



Department of
**Energy and Economic
Diversification**



2026 Applicant Information Pack

Science Engagement Initiative of the Year

Application closing date: Monday, 11 May 2026 at 4:00PM (AWST)

Applications must be submitted online and endorsed at <https://psa.grantplatform.com> by the application closing date.

Late applications or changes to applications will not be accepted after the advertised application closing date and time.

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Introduction

The Premier's Science Awards (the Awards) recognise and celebrate the achievements of Western Australia's science community. Award recipients exemplify outstanding scientific research, science engagement, STEM education and study efforts taking place across the State.

For the purposes of the Awards, 'science' encompasses applied and discovery science and includes engineering, new technologies and mathematics. Applications for any category can include achievement in any of these disciplines.

The Awards are a proud initiative of the Western Australian Government and are supported by:

- Gold Sponsors: Shell and Woodside
- Silver Sponsor: DUG
- Bronze Sponsors: BioCina, CSIRO, Fogarty Foundation and Orthocell
- University Sponsors: Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, Murdoch University and The University of Western Australia
- Sector Sponsor: The Kids Research Institute Australia
- Community Partner: Scitech
- Media Partner: The West Australian

In 2026, there are ten competitively assessed categories across scientific research, science engagement, STEM education and study along with a People's Choice Award.

Science Engagement Initiative of the Year

This information pack provides guidance for applicants to the award category for:

Science Engagement Initiative of the Year

The Science Engagement Initiative of the Year recognises an initiative that has made an outstanding contribution to community awareness, interest and/or participation in science in Western Australia.

PRIZE: \$10,000

Application process

The selection of the award recipients is a competitive process and comparability across applications is essential.

Applications must follow the required format, meet all information requirements and have all documentation submitted by the application closing date and time to be considered.

Applications must be submitted and endorsed online at <https://psa.grantplatform.com> before the closing date and time. Late applications or amendments will not be accepted.

Applications must:

- Include all required documentation
- Follow the required format
- Observe the word limits

Documentation required for all this award category is a:

- Completed online Application
- Completed online Endorsement
- Images, figures or tables

Applications that do not comply with the requirements will be deemed ineligible.

Step 1: Applicant details

Applications are required to include:

- the name of the initiative (word limit: 10 words)
- the name of the provider and type
- the provider email and physical address
- the ABN of the provider
- a list of key personnel who deliver the initiative including their name, organisation and role
- an application contact person including their name, organisation, role and contact details
- a statement addressing the eligibility criteria (Step 2)
- an Achievement Summary.

Achievement Summary

The achievement summary is an engaging third person narrative that conveys the importance and achievements of the initiative to a layperson. It should include:

- the name of the initiative
- the name of the provider
- how long the initiative has been operating in the community and other essential details
- key elements of responses to the evaluation criteria that convey the outcomes and achievements of the initiative.

Word limit: 100 words

If announced as a finalist, the description used in all promotional material draws from the Achievement Summary.

Step 2: Eligibility criteria

Applications will be evaluated for eligibility against the criteria.

General eligibility criteria

The application must meet the general eligibility criteria for the Premier's Science Awards.

Applications must:

- Be providers based* in Western Australia, which means
 - If an individual, be an Australian citizen or permanent resident
 - If an entity or organisation, be operating in Western Australia
- Not be a science engagement initiative that is a past winner of this category or its equivalent. Providers who have previously won the Science Engagement Initiative of the Year can reapply if the application is for a new and different science engagement initiative.
- Be completed online for the relevant award category
- Include the completed applicant declaration confirming eligibility
- Include the relevant endorsement prior to submission
- Be submitted via the application portal prior to the application closing date and time
- Declare any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest
- Permit submitted material to be used for assessment and promotional purposes.

Applicants may submit applications to multiple categories, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for each category and lodge a separate application for each.

Previous applicants may reapply ensuring their submission reflects current guidelines and evaluation criteria.

