



Australian Government



NATIONAL AWARDS

FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT



LOCAL GOVERNMENT – BUILDING AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITIES

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Minister's Message

The Australian Government has a long-standing and keen interest in supporting local government, and we are pleased to support councils across Australia through the annual National Awards for Local Government.

Each year the Awards focus on local government projects that contribute to the Australian Government's priorities to deliver a strong and prosperous economy and a safe and secure Australia – and to reward and provide opportunities for all Australians.

Local governments consistently contribute to the national agenda through delivering targeted quality services to Australians in urban and regional communities. The Awards celebrate local government projects that demonstrate leading practice, deliver better outcomes for communities, have the potential to be rolled out across the country and make a meaningful difference.

Every year the quality and diversity of entries against consistent categories demonstrate the growing maturity of the local government sector. For example, in the past the Indigenous category attracted the only Indigenous-focussed projects. Now, we find exemplary Indigenous projects submitted across all categories. Categories encouraging economic development and financial and asset planning models are regularly submitted by local governments as examples of their continuous improvement in these areas.

The judges this year have highly commended seven councils, indicating the difficulty of choosing between the outstanding examples of local government practice as each project delivers strong social and economic outcomes in the region.



I congratulate our 2015 winners and thank our judges for their hard work. These initiatives provide tangible benefits to residents, and the high-quality entries we received this year are a reflection of the level of service our local governments provide to all Australians.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Warren Truss', written over a light grey diagonal line.

The Hon Warren Truss MP

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for
Infrastructure and Regional Development

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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.

Local governments are invited to submit projects that contribute to building a stronger, more diverse and productive economy, and deliver better services at a local community level in the following categories.

- **Arts Animates—excellence in community engagement and participation**
sponsored by the Ministry for the Arts in the Attorney-General's Department
- **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
- **Disability Access and Inclusion**
sponsored by the Department of Social Services
- **Multicultural Australia—Strength in Diversity**
sponsored by the Department of Social Services
- **Promoting Indigenous Recognition**
sponsored by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- **Excellence in Road Safety**
sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
- **Youth Employment**
sponsored by the Department of Education and Training

WINNER

National Award for Excellence





WINNER



Maroondah City Council, Vic

Changing Places – Changing Lives

The Maroondah City Council has demonstrated excellence and leading practice by developing and delivering a project that makes a major contribution to improving the lives of people with disabilities across Australia and internationally.

Changing Places – Changing Lives promotes the installation of accessible toilets that meet the special needs of most people with a significant disability and those of their carers. This is vital to their participation in everyday activities that many other people take for granted and is a major contribution to their independence.

The project originated with Maroondah City Council convening an Access Focus Group of local people with a disability and their service providers to work with the Queensland Investment Corporation in ensuring that its \$575 million redevelopment of Eastland Shopping Centre is accessible to all.

Leveraging off the success of this project, Maroondah City Council established relationships with organisations and professionals in the disability and building sectors. Working together, they developed a design that meets national building standards and sets the benchmark for Changing Places toilets in Australia. The design has received the backing and support of the Australian Institute of Architects and Changing Places UK. The use of the name Changing Places and

logo is building global recognition of these facilities. In addition the full design specification drew on the expertise of a hoist supplier and a door maker. They provided an entry system with an automated universal door key that each user can access and use in any Changing Places toilet across Australia. This reduces costs to building owners caused through vandalism.

The establishment of the design led to several developers committing to fund installation of the toilets in their shopping centres. The Western Australian and Victorian Governments have also committed funding to install the toilets in parks, sporting venues, tourist attractions and other community facilities. Other states have also shown interest in the project.

Maroondah City Council also led the development of the Changing Places Information Kit. This provides councils and the building industry with the information needed to build Changing Places toilets, encouraging design consistency across the nation.

The Maroondah City Council's submission to the National Awards for Local Government for Changing Places – Changing Lives is a model statement of claims against the assessment criteria. The project demonstrates leading practice, delivers better outcomes for communities, incorporates practical tools to assist with adoption across the country and can be used as a template internationally.





CATEGORY

Arts Animates—excellence in community engagement and participation

The Arts Animates awards category is sponsored by the Ministry for the Arts in the Attorney-General's Department.

The Ministry for the Arts develops and administers programs 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

This category recognises excellence by local governments in driving community engagement and participation in the arts which:

- encourages innovative opportunities for participation in artistic activities,
- supports new arts or cultural activities by artists and organisations that bring the community together and celebrates local identity,
- promotes cross-sector partnerships, networks or collaborations, and
- builds sustainability and encourages commercial success for artists and organisations.

