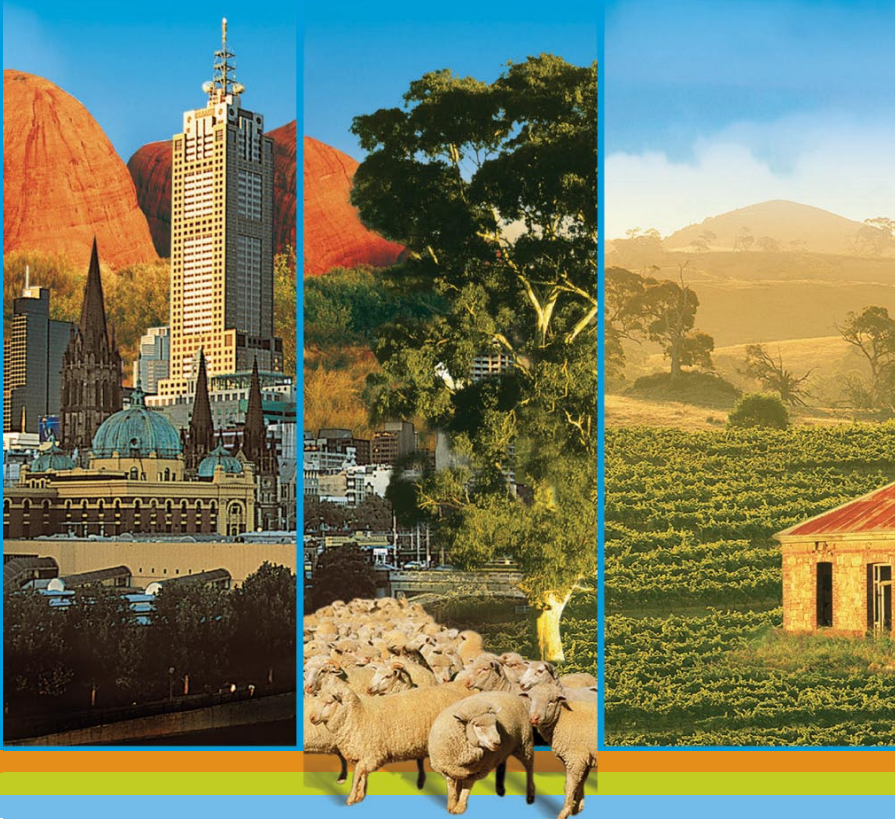




Australian Government



# NATIONAL AWARDS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT



## 2011 Winners

### 2011 National Awards for Local Government

The 2011 National Awards for Local Government have recognised and promoted the innovative work of local governments across Australia. The National Awards are an important component of the Government's partnership with local government, showcasing unique local solutions to common problems.

In 2011, 152 entries were received from councils across the country. From these entries two national winners and 17 category winners have been recognised.

This supplement provides an overview of each of the national and category award winning projects and enables readers to contact project officers to share ideas and experiences.

### Thanks to our sponsors and judges

Sponsorship for the National Awards for Local Government was provided by the Australian Government departments listed below. The National Awards would not be possible without their support. Category sponsors are identified throughout this supplement.

Members of the National Awards judging panels are either experts in their field or have an excellent understanding of local government. Many are drawn from the Australian Local Government Association and from Local Government Managers Australia. We would like to thank the judges for their efforts in assessing the diverse range of National Awards entries received this year.

### 2011 National Award Winners

- National Award for Excellence – Frankston City Council, Victoria
- National Award for Excellence (small council, under 15,000 ratepayers) – Mid-Western Regional Council, New South Wales