* If the science engagement initiative is chosen as a finalist, the application contact will be required to provide evidence that the provider of the initiative is based in Western Australia.

- For individuals, this is evidence of Australian citizenship or permanent residence status.
- For entities or organisations, this is evidence of a registered ABN with a main business location of Western Australia.

Step 3: Evaluation criteria

Applications must demonstrate excellence, impact, leadership, collaboration and communication in a science engagement initiative that has made an outstanding contribution to community awareness, interest and/or participation in science in Western Australia.

Eligible applications will be evaluated and ranked against the weighted evaluation criteria in the online form. Weightings and word limits are listed for each criterion.

Note that the evaluation criteria have changed from previous years.

1. Excellence

Demonstrate this by identifying evidence of the high quality of your science engagement initiative and its achievements, such as:

- a description of the initiative's purpose, audience, activities, outputs and outcomes, with a clear program logic or theory of change
- use of best practice, evidence-based methods and/or innovative techniques to successfully reach and meaningfully engage your audience in science
- structured program evaluation, engaging participants, their influencers, and other stakeholders that demonstrates success measures met.

Weighting: 40%

Word limit: 700 words

2. Impact

Demonstrate this by providing evidence of the tangible, intangible or potential benefits of your science engagement initiative to your audience and to Western Australia, such as:

- increased awareness, interest in, understanding of, and positive attitudes towards science and technology and their critical importance to Western Australia's future
- increased STEM literacy and foundational skills to ensure Western Australians are equipped to thrive in the modern world and make informed decisions
- increased confidence, capability, participation or likelihood to continue to participate in STEM, especially among under-represented or under-engaged groups in science in Western Australia
- increased capabilities or confidence of educators to deliver effective STEM education
- increased awareness of STEM opportunities, capabilities and priority of emerging industries in Western Australia.

Weighting: 30%

Word limit: 550 words

3. Leadership, collaboration and communication

Demonstrate this by providing evidence of how your science engagement initiative utilises collaboration, coordination and communication to achieve outcomes such as:

- genuine collaboration with other providers or across disciplines and sectors such as: schools, industry, researchers, community groups, universities, TAFEs, Aboriginal organisations and government
- partnerships that complement or connect with other key science strategies, policies or education initiatives or enhance coordination across WA's STEM ecosystem
- meaningful industry engagement to support education and training and/or provide role models or resources
- demonstrated ability to leverage local, national or international interest, support, investment or participation.

Weighting: 30%

Word limit: 550 words

4. Attachments

All applications must include supporting attachments that are clearly referenced and relevant to the application:

- Images, figures or tables (three pages maximum)
- one high resolution photograph of yourself or group in **landscape** format. This may be used for promotional purposes in case you are selected as a finalist.

Formatting

Applications are required to meet formatting requirements for attachments:

- Single spaced Arial 11pt font
- Word or PDF document formats
- Document title saved as the applicant's name then document name. Eg. JaneSmithCV.doc

Documents that exceed formatting or page limits will be reformatted and cut off at the page limit.

Step 4: Submission

Once the applicant has completed the online application and answered the Evaluation Criteria, they should attach the supporting documentation, complete their declaration, nominate their endorser and prepare to submit their application with time for their endorser to complete their endorsement at <https://psa.grantplatform.com>.

Note that Endorsement (Step 5) is required prior to the application closing date and time.

Documentation

Only the documentation requested will be provided to the judging panel and considered in the evaluation process.

Application form

All applications must include a:

1. Completed online application for the *Science Engagement Initiative of the Year* category.

Attachments and supporting documentation

All applications must include:

2. The requested attachments
3. Completed and electronically submitted Endorsement (Step 5)

Declaration

In the online application, the applicant contact must complete the declaration stating that:

- the information supplied is true, accurate and not misleading
- the initiative is based in Western Australia and is being delivered in Western Australia
- they are not a past winner of the category they are applying for
- appropriate endorsement will be obtained
- they permit the use of any submitted materials for the purposes of assessment and promotional purposes
- if chosen as a finalist, the Department may use applicant information, photos and/or videos for promotion of the Awards program.