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 Ministry for the Arts recognises the important role local government has in creating vibrant local communities through arts and cultural activities.



Arts Animates—excellence in community engagement and participation



Barkly Regional Council, NT

Barkly Desert Cultures

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The Barkly Desert Cultures project was developed to bridge a growing gap between Indigenous Elders and younger generations in the Barkly region and help them to deal with issues of substance abuse and domestic violence.

The project, an ongoing multimedia youth engagement strategy, provided Elders and younger generations with the opportunity to jointly explore local identity, culture and social issues through song, hip hop music, storytelling, film, posters and animation.

The innovative use of technology also enables the project to overcome geographic barriers, increasing the level of community engagement that is central to the project's success. The project supports the

ongoing and sustainable cultural development of the region, including by developing local skills and offering employment for artists.

After extensive consultation with community members in Ali Curung and Elliott throughout 2013, Barkly Regional Council secured funding from various sources, including the Australian Government and Catholic Care NT. The Council appointed a sound engineer, a filmmaker and a representative from the Sista Sounds Music NT Program to collaborate with local youth and Elders in launching an eight-week pilot program in Ali Curung in May 2014 followed by a six week period in Elliott.

Re-engaging young people with their Elders encourages the retention and sharing of traditional cultures between generations. A selection of the songs, films and stories has been compiled into DVDs and CDs forming a lasting record of the Barkly Desert people's heritage and culture. Community response to the project has been overwhelmingly positive, with a high participation rate from community members of all ages.





City of Ballarat, Vic

Rebel Elders

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The Rebel Elders Project commenced in 2014 as an innovative means to engage seniors and youth in Ballarat in artistic and cultural intergenerational activities. The project was funded in partnership with the City of Ballarat and the Victorian Seniors Festival (Victorian Department of Health).

The core of the project involves collaboration between artists and community members of ages ranging from 15 to 94 to develop public presentations of stories and musical compositions focused on the theme of rebellion, a key concept in Ballarat's overall history.

Nine older members of the Ballarat community were invited to share stories of rebellion throughout their lives with local regional artist Rose Turtle Ertler. The stories were shared with a disparate group of local

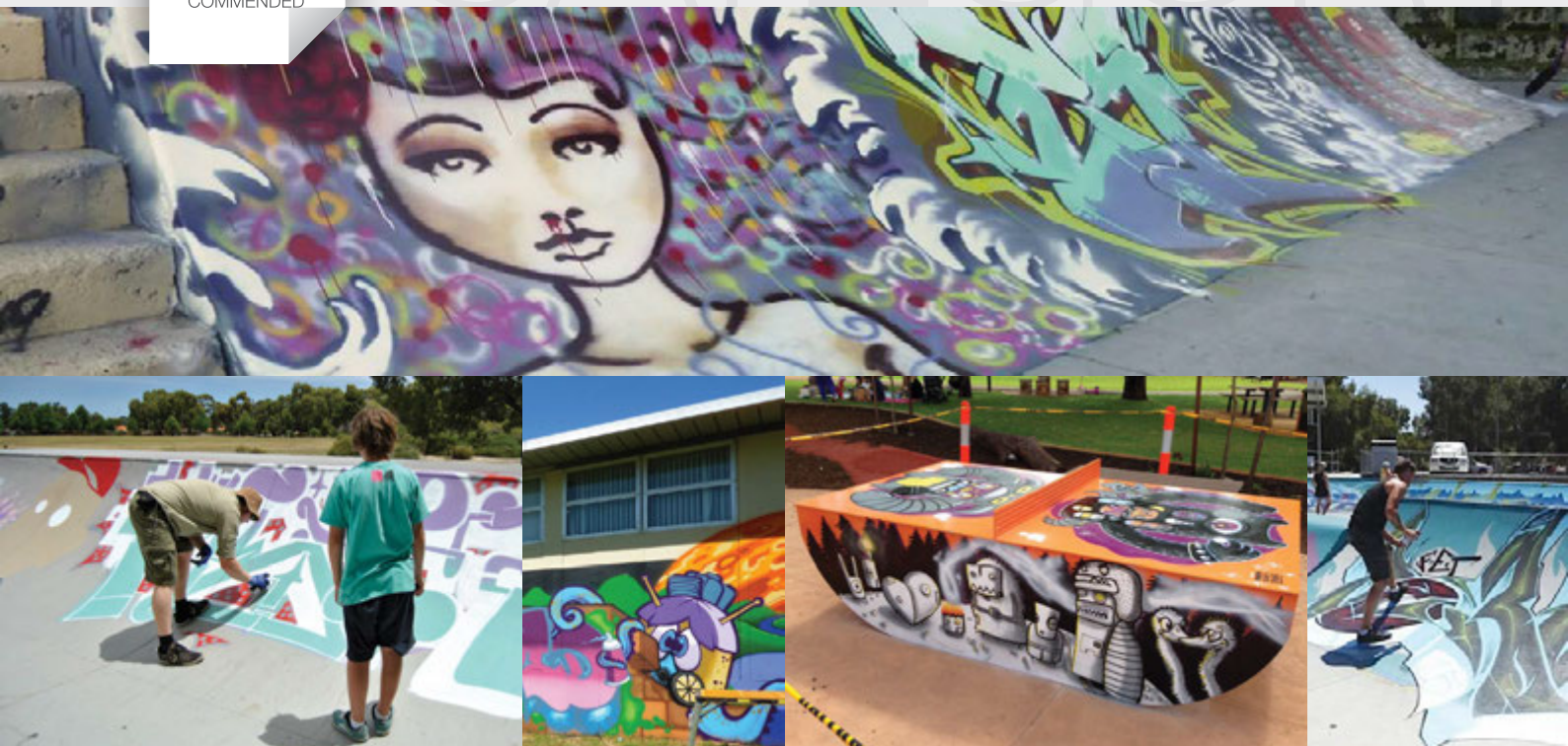
young people who were invited to musically respond to the stories with either soundscape pieces or descriptive songs. The musical styles ranged from pop songs, beatbox and hip hop to industrial, heavy metal and waltz.

