including the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts NSW, the Gordon Darling Foundation and Artwork Transport.
The Youth Economic Participation Award category is sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The Australian Government, through the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, contributes to the prosperity of the economy and the wellbeing of all Australians by assisting local communities to realise their potential and manage their own futures. To do this, the Department works in partnership with regional, rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

About the category

The Youth Economic Participation Award recognises local governments that assist young people to become engaged in their local communities and/or engaged in the workforce; offer flexible services to assist young people to further their education or training; and offer activities for young people who are disengaged from education, training or employment to better support them in their local communities.

The Youth Economic Participation Award is for local governments that:

- provide support for young people who are unemployed, underemployed or disengaged from their communities;
- provide training, education and opportunities for young people; and
- implement innovative solutions between local businesses and young job seekers, including mentoring.

The important role of local governments in youth employment

Local governments play an important role in connecting young people to their communities and helping them achieve their potential.
Kalamunda Careers Expo brings together schools, universities, training providers, career development pathway providers and local employers for one day a year to make a lifetime of difference for young people. Developed and managed by the Shire of Kalamunda, it helps students and young adults make informed choices about future career options. The Expo is free for exhibitors, students and the general public.

The need for the Careers Expo was highlighted in late 2012 when the Shire’s Youth Services team met with local High School Principals. One school was concerned that existing options for students to explore careers lacked serious one-to-one engagement not just with universities, but also with trades and apprenticeships and non-mainstream choices. The schools wanted students to base their Year 11 and 12 academic choices on practical guidance that encompass all opportunities.

The Shire’s Youth and Economic Development Teams put together the first Expo in 2013. Establishing a point of difference was crucial in attracting local schools. Over 600 students and more than 30 exhibitors participated. It is now an annual event and is expanding its reach beyond Shire boundaries to help as many young people as possible. Building on the success of previous years, the 2016 Expo covered the option of school leavers starting their own businesses.

The Expo is held in Kalamunda’s Performing Arts Centre, ample surrounding outdoor space is utilised for ‘try a trades’ and demonstration vehicles. Exhibitor involvement is by invitation, which enables pre-selection based on type and quality. Comprehensive exhibitor descriptions are sent to schools prior to the Expo, enabling them to plan around students’ needs. All schools receive formal feedback forms and conduct pre/post Expo sessions with students.

For a total investment of less than $8,000, the benefits and outcomes represent tremendous value for money. Internally, there is much wider recognition of youth issues and engagement with the Shire.

As its approaches its fifth year, the Expo’s popularity continues to grow. Schools outside the Shire and the general community are attending in greater numbers. It has also raised the profile of Shire of Kalamunda with employers and training providers throughout metropolitan Perth.
Sponsors

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