### 2011 Category Award Winners

- Asset and Financial Management - Townsville City Council, Queensland
- Asset and Financial Management (small council, under 15 000 ratepayers) - Kangaroo Island Council, South Australia
- Engaging and Strengthening Indigenous Communities - City of Swan, Western Australia
- Engaging and Strengthening Indigenous Communities (small council, under 15 000 ratepayers) - Victoria Daly Shire Council, Northern Territory
- Excellence in Alcohol Management - Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Queensland
- Innovative Infrastructure Development - City of Tea Tree Gully, South Australia
- Innovative Infrastructure Development (small council, under 15 000 ratepayers) - Cabonne Shire Council, New South Wales
- Inspired Cities - Frankston City Council, Victoria
- Leading Community Climate Change Action - City of Cockburn, Western Australia
- Promoting Reconciliation - Manningham City Council, Victoria
- Promoting Reconciliation (small council, under 15 000 ratepayers) - Narrabri Shire Council, New South Wales
- Regional Collaborations - Cairns Regional Council, Queensland
- Regional Collaborations (small council, under 15 000 ratepayers) - Shire of Morawa, Western Australia
- Women in Local Government - City of Ryde, New South Wales
- Women in Local Government (small council, under 15 000 ratepayers) - Mid-Western Regional Council, New South Wales
- Youth Engagement - Moonee Valley City Council, Victoria
- Youth Engagement (small council, under 15 000 ratepayers) - Circular Head Council, Tasmania



Australian Government

Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (Office for Youth)

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

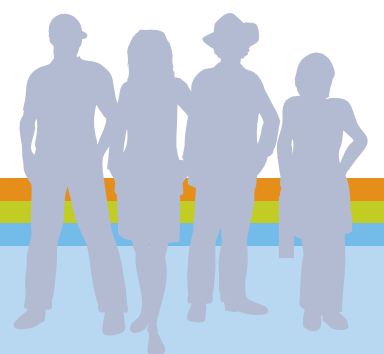
Department of Health and Ageing

Department of Infrastructure and Transport (Major Cities Unit)

Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government

For further information on the National Awards go to:  
[www.regional.gov.au/local/awards](http://www.regional.gov.au/local/awards)  
Email: [awards@regional.gov.au](mailto:awards@regional.gov.au)  
Phone: 1800 065 113

Details of the 2012 National Awards program will be available in late 2011.



# National Winners

## National Award for Excellence

### Frankston City Council, Victoria

#### Frankston Student Discount Card Scheme (Splash Card)

Traditionally, the streets of Frankston are often overlooked by young people as a shopping destination. Many are drawn into the Bayside Shopping Centre or further afield to other regional shopping centres. This means the Frankston shopping strips suffer from high vacancy rates and high turnover of businesses.

Frankston City Council identified the missed opportunity in Frankston's city centre to encourage around 15,000 Chisholm Institute of TAFE students, as well as nearby Monash University students, to shop there. That is why they developed the Splash Card, to give an added incentive for students to explore and shop at businesses on the streets of Frankston.

Splash Card provides secondary and tertiary students with discounts at over 50 street-side businesses in the Frankston city centre.

The Splash Card has directly resulted in increased clientele and awareness at over 70 businesses in Frankston and the increased number of students in the city centre also adds vibrancy, colour and atmosphere to the streets of Frankston.

Students need to register their card online, which gives the council a great database to share relevant information with students.

For example, the council identified the difficulty in retaining a skilled local workforce. So they have used the Splash Card student database to promote a free employment advertising service that links to a database of local businesses. In the short time it has been available, most positions advertised have been filled by Splash Card registrants. As this service gathers momentum, more skilled young residents will be employed locally. This will increase the business community's in-

tellectual capital, entrepreneurship and ability to grow. Splash Card has also revolutionised the way local government can connect with youth using social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

*Frankston City Council took a simple concept and turned it on its head. Starting out as a discount card to encourage students to spend in the local economy, it has grown to utilise social networking media to develop into a tool to advertise local jobs. It is an excellent example of local government using modern technology to engage its young adults and gather information to connect them with local jobs and other services.*

*The Frankston City Council model demonstrated excellent partnership arrangements with local education providers and local businesses and could be easily adapted to other councils. It enables a council to engage with members of their community such as young people or the elderly, and connect them with other segments of the community.*



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## National Award for Excellence (small council, under 15,000 rateable properties)

### Mid-Western Regional Council, NSW

#### Inspire | Encourage | Enlighten

Inspire | Encourage | Enlighten is a set of activities that includes a range of networking events, a formal mentoring program and a training program designed to build self-confidence and assertiveness for women working in the council, as well as communication and organisation skills.