Conflicts of Interest

In the online application, the applicant must also declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest they or their partners may have in relation to any aspect of the Premier's Science Awards program. Identified conflicts do not affect eligibility, but must be managed by the Department.

If the applicant later identifies an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, they must inform the Department in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to, a professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party that could be reasonably construed as having or seen to have influence on the proper and objective judging process of the Awards, such as an officer of the Western Australian Government Department, an employee of one of the Awards sponsors or partners, a member of a judging panel or a Western Australian Member of Parliament.

Personal conduct statement

All applicants, finalists and Award Recipients are expected to:

- abide by the highest standards of integrity, ethics, diligence and professionalism
- display good judgement, diplomacy and courtesy when acting in the capacity of a Premier's Science Awards participant.

Submission

After completing the application, addressing the evaluation criteria, attaching documentation and completing the declaration, applications must be submitted at <https://psa.grantplatform.com>.

During submission, applicants must provide the name, email address and phone number of a suitable endorser.

After the application has been submitted:

- the endorser will receive an automated email asking them to complete the endorsement before the application closing date and time

Endorsement must be completed before the application closing date and time.

The application contact person will receive an email notification once endorsement has been completed. The application contact person should follow up if they do not receive an endorsement confirmation email.

Step 5: Endorsement

The applicant must obtain endorsement for their application within the online form at <https://psa.grantplatform.com> by the application closing date and time.

Suitable endorser

The online submission must include the name and email address of a suitable endorser.

The endorser's role is to confirm the accuracy of the application and indicate that the applicant's organisation supports the submission. The endorser should have knowledge of the applicant's achievements and be able to provide expert opinion on their science engagement initiative.

An individual may endorse multiple applications in the same category.

Who can endorse an application?

For Science Engagement Initiative of the Year, the application can be endorsed by:

- If part of a larger group or organisation, then an appropriate senior member of that group or organisation, such as the CEO, Head of the Research Group or similar
- If an independent engagement provider, then an appropriate senior member of an organisation that has funded the initiative or is a beneficiary of the initiative's work

The application contact person must allow sufficient time for the endorser to complete the online endorsement before the application closing date and time.

The application contact person will receive an email notification once endorsement has been completed. If a notification is not received, it is the applicant's responsibility to follow up with the endorser.

Joint applications

For joint applications involving more than one provider, one provider should be nominated to be lead applicant and provide endorsement..

The application should note if the initiative is a joint project and list the partnering providers involved.

General Information

The applicant should read the following information before completing their application.

General application guidelines

The applicant should ensure that they:

- Complete all sections of the online form and address the Evaluation Criteria
- Provide clear, concise responses in plain English, avoiding jargon and technical terms
- Structure responses logically and avoid repetition
- Clearly attribute where contributions are made, either as an individual or within the context of the wider team
- Support claims with verifiable quantitative and qualitative evidence
- Reference in the application all images, figures, tables or research articles included in the attachments
- Attach documents in the required format: applicant's name document name. Eg. JaneSmithCV.doc
- Avoid including webpages and links to audio-visual files
- Arrange for another person to review and proofread the application prior to submission
- Allow adequate time for the endorser to complete the online endorsement before the deadline
- Submit applications via the submission portal prior to the application closing date and time.

Unsubstantiated or unverifiable statements will not be considered during the selection process.

All applicants must ensure they use the correct form for their chosen category. There are different online forms for the Research categories, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scientist of the Year, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander STEM Student of the Year, Educator categories, Science Engagement Initiative of the Year and Government Science Project of the Year awards.

For technical issues with the portal, applicants can contact science@deed.wa.gov.au.