The music and stories formed the basis of a physical theatre piece developed by the older community members and choreographer Michelle Heaven for performance as part of Seniors Festival in October 2014. The performance was filmed and the DVD made available in Central Highland libraries.

The project is continuing. With arts grant funding and City of Ballarat support, the Rebel Elders cast and crew are currently developing a series of short musical films expanding on the musical pieces and stories of rebellion that were recorded in 2014.



Arts Animates—excellence in community engagement and participation



City of Melville, WA

PHAZE Youth Urban Art Project

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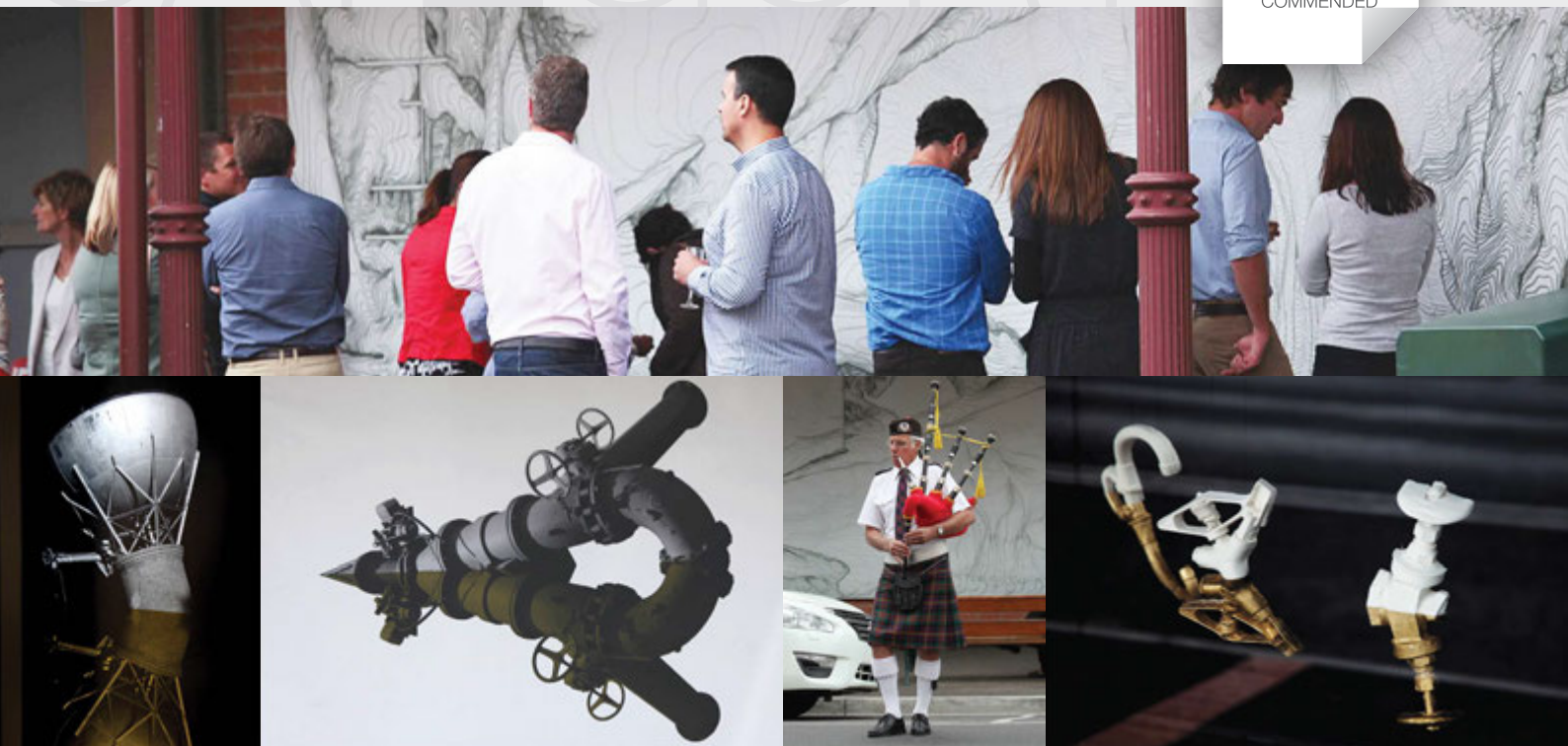
The PHAZE Youth Urban Art project was established to create opportunities for youth to work with professional street artists to create quality street art at skate parks across the Melville area.

