

Award Submissions Now Open

Important Dates

Call for Award Submissions Closes

Midnight on Friday, 27 March 2026

Entrants to be Interviewed by the Judging Panel

Mid April 2026

Awards for Excellence Presentation

Mantra Lorne, Victoria

Tuesday 2 June 2026

Submissions Close at Midnight on Friday, 27 March

Information for the Preparation of Awards Entries

Stormwater Victoria is conducting the *2026 Awards for Excellence* to encourage and celebrate excellence in the innovation, development, completion and management of stormwater projects and the people involved.

The 2026 Stormwater Victoria Awards for Excellence will be presented as part of the Conference Program to be held in conjunction with the 2026 Stormwater Victoria Conference at Mantra Lorne, Victoria on Tuesday, 2 June, 2026.

In addition to our usual project categories, we encourage you and your team to consider nominating one of your colleagues for the category of the Stormwater VIC Excellence Awards - '**Young Stormwater Professional of the Year**' which celebrates the achievements of the future leaders of our industry.

Award Categories

The award categories for the 2026 Awards for Excellence are:

- Excellence in Strategic or Master Planning.
- Excellence in Infrastructure.
- Excellence in Asset Management
- Excellence in Research and Innovation.
- Excellence in Policy or Education.
- Excellence in Integrated Stormwater Design.
- Young Stormwater Professional of the Year

Further information on the Award Category criteria can be found on the following pages.

Awards for Excellence Submission

Entries for the 2026 Stormwater Victoria Awards for Excellence are now invited.

Entries are not constrained by project or organisation size and will be judged on their merits.

Note: A project may be entered into more than one category, however it is important that the criteria specific to each award category are addressed in the application. Separate entry fees (where applicable) are required for each entry submitted.

Closing Date for Entries: **Midnight on Friday, 27 March 2026.**

Why Should You Enter?

There are many benefits of winning a Stormwater Victoria Award for Excellence, including:

- Recognition of the Project's excellence
- Showcasing and promoting the project, people and organisations involved
- Demonstrating to all stakeholders that your organisation is a leader in its field
- Recognising the personal achievements of your staff involved in the project
- Ongoing promotion including media coverage (promotion on LinkedIn, Stormwater Victoria website and email marketing)
- Having the Award proudly on display within your organisation
- Providing an example of excellence that can be advocated and promoted elsewhere
- Entry to the National Stormwater Awards for Excellence

Winners have automatic entry to the Stormwater National Awards for Excellence

Under the Awards for Excellence protocol adopted nationally by Stormwater Australia, only the recipients of the State Awards for Excellence will be eligible for the National Excellence Awards. Therefore, entry of a project into a State Excellence Awards is a minimum prerequisite for entry into the National Awards.

Allowance may be made for recipients of a State Excellence Award to refine their application for national entry based on the judges' comments and feedback on the State level application. For example, it may be recommended that a criteria response is amended to more clearly demonstrate or emphasise aspects of the project. This will allow the State Association to further support excellence in the local stormwater industry.

The National Awards will be held every two years. The next National Awards will be announced by Stormwater Australia in 2026. The preceding two years of State award winners (2025 and 2026) will be eligible for the National Awards in 2026.

Award Categories and Judging Criterion

1. Excellence in Strategic or Master Planning

This Award recognises excellence in strategic or master planning in development of integrated stormwater management.

Examples of projects that would be eligible for consideration in this category include, but are not limited to:

- Site or precinct master/conceptual layout plans
- Regional or catchment strategies/plans, including infrastructure plans
- Integrated Water Management Plans.

Entries in this category will be judged against the criteria listed below. Applications must demonstrate how the project meets each criterion.

Criteria for Excellence in Strategic or Master Planning		Weight
1	The project is expected to result in significant benefits and achievement of project objectives when the recommended approaches, strategies and / or design are implemented.	20%
2	The project demonstrates excellence in the application of best planning practices for stormwater.	20%
3	The project has integrated stormwater management within broader considerations, such as land use planning, integrated water management, sustainability and liveability, to ensure multiple benefits and the best overall outcomes are achieved.	20%
4	The project demonstrates excellence in consideration of economic, environmental and social factors.	20%
5	The project involved meaningful collaboration with stakeholders.	20%

Notes on criteria:

- Criteria 2: Best planning practices refers to the site assessment, planning and design component and should represent the best practical planning approach for achieving water resource management objectives.
- Criteria 5: Stakeholders may include those from other disciplines, the community, other organisations and/or within an organisation.