Decision Making Process

Applications will be evaluated by a Premier's Science Awards judging panel. Evaluation of applications will be based on the application's alignment with the evaluation criteria.

The judging panel reserve the right to request additional evidence to support claims against the evaluation criteria to assist it in making its decision. The judging panel may also seek advice from individuals with expertise in the area under consideration, to assist with evaluation.

The judges' recommendations are final. The deliberations of the judging panel and all related information and material will be kept strictly confidential, subject to the requirements of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*. The judging panel reserves the right not to recommend a winner or finalist for a particular category. Where the judging panel recommends multiple winners, the prize money will be shared. Recommendations are endorsed by the Premier of Western Australia.

Applicants will be notified by email of the outcome.

Finalists will be announced by media statement in the middle of the year.

Winners of the 2026 Premier's Science Awards will be announced at the Awards ceremony, scheduled for September 2026.

Obligations of finalists

Finalists will be notified by email of the outcome. This will include a request to:

- provide evidence that the provider of the initiative is based in Western Australia:
 - for individuals, this is evidence of Australian citizenship or permanent residence status.
 - for entities or organisations, this is evidence of a registered ABN with a main business location of Western Australia
- approve the biography to be used in all promotional material
- provide up to three high resolution landscape format headshot photographs with appropriate permissions to use for promotional purposes
- respond promptly to the videographer to coordinate production of the finalist videos
- organise permissions for topics, photographs, b-roll, research, publications or programs that could be filmed
- organise access permissions or entry permits for film locations.

Complimentary tickets to the Awards ceremony will be offered to three representatives.

Finalists are expected to abide by the personal conduct statement.

The Department may facilitate links between 2026 finalists and existing science engagement opportunities, including invitations to:

- be a WA STEM ambassador
- participate in public engagements promoting science.

Finalists are encouraged to promote their success through newsletters, websites, social media and by other means. The Department will provide information to support finalists in these promotions.

In the event finalists are contacted by the media, please seek advice from the Department prior to interviews.

The Department may use finalist information, photos and/or videos to promote the Premier's Science Awards program to the Western Australian community including, for example, social media promotion, public displays and public voting.

Obligations of Award Recipients

Winners of the 2026 Premier's Science Awards will be announced at the Awards ceremony.

Following the ceremony, the Department will contact the award recipients to arrange payment of prize money and discuss any proposed promotional activities.

Award recipients are expected to continue abiding by the personal conduct statement.

Award winners of the Premier's Science Awards are expected to:

- be a WA STEM ambassador
- participate in public engagements promoting science, such as National Science Week activities.

The Department encourages award winners to promote their success through newsletters, websites, social media and by other means. The Department will provide information to support award winners in these promotions.

In the event award recipients are contacted by the media:

- seek advice from the Department prior to interviews
- ensure information provided to the media appropriately acknowledges the Premier's Science Awards, your category and the date the award was granted.

Freedom of Information

Applicants are informed that the Department is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*, which provides a general right of access to records held by Western Australian State and Local Government agencies.

Further information on the operation of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act can be obtained from the [Department of Energy and Economic Diversification](#) or by contacting the Department's FOI Coordinator at foi@deed.wa.gov.au.

Use of Application Materials

All materials provided are accepted on the understanding that the Department will only use or disclose such material:

- determining the recommended winner and finalists for a category
- informing the public about the award outcomes
- promoting of the Awards
- promoting STEM
- in other instances where information collected may be disclosed without consent, where authorised or required by law.

All award-related information, material provided, and material created by the Department through the Awards program, such as media statements, interviews, videos and photos remain the property of the Department.

Tax Information

In some instances, the Australian Taxation Office views prize money as assessable income. An award recipient is advised to discuss any potential taxation implications with their financial advisor or the Australian Taxation Office (13 28 61).

For further information

Project Officer, Future Science Capability: STEM
Department of Energy and Economic Diversification
Email: science@deed.wa.gov.au

END OF INFORMATION PACK