Urban art is an extremely accessible and powerful medium for young people that features prominently in popular youth culture as something they can readily identify with and relate to. The key to the success of PHAZE is to capitalise on this popularity by using urban art as a strong engagement tool that has a focus on building resilience, positive relationships and engaging young people in constructive social activities.

The PHAZE project is the only ongoing and regular Youth Urban Art project of its kind in Perth, providing participants with a safe and supported space where they can create their art and develop their skills while working with a professional mentor.

PHAZE is also a relatively inexpensive way of reducing instances of illegal graffiti. As such, the project is now developing beyond skate parks to graffiti 'hotspots' identified by the City of Melville Technical Services Division. These are often walls or public buildings in very visible and high-traffic areas – another way to bring young people out into their communities and a further step in the growth and diversification of PHAZE.





Northern Grampians Shire Council, Vic

St Arnaud Street Museum – pride of place in the regeneration of St Arnaud

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The St Arnaud Street Museum uses shop windows and wall spaces between shops to display artworks created by visiting artists-in-residence. With strong community collaboration, the Street Museum project has created a “buzz” within the town and the arts community that has drawn strong media interest. It is possibly the first museum of its kind in Australia.

St Arnaud is a small western Victorian town with a population of around 2,600. Like many small country towns, it struggles to retain population and attract visitors. The Street Museum is the first stage of the St Arnaud Civic Precinct Project that aims to enhance the town’s liveability and promote tourism.

Council funding and a Regional Arts Victoria grant has enabled the employment of a curator and four artists-in-residence to create installations based on sculpture, photographic works and other mixed media in shop windows and along a central mural wall in the main street.

The artist-in-residence concept provides the community with internationally recognised mentors. This relationship combines ideas, people and history to produce gallery quality installations representing this partnership.

The project has been of great social and economic benefit to the community by creating a greater sense of pride in its history and encouraging residents to embrace the artistic. Community members talk to visitors on the interpretation of the works – embracing the stories in the art as their own.



CATEGORY

Boosting Productivity through Infrastructure

The Boosting Productivity through Infrastructure award category is sponsored by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The Department supports the Australian Government in responding to emerging and critical issues affecting the nation including: growing demand for infrastructure and transport; improving 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 goal of building more modern infrastructure that boosts 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 in both urban and regional centres will intensify. So too will the challenges of managing increased urbanisation and social and economic pressures in our regions. We need to ensure Australia's infrastructure and transport systems attract the investment needed for a fully functioning, efficient and productive economy.

Central Desert Regional Council, NT

Creating great landfills in central Australia remote Aboriginal communities

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This project demonstrates the on the ground benefits of local governments working together to make effective service delivery a priority. Three councils have been involved - Central Desert Regional Council, MacDonnell Regional Council and Barkly Regional Council – along with the Local Government Association of the Northern Territory and the Northern Territory Health Department.