The benefits are extensive, with a higher than average participation of women at the middle and senior management levels, and is easily transferable not only to other councils but the workforce more broadly.

A leadership group of 20 women across all areas of Mid-Western Regional Council were selected to participate in an initial think tank session to brainstorm ideas for a continuous program of growth and development for all women in council. This holistic examination included all levels of the organisation and identified three significant areas for development: mentoring, assertiveness training, and networking.

Working parties were appointed from the leadership group to develop project briefs for further deliberation. Project briefs included purpose, steps for implementation and timeframes, costing, targets and a way of measuring successful implementation.

All three projects were within budget and were supported for inclusion in the program. Team leaders were appointed to coordinate and administer each of the projects.

Since the Inspire | Encourage | Enlighten program's inception, and as a result of a recent restructure, Mid-Western Regional Council can now boast the following statistics for female management:

- Senior management staff – ratio of women to men: 2:2 (50%).
- Middle management staff – ratio of women to men 10:7 (60%).

The program has provided women with an understanding of how assertiveness, attitudes and actions can affect people, to see themselves more clearly, and take steps to boost self-esteem and confidence.

*By becoming an employer of choice, Mid-Western Regional Council has sent a message to the community that it provides opportunity for its female employees to achieve their goals and ambitions.*

*This project is commended for its transferability not only to other councils but the workforce more broadly. It is an excellent example of collaboration and connecting with the local community to improve workforce sustainability and economic development. Above all, it has changed the culture of the organisation to improve self-esteem, confidence and empowerment in its female workforce.*



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# Minister's message



Local government plays a vital role in the life of our nation – not only in the delivery of services, but in building communities, planning for future challenges and strengthening partnerships beyond council boundaries with business, community and all levels of government.

Local government helps to underpin

location-based solutions tailored to the specific needs and strengths of particular regions.

The 2011 National Awards for Local Government highlights the important contribution that local government is making across Australia.

It is important for us as a nation to tap into local input to develop creative solutions to address emerging social, economic and environmental issues. I am pleased that this year's projects are a demonstration of that creativity and innovation.

The winning projects showcased in this booklet demonstrate that the role of local government is entrenched in identifying local solutions and developing a strategic approach to resolving complex issues.

The projects highlight the economic diversity across our nation and show the benefits of localism and partnerships in empowering regions to enhance the liveability and social cohesion of their communities.

I am particularly pleased to see that this year a new category "The Inspired Cities Award" has been added which recognises creative and innovative urban projects that support social, economic and/or environmental outcomes for urban communities and their cities through new and exciting approaches to urban initiatives, planning and design.

This year marks 25 years of recognising the positive impact local councils make in their communities and I congratulate the winning councils. I am pleased to see that there were seven small council winners among the overall 17 category winners.

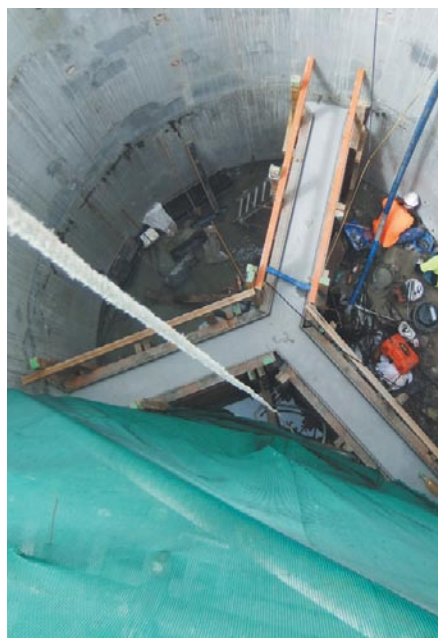
The quality of the entries submitted was as always, very high, making it a difficult task for the independent judging panel to determine the winners and I commend all of the 101 councils who submitted 152 entries.