Award Categories and Judging Criterion

2. Excellence in Infrastructure

This Award recognises excellence in stormwater infrastructure projects that have been delivered and are now operational.

Examples of projects that would be eligible for consideration in this category include, but are not limited to:

- Flood protection/mitigation works
- A stormwater harvesting and/or managed aquifer recharge scheme
- A retrofit or restoration project, such as waterway rehabilitation
- A stormwater management system for a development, which may incorporate treatment measures such as constructed wetlands or bioretention systems
- Any combination of the above to achieve an integrated system.

Entries in this category will be judged against the criteria listed below. Applications must demonstrate how the project meets each criterion.

Criteria for Excellence in Infrastructure		Weight *
1	The project will deliver significant benefits (including stormwater management outcomes that exceed minimum legislative requirements).	20%
2	The project demonstrates excellence in design.	20%
3	The project demonstrates excellence in construction technique.	20%
4	The project demonstrates excellence in consideration of economic, environmental and social factors.	20%
5	The project involved meaningful collaboration with stakeholders.	20%

Notes on criteria:

- Criteria 2: Excellence in design involves application of best planning and management practices. This includes, but is not limited to, design that:
 - Involves innovative or resourceful use of existing practices to respond to and address site constraints
 - Considers and allows for maintenance requirements
 - Integrates stormwater management objectives with broader considerations, such as sustainability or liveability, to maximise benefits and achieve the best solution for the site
 - Meets client expectations
- Criteria 5: Stakeholders may include those from other disciplines, the community, other organisations and/or within an organisation.

Award Categories and Judging Criterion

3. Excellence in Asset Management

This Award recognises excellence in the management of stormwater infrastructure in order to encourage and promote improved asset management planning and practices.

Stormwater Australia considers asset management a vital component of the lifecycle of stormwater infrastructure. Effective asset management prolongs the life cycle of stormwater systems and helps ensure they meet required levels of service. While systems, processes and techniques to manage stormwater assets have advanced, significant improvements are still possible. This is particularly the case with stormwater infrastructure, such as swales, bioretention systems and wetlands, which involve a “green” infrastructure component.

Examples of projects that would be eligible for consideration in this category include, but are not limited to:

- Programs and/ or plans that set out approaches and strategies to manage stormwater assets
- Programs that undertake management of stormwater infrastructure, including maintenance or renewal programs
- Projects that improve the management of data relating to stormwater assets
- Projects that improve the process of handing over stormwater infrastructure from developers to council so that the infrastructure is in a functional state
- Projects that employ innovative methods or approaches to asset management.

Entries in this category will be judged against the criteria listed below. Applications must demonstrate how the project meets each criterion.

Criteria for Excellence in Asset Management		Weight
1	The project will provide significant benefits.	20%
2	The project promotes or employs processes or practices that prolong the life of stormwater systems and ensure they meet or exceed expected levels of reliability, functionality and ease of operation.	20%
3	The project demonstrates excellence in consideration of economic, environmental and social factors.	20%
4	The project integrates with other areas of organisational planning and follows established asset management frameworks to allow broader policy and continuous improvement outcomes to be achieved	20%
5	The project involved meaningful collaboration with stakeholders.	20%

Notes on criteria:

- Criteria 1: Significant benefits may include, but not be limited to:
 - Improved governance and accountability
 - Enhanced service management and customer satisfaction
 - Improved financial efficiency
 - More sustainable decisions (International Infrastructure Management Manual, 2006).
 - Notable environmental outcomes or improvements
- Criteria 2: Explain how the Assets are managed and what elements of this make it reliable, practical, functional and easy to use.
- Criteria 4: Explain how asset management approaches are able to consider future challenges that could be anticipated over asset life.

Award Categories and Judging Criterion

4. Excellence in Research and Innovation

This Award recognises excellence in research and innovation that fills knowledge gaps and/or addresses information or technology needs which lead to improvements in the sustainable use and management of stormwater.