A Regional Waste Management Coordinator was engaged to lead audits and upgrade plans at participating waste disposal sites. Upgrades then commenced, including excavation of new best practice landfill pits, site clean ups, installation of perimeter fencing, isolation fencing around pits, public drop off bays, return of recyclables to Alice Springs, general community education and (most importantly) training of staff in how to safely operate in and around the landfill site. Participation by local Indigenous staff has been strong. Upgraded sites have operated effectively for 3 years now.

Despite a limited budget and many practical obstacles, the project has greatly improved waste management, resulting in direct and ongoing positive results for local communities. Key achievements of the project include



improved safety; less poisons and asbestos exposure; reduced need for new pits and equipment repair and maintenance; and cleaner and safer communities which are better serviced by waste management facilities.

Councils are now spending less on pits and machine replacement and maintenance. This frees up funds to install the park and sporting facility infrastructure that residents value.

The project's collaborative approach to solving problems in small communities has proved highly successful and is leading to other partnerships. In 2014, the three councils collectively initiated a Regional Roads and Traffic Management program to set best practice guidelines for roads and traffic managed by councils within and between communities that draws on collaborative principles developed in the landfills project.



Boosting Productivity through Infrastructure



Townsville City Council, Qld

Lifecycle Cost Asset Management Plan

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Townsville City Council has developed and implemented a Life Cycle Cost Asset Management Plan model that revolutionises its approach to asset management. This model brings together three previously disparate strategies – capital works, operations, and maintenance and service levels – to quantify the interdependencies of these strategies and the impacts on decisions in terms of risk, cost and customer service.

The model's reporting is presented on “dashboard” worksheets using visual indicators. One provides a whole-of-council summary and “scoring”, while others drill down into service asset classes. The model's functionality allows the council to compare alternative asset management planning scenarios.

The model is consistent with Quadruple Bottom Line reporting. It empowers the council to make financial and operational decisions that achieve optimal financial sustainability. The impact of decisions is shown against agreed service levels and acceptable levels of risk, making it a powerful enabler of sound asset management.

Key decision makers can now endorse asset management plans from a position of understanding of the whole-of-council impact. Research indicates that this is the first model of its kind to be used in a local government context and possibly the first of its kind in Australia.





CATEGORY

Contributing to Regional Growth

The Contributing to Regional Growth awards 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 with other councils, Regional Development Australia (RDA) committees, local industry, communities and/or other organisations 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 entities, 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. 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.



Contributing to Regional Growth

CATEGORY



Northern Grampians Shire Council, Vic

From Italy to Stawell – the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory

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This project makes direct and highly creative use of large-scale infrastructure affected by major change in a regional economy. After more than 30 years of operation, the Stawell Gold Mine is transitioning to closure due to economic and operational business factors.

In response, the council has worked together with the mine's owners, business, research, training and regional development organisations to identify new opportunities for the mine site. It led a search to identify responses to the economic and social losses resulting from the closure of what was Stawell's largest employer. The result is the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory, a partnership between the council, the ARC Centre of Excellence for Particle Physics at the Terascale, the Italian National Institute for Nuclear Physics, Crocodile Gold and other Australian and international organisations.



Construction of the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory will create the first underground dark matter detection laboratory in the Southern Hemisphere, forming part of a network of major research laboratories around the globe. The council has been heavily involved in initiating and guiding the project, and has involved the local community throughout. Its highly structured and logical approach helped to attract partners and the participation of all three levels of government.

The project will bring new jobs, economic activity and opportunity to Stawell resulting from the council's actions to prompt a broad search for solutions.



CATEGORY

Disability Access and Inclusion

The Disability Access and Inclusion awards category is sponsored by the Department of Social Services.

Through the Department of Social Services, the Australian Government is working to improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia by responding to need across their life course, encouraging the independence and participation that supports 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. The Strategy was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2011.

About the category

The Disability Access and Inclusion Award recognises local governments that have applied the principles of the National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 by engaging with people with disability, their families and carers to develop and implement innovative services, practices and/or policies that provide greater opportunity for people with 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, programs 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 National Disability Strategy 2010–2020 is the responsibility of all governments. A focus is to improve the accessibility of mainstream services, support and infrastructure for people with disability. Local governments play a vital role in implementing the Strategy within local communities.