I would also like to thank the sponsors of this year's Awards whose contribution ensures ongoing recognition of local government excellence and innovation.

**The Hon Simon Crean MP**  
Minister for Regional Australia,  
Regional Development and Local Government

## Category Winners

### ASSET AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT



#### **Townsville City Council, Queensland**

#### **Cairns, Townsville and Mackay Water Alliance - Best Practice Pricing and Financial Sustainability Model**

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The Best Practice Pricing and Financial Sustainability Model was developed by the Cairns, Townsville, Mackay (CTM) Water Alliance to provide local governments in regional Queensland with a high powered financial tool to comply with national Best Practice Pricing Principles and the Queensland Competition Authority's Statement of Regulatory Pricing Principles.

In addition to calculating water and sewerage pricing, the model provides a full suite of financial reports and financial sustainability ratios. Councils using this model can confidently determine regulatory compliant price paths for their water and sewerage activities over a 20-year period and ensure that these prices move their water businesses towards financial sustainability.

The model can provide direct output to Queensland Treasury Corporation's generic financial model used by local governments in Queensland and also the regulatory financial model template for Total Management Plans.

The model is available free of charge to regional councils in Queensland. Training will be provided by the members of the CTM Alliance with ongoing support of the model being provided by Queensland Treasury Corporation.

This project implements sound water pricing principles for water utilities managed by councils. Regional co-operation is the driving force of this project coupled with the imperative for councils to achieve the right nexus between costs, price and demand to manage water sustainably. The regional partnership arrangements can be replicated by other councils that have water utilities. The reforms are being driven by national best practice pricing principles for the sector. The main benefits are that water can be managed on a more sustainable basis and council water utilities can become more financially sustainable.

This project potentially has nation-wide benefits in better managing a scarce resource and other councils, particularly in Queensland, regional New South Wales and Tasmania could benefit from the project.

### ASSET AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT (small council, under 15,000 rateable properties)



#### **Kangaroo Island Council, South Australia**

#### **Kangaroo Island Council - Asset Management Plans**

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Kangaroo Island Council's vision is for a confident, growing and cohesive community, benefiting from a thriving economy based on strong tourism and primary production sectors, while preserving its unique heritage and sustainably managing its natural environment.

Kangaroo Island Council is in a position common to many small rural councils – its revenue is insufficient to keep its assets in a sound condition. The Council's income is

constrained – about a third of the island is national park and is unrateable and it has 185,000 tourists a year using services and infrastructure that are funded by about 5,000 rateable properties. Due to the island's remoteness and its diffuse population, its expenses are higher. The council has a large asset base, including 1,550 kilometres of road, much of it needing renewal.

Given Kangaroo Island's unique circumstances its sustainability will depend on sourcing an additional, sustainable source of revenue to support its asset maintenance requirements.

The council commissioned an external review – *Local government on Kangaroo Island today and tomorrow* – to assess its options and this triggered whole-hearted council reforms. The implementation of Asset Management Plans (AMPs) has given Kangaroo Island Council a competitive

edge when applying for grant funding assistance and holding discussions with state government around strategies to address its sustainability issues.

The council has been collecting more accurate data on the lifecycle of its assets, consulting the community on service level standards and has commenced a training and development program to up-skill its staff and measure their performance. The council now has an asset management plan, a four-year strategic plan and long-term financial plan. The practical outcomes include the introduction of sustainable pricing for its camping sites and sewerage treatment and other improvements for the airport and waste management.

Asset management plans have delivered 'science' to Kangaroo Island's prioritisation and decision making processes at operational and Council level.

# Category Winners

## ENGAGING AND STRENGTHENING INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES



### City of Swan, Western Australia

#### Yagan Memorial Park

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The Yagan Memorial Park was initiated by the Derbarl Yerrigan Committee for the Reburial of Yagan's Kaat (head – Nyoongar language).

The Derbarl Yerrigan Committee for the Reburial of Yagan's Kaat, the Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