Examples of projects that would be eligible for consideration in this category include, but are not limited to:

- Scientific research and validation
- New technologies (including products and software) used in stormwater management planning, design, construction or maintenance.

Entries in this category will be judged against the criteria listed below. Applications must demonstrate how the project meets each criterion.

Criteria for Excellence in Research and Innovation		Weight*
1	The project clearly identifies knowledge gaps and/or information needs to improve stormwater management practices	20%
2	The project demonstrates its ability to fill knowledge gaps and/or address information or technology needs which lead to improvements in the sustainable use and management of stormwater.	20%
3	The project involved meaningful collaboration with stakeholders.	20%
4	The project demonstrates excellence in consideration of economic, environmental and social factors which may, in part, be defined by financial efficiency or value for money.	20%
5a	Describe how the project relates to the definition of research, and include references to definition cited, benchmarks of excellence against the cited reference and how project relates to these.	20%
5b	Describe how the project relates to the definition of innovation, and include references to definition cited, benchmarks of excellence against the cited reference and how project relates to these.	

Notes on criteria:

- For judging purposes, innovation may be defined as:
 - The process of making improvements by introducing something new
 - Change that creates a new dimension of performance
- Criteria 1: In response to this criterion, the entry may highlight (but not be limited to) the knowledge or information gap that it addresses
- Criteria 2: In response to this criterion, the entry may highlight (but not be limited to) demonstration of how the research or innovation is being applied
- Criteria 3: Stakeholders may include those from other disciplines, the community, and other organisations and/or within an organisation.
- Criteria 5a or 5b, please complete one to demonstrate how the project aligns with definition of Research or Innovation.

Award Categories and Judging Criterion

5. Excellence in Policy or Education

This Award recognises excellence in policy/regulation, and educational programs/activities that facilitate or accelerate the uptake of stormwater management principles and practises that lead to the sustainable use and management of stormwater.

Examples of projects that would be eligible for consideration in this category include, but are not limited to:

- Capacity building projects
- Community focussed education programs
- Policy or regulation that accelerates the uptake of best practice

Entries in this category will be judged against the criteria listed below. Applications must demonstrate how the project meets each criterion.

Criteria for Excellence in Policy or Education		Weight
1	The project clearly identifies knowledge gaps and/or information needs and sets a relevant standard for attainment of improved stormwater management within a target community.	20%
2	The project demonstrates its ability to facilitate or accelerate the uptake of stormwater management principles and practises that lead to the sustainable use and management of stormwater.	20%
3	The project involved meaningful collaboration with stakeholders.	20%
4	The project demonstrates excellence in consideration of economic, environmental and social factors which may, in part, be defined by financial efficiency or value for money.	20%
5a	Describe how the project relates to the definition of policy, and include references to definition cited, benchmarks of excellence against the cited reference and how project relates to these.	20%
5b	Describe how the project relates to the definition of education, and include references to definition cited, benchmarks of excellence against the cited reference and how project relates to these.	

Notes on criteria:

- Criteria 1: In response to this criterion, the entry may highlight (but not be limited to):
 - Demonstration of how the policy or education is being applied
 - How the project is tailored to the target audience (where applicable)
 - The knowledge or information gap that it addresses
- Criteria 3: Stakeholders may include those from other disciplines, the community, other organisations and/or within an organisation.
- Criteria 5a or 5b, please complete one to demonstrate how the project aligns with definition of Policy or Education.

Award Categories and Judging Criterion

6. Excellence in Integrated Stormwater Design

This Award recognises excellence in integration of stormwater into the urban environment. It is intended to promote the use of integrated design principles and to acknowledge design lead stormwater projects. These projects, which may be at any scale, deliver quality outcomes for amenity, recreational, biodiversity and functional elements of stormwater systems. The award recognises projects that have been constructed.

Examples of projects that would be eligible for consideration in this category include, but are not limited to:

- Stormwater treatment/flood mitigation within public spaces.
- Linear waterway corridors that encompass multiple aspects of stormwater management.
- Restoration projects, improving aquatic ecosystems and creating liveable spaces.
- Stormwater integrated into urban design layout incorporating aesthetics and recreation.
- Any combination of the above to achieve an integrated system.