Disability Access and Inclusion



Maroondah City Council, Vic

Changing Places – Changing Lives

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The Changing Places – Changing Lives initiative, introduced across Australia in 2012, aims to promote the provision in key locations of public toilets that are accessible to a broader range of people with significant disability than are standard toilets. The unique features of these toilets include tracking hoist systems, height-adjustable adult-sized changing benches, access ramps, curtains for extra privacy and larger interiors for wheelchair manoeuvrability.

This groundbreaking initiative was introduced following community participation in an Access Focus Group facilitated by Maroondah City Council. The focus group noted that many local people with significant or severe disabilities and their carers were not able to access local services due to the lack of suitable toilet facilities, adding to problems of social isolation. The council established a consortium of organisations and researched best practice approaches in the United Kingdom. The resulting design set the benchmark for Changing Places toilets across Australia. With some funding from key stakeholders, the council also developed a Changing Places Information Kit to assist with implementation.

Maroondah City Council continues to work to promote the initiative through presentations, submissions, news stories and conferences to encourage the installation of Changing Places accessible infrastructure in other communities.



As a result of the council's efforts, the Victorian State Government has invested \$750,000 in the programme that has been used to build six Changing Places toilets including at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Rod Laver Arena and Melbourne Zoo. This funding also included \$75,000 provided to the Association for Children with a Disability to continue the consortium's work on a national level as Changing Places Australia. Other state governments have shown interest, with the Western Australian and Victorian Governments committing to funding to install the toilets in parks, sporting venues, tourist attractions and other community facilities.

In October 2014, the Victorian State Government established a Changing Places Advisory Group which included Maroondah City Council, the Department of Transport, the Victorian Tourism Industry Council, the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Australian Institute of Architects and others.





East Gippsland Shire Council, Vic

East Gippsland All Abilities Playground

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The East Gippsland All Abilities Playground is an innovative, fully accessible play space that allows everyone, regardless of physical and psychological abilities, to experience the joy of outdoor play.

The playground was developed by a dedicated group of community members and business leaders who worked in partnership with the East Gippsland Shire Council and the Victorian Government over a ten year period to create a fully accessible play space. This infrastructure is vital to helping members of the community with disability, their families and carers participate in the social, cultural and recreational life of the wider community.

East Gippsland Shire Council consulted with key stakeholders in the planning and delivery of a high-quality fully accessible facility, including members of the East Gippsland All Abilities Playground Association, service groups, community groups, state agencies and local business. The views of people with a disability and of their families and carers were key to the inclusive design of the structure, which exceeds

minimum compliance standards to ensure that it is accessible to all. The resultant playground is an inclusive, state-of-the-art playspace. A Liberty Swing enables people in wheelchairs to experience the simple joy of swinging at a playground. Six accessible toilet cubicles, one with a washing facility and hydraulic hoist, are in close vicinity for easy access.

The playground is one of very few with specialised accessibility features available in regional Victoria. It is widely used by residents and tourists, and has become a popular venue for family parties and celebrations.

Multicultural Australia—Strength in Diversity

The Multicultural Australia awards category is sponsored by the Department of Social Services.

The Department of Social Services works to improve the lifetime wellbeing of people and families in Australia, responding to need across people's lives, encouraging independence and participation, and supporting a productive and harmonious diverse society. The department's services are delivered through offices in every state and territory.

The department manages a range of projects that assist migrants to settle into life in Australia and promote respect, fairness and a sense of belonging for everyone.

Further information on these projects can be found at www.dss.gov.au.

About the category

The 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;

- innovative approaches to bring people together to build local social cohesion and community harmony;
- promotion and celebration of local cultural diversity, for example through multicultural policies, interfaith/intercultural initiatives; and
- development of inclusive programs which engage and support youth throughout the community.

The important role of local governments in promoting a multicultural Australia

Local governments can provide a supportive community for migrants by promoting cultural diversity through multicultural policies, inter-faith initiatives, celebrations, and citizenship and affirmation ceremonies. Local governments need to consider the prospect of employment opportunities and programs to engage and support young migrant refugees and to be mindful of improvements required for migrants, such as interpreting, aged care and childcare facilities.



Shire of Kulin, WA

Camp Kulin

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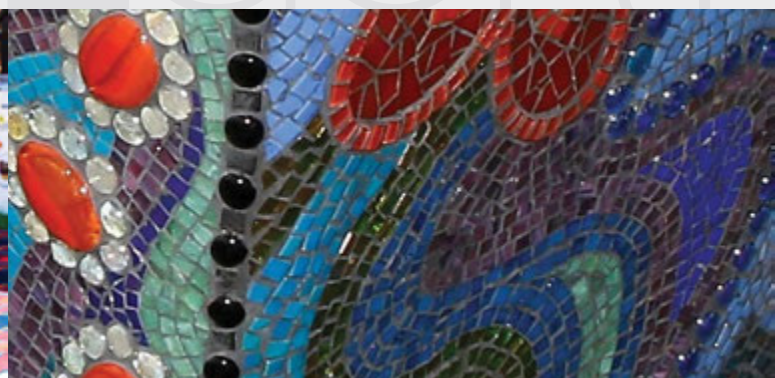
The Camp Kulin programme began in 2013 to provide programmes for children aged 8–12 from across Western Australia, primarily those who have been affected by disadvantage and/or childhood trauma. The aim is to teach life skills in a setting that is fun and which provides positive role models (camp counsellors) as mentors, enabling children to build resilience.

Camp Kulin works with over 500 families each year. Camper registration and volunteer enquiries are increasing at a rate of 25% each month. Over 400 children are currently on the waiting list to attend the scholarship programmes for children affected by childhood trauma. Over 75% of these are from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Parents and case workers report increased self-esteem, self-confidence and respect, better behaviour and increased school marks in children who have attended Camp Kulin. The short and long term benefits and behavioural changes effectively reduce the cost and necessity of many of these children undergoing intervention programs at a later age. This includes helping participants from CALD backgrounds adjust to life in Australia.

The camp makes use of facilities in the Shire of Kulin that were previously under-utilised. Local businesses are providing services for the Camp, which is bringing significant additional economic diversity to the town.





Melton City Council, Vic

Melton City Council Community Partnership Program

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Melton City Council's Community Partnership Program is a unique capacity building initiative in the field of community development and health promotion. Its focus on skills sharing, mentoring and increased capacity; its addressing of segregation within the community, particularly between Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups; and the sustainability of its outcomes all make this program highly innovative.

The Program seeks to foster cross-cultural connections by providing a framework for community groups from various cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds to work in partnership on projects of mutual interest. Participants share experiences, gain knowledge and develop new skills. In 2014–15, the first iteration of this program involves nine grass-roots projects, each coordinated by two or more community groups of different backgrounds to meet a common self-identified need. These include Historical Sharing Through Partnership: creating sound-scapes of local Aboriginal women's personal histories (Marla Aboriginal Women's Group and Melton Historical Society); Adults Learn to Swim (Melton Chin Group and St George Iraqi Group); and Active Multicultural

Seniors: Tai Chi and Zumba (Caroline Springs Macedonian Fishing Club and Chinese Friendship Group).

Community groups initiated the project to address their own self-identified needs. This increases the likelihood of continued participation and ensures the appropriateness and relevance of projects undertaken. The Program is overseen by a consortium of stakeholders and was designed to align with key Federal, State and local government strategies. Community ownership of the program has been maintained during the planning, implementation and evaluation stages.

This model could be easily adapted by other local government areas and applied to many different community groups, particularly CALD communities.





CATEGORY

Promoting Indigenous Recognition

The Promoting Indigenous Recognition awards category is sponsored by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is responsible for the majority of Australian Government Indigenous policies, programs and service delivery.

The Government's agenda for Indigenous affairs centres on positive engagement with Indigenous communities and increasing practical action to improve key Indigenous outcomes.

One of the key priorities for the Government is achieving constitutional recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the first inhabitants of this nation. The movement to recognise them in our Constitution presents an historic opportunity to acknowledge their unique culture and history, and their enormous contribution to this nation. Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, history and culture is about respect for all Australians.

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 through engaging Indigenous peoples in local communities.

In general terms, this Award involves acknowledging in a local community 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 to this nation.

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 their 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.



Promoting Indigenous Recognition



Parkes Shire Council, NSW

Bushman's Hill Indigenous Precinct

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The Bushman's Hill Indigenous Precinct project has rejuvenated Bushman's Hill Reserve by establishing an Indigenous cultural precinct with an amphitheatre and associated facilities. The local Aboriginal community had long been advocating the development of an Indigenous cultural precinct on the site.

The project involved a number of working bees that brought together school children, volunteers, local Aboriginal people and artists to develop and paint the new facilities. It also fostered a partnership with local community service agency Centacare so as to provide 'work for the dole' clients with skills and experience.

The project has fostered social cohesion by providing a place where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can meet culturally and socially, as well as serving as a venue for functions and events. The precinct has brought people together and furthered the community's understanding of local heritage.





CATEGORY

Excellence in Road Safety

The Excellence in Road Safety awards 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 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 and Seatbelts for Regional School Buses programmes, producing national road safety statistics, and coordinating the National Road Safety Strategy 2011–2020.