Entries in this category will be judged against the criteria listed below. Applications must demonstrate how the project meets each criterion.

Criteria for Excellence in Integrated Design		Weight
1	The project is expected to result in significant multiple benefits to the community, environment and water quality.	20%
2	The project demonstrates excellence in the delivery of Integrated Design principles by creating adaptable, enduring, flexible and resilient spaces.	20%
3	The project integrates stormwater management to ensure multiple benefits and the best overall outcomes are achieved at the local (project) scale.	20%
4	The project demonstrates how outcomes achieved are able to be integrated within a broader catchment context which includes land use planning, integrated water management, sustainability, and liveability and biodiversity outcomes.	20%
5	The project demonstrates collaboration between multiple disciplines and stakeholders at all stages of the project.	20%

Notes on criteria:

- In responding to this award category, the entry may highlight (but not be limited to):
 - Demonstration of the design process and range of parties involved
 - Community and stakeholder acceptance of the outcomes
 - How the project compliments surrounding land uses and wider area
 - Stormwater management outcomes
 - Demonstration of Integrated Design outcomes

7. Young Stormwater Professional of the Year

This Award confers recognition for outstanding stormwater achievements for a stormwater practitioner with less than 5 years of experience (post-graduate or post-employment in the field). This award must be nominated by a party other than the nominee. Self-nominations will not be accepted. It will acknowledge and reward young stormwater practitioners who have:

1. Technical and professional stormwater management competence
2. Demonstrated leadership skills including leadership of teams
3. Positive/notable outcomes from their stormwater work
4. Creativity/innovation
5. Community service to industry, the profession and/or society

To apply for the award, provide the following:

1. An entry form with the following sections completed¹:
 - a. Conditions of entry
 - b. Category of entry
 - c. Entry contact details
 - d. Project organisation’s name (What company does the applicant work for)
 - e. Description of how the nominee meets the judging criteria (see criteria below and word limit in the entry form)
 - f. Summary (include a 100 word biography here)
 - g. Referee contact details
2. The nominee’s curriculum vitae (maximum 2 pages);

	Criteria for Young Stormwater Professional of the Year	Weighting
1.	Contribution to the well-being of the industry, the profession and/or society	25%
2.	Demonstrated resourcefulness and leadership in the planning and in the solution of design problems	25%
3.	Use of sustainable practices	25%
4.	Innovative design, construction and aesthetic values	25%

¹ The sections of the entry form not covered in the dot points listed should be left blank for this award.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible the nominee must:

- Be supported by a Stormwater Victoria member
- Be a practicing stormwater professional that graduated less than 5 years ago
- Have given permission for the entry to be lodged
- Reside in Victoria.

Note: This category of the awards is not eligible for a National Award (as no similar category exists at the National level). Entry to this category is free of charge.

Judging

Each accepted entry will be assessed within the State that it is entered and by a panel of judges chosen by the committee of the State Association. Entries will be judged against the criteria for each Award category, which are included in this document.

To ensure that the Excellence Awards are relevant to the broadest range of projects across the country, the judging criteria have been designed to allow flexibility in describing project merit and to allow judges to compare projects that demonstrate excellence across the many diverse aspects of stormwater management.

All applicants will be required to attend a 30-minute interview with the Judging Panel for their Award Entry in April 2026. Interviews will be held via zoom and further details regarding the interview day will be advised in due course.

In 2026, Stormwater Victoria will undertake a two stage judging process. All entries in each category will be assessed by the Judging Panel and a short list of finalists will be determined. Finalists will be invited to an interview, which will give all applicants an opportunity to speak directly to the judges about their project and promote its merits. Interviews will be held via zoom and the date and time of the Awards interviews will be provided to finalists in April, 2026. Interviews will be conducted in late April.

Application Requirements

Entries must conform to the submission format, contain all the required information, meet the eligibility requirements and accept the Conditions of Entry.