About the category

The 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
- 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 at \$27 billion per year — and the social impacts are devastating. Local governments can improve road safety through local community initiatives.



CATEGORY

Excellence in Road Safety



South Gippsland Shire Council, Vic

Gippsland Safe Freight Network

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The Gippsland Safe Freight Network project involves the development of an effective mechanism for engaging stakeholders in road safety initiatives.

The project addressed an increase in heavy vehicle crashes in the South Gippsland region by adopting a unique broad-based round table approach. After analysis of crash data to identify causes of heavy vehicle crashes, key stakeholders including 'industry champions' were invited to discuss the problem, and a series of local action plans were developed. The focus of the project was to adopt the Safe System approach to develop local solutions, which could potentially be applied state-wide and are consistent with nation road safety objectives. This is being achieved through a

variety of engaging initiatives such as campaigns and training opportunities which include both drivers and members of the public.

The project has developed partnerships in a unique way based on a mutual desire to ensure that all drivers complete their journeys safely. It continues to attract more and more companies wishing to be part of this road safety movement. This simple but effective model of engagement has been embraced across several local government areas, resulting in five round tables linked to the Gippsland Safe Freight Network.



**South Gippsland
Shire Council**



CATEGORY

Youth Employment

The Youth Employment awards category is sponsored by the Department of Education and Training.

The Department is responsible for national policies and programmes that help Australians access quality early childhood education, school education, higher education, vocational education and training, international education and research.

The Department works to encourage young people to participate in further education, training and work. It oversees the delivery of a number of programmes and policies that support young people in employment. This includes strengthening young people's transition from school into employment, continuing assistance for young people to stay engaged within the workplace and offering flexible services for further education and training.

About the category

The Youth Employment Award recognises local governments that assist young people to become engaged in the workplace; 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 Employment Award is for:

- local governments that provide support for young people who are unemployed, particularly those providing assistance to obtain long-term employment;
- local governments providing training, education and opportunities for unemployed young people; and
- local governments implementing innovative solutions between local businesses and young job seekers.

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.



CATEGORY

Youth Employment



Mildura Rural City Council, Vic

Flexible Learning Options (FLO) Connect

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The Flexible Learning Options (FLO) Connect project provides significant social and economic benefits for young people and the wider community.

The FLO project is a strategy by which the council addresses the issue of disengaged and disconnected secondary school age people, Mildura having one of the lowest rates of Year 12 completion in Victoria. It is an innovative approach to improve the retention of vulnerable students through the provision of flexible learning options at six local secondary schools. Young people aged 13-19 who have been out of school for three months or more are provided with individualised learning programmes based on their strengths and interests. The retention rate for these young people has increased by over 75 per cent.

The project's education program optimises the roles, skills and resources available from schools, training, and employment and community services. A range of assessment and monitoring processes are used to regularly review progress. Programs and activities on offer are mapped to VET modules students are undertaking, so that wherever possible student activities contribute to their assessment portfolio.

Students are provided extended transition support as they take their next pathway step into school, further education and training or employment. This project prepares youth for a better future, essential to breaking entrenched generational poverty traps.



Mildura Rural City Council



Maroondah City Council, Vic

Work Inspiration – Transitioning from School to Work

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The Work Inspiration program transforms traditional work experience to make young persons' first experience of the world of work more meaningful and inspiring. By imparting insight into the working world it allows students to identify pathways towards employment, emphasising motivation and encouraging planning for the future. Work Inspiration provides positive outcomes for students and employees involved through active participation and reflection by all parties.

The program has a flexible format which encourages employers to tailor the program to suit their needs, including employers who cannot offer individual work experience placements but would still like to be involved in the career path development of young

people. The project can be negotiated with schools so that it can form an integral part of their ongoing careers curriculum.

The council's pilot program included the council's CEO and Directors giving an overview of the diverse work carried out at Maroondah City Council; the mapping of each student's personality type and discussion of the relevance to their career aspirations; a tour of council sites; a student-based project to produce an advertising campaign promoting council services; and the matching of students with council mentors for in-depth career conversations

The council continues to promote the initiative through presentations, submissions, news stories and conferences in the hope that it will be adopted by local governments and small businesses throughout Australia. The program has since attracted the interest of other councils and has been demonstrated to business and networking groups.

Sponsors

The 2015 National Awards for Local Government are proudly sponsored by:



Australian Government

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Department of Education and Training

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Department of Social Services