Completed entry forms must be submitted electronically via the Awards Submission Portal. You can access the portal via the following link: [2026 Awards for Excellence Portal](#)

Entries must be received by **Midnight on Friday, 27 March 2026.**

The entry fee is **free for Stormwater Victoria Financial Members** (paid individual, corporate and sustaining members) **and \$330 per submission for Non-Members.** An invoice and payment link will be forwarded on receipt of application. Entries for the VIC Young Stormwater Professional of the Year are free of charge.

For any questions about the application process contact:

Sarah Robinson
Email: registration@gemsevents.com.au
Phone: +61 2 9744 5252

Submission Format

- All submissions must be submitted through the Awards Submission Portal, to ensure judges have access to the awards submission as soon as the submission has been completed.
- Material presented should only consist of information requested on the entry form and visualisation material relevant to meeting the judging criteria. Repetition of material in different forms may detract from the judged score.
- Material of an advertising nature giving general unsupported views or information should not be included, except as adding to visualisation. All images must be of quality suitable for reproduction.

As per the entry form, the following information must be included in the application:

- Contact details;
- Project title;
- Stormwater Victoria Member or Non-Member Submission
- Category entered;
- Organisation and contact (include the lead applicant and any collaborators);
- Overview/ description of the project including objectives and outcomes (maximum 200 words) which is suitable for use in a media release;
- Description of how the project meets/demonstrates each of the judging criteria for the nominated category (max 500 words per criterion);
- Three high-resolution photos (jpg format) maximum of 1 mb per image.
- Company Logo in jpeg format
- A 30-second video or PPT of images giving an overview of the project. This may be played in the awards session.
- Geographic coverage/ location of project (if applicable)
- Project timeframe, including a statement confirming that the project has been finished within a two-year period prior to the closing date of the entry – **Midnight on Friday, 27 March 2026.**
- Identification of stormwater benefits addressed by the project, including water quality, stormwater reuse, ecosystem health, flooding and drainage control, public health and safety, placemaking/amenity, and adaptation to climate change (maximum 500 words)
- Estimated project cost, including the cost of the stormwater component and total project cost (this is to allow the judges to compare the benefits relative to the costs across projects);
- Summary of why the project is an exemplar of excellence in the nominated category (max 500 words);
- Project Referee contacts (2) if further, independent clarification on information provided is sought by judging panel;

- A short (50-word) project description and preferred media contacts to include in media distribution announcing finalists and winners;
- Statement confirming the information provided is accurate and not misleading in anyway and that all relevant permissions from collaborations and clients have been obtained for the award application;

Eligibility Requirements

The following requirements must be met for a project to be accepted for award judging:

- The project was completed in the State where the nomination is entered, or at least the majority of the project. Alternatively, for the Excellence in Strategic Planning or Conceptual Design category, the project must be coordinated from that State. Projects that are located overseas but were substantially managed, planned and/or designed by practitioners in Australia are also eligible for entry.
- The project should have been completed within a two-year period prior to the Award submission closing date – **Midnight on Friday, 27 March 2026.**

Conditions of Entry

It is a condition of entry that entrants accept the following:

- Information provided by the entrant in relation to the Stormwater Excellence Awards (including photos) may be used by Stormwater Victoria for promotional/publicity purposes.
- At the discretion of the judging panel, the Association reserves the right to assess an entry in a different category than originally applied with the consent of the lead applicant. Note, in this eventuality the applicant will not be afforded the right to refine entry and it is unlikely that differences between category criteria will allow for a favorable consideration. Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the relevant state association to seek guidance on criteria prior to submitting an application.
- Based on the quality and number of submissions, Stormwater Victoria reserves the right to present sub-category awards for specific areas.
- The decision of the judges is final and no correspondence concerning decisions will be entered into.
- Stormwater Victoria reserves the right not to allocate an award for a particular category. For an excellence award to be allocated, a project must demonstrate a minimum standard that is considered by the judging panel to reflect excellence.
- Stormwater Victoria reserves the right to allocate highly commended and merit awards in a category, in addition to an award of excellence.
- A project can be entered into multiple categories if the project meets the criteria for each category. Separate entries will need to be made for each category.

Should you need any assistance with your submission or have any questions regarding the 2026 Stormwater Victoria Awards for Excellence submission format, please contact Sarah Robinson at the Stormwater Victoria Association Secretariat on +61 2 9744 5252 or via registration@gemsevents.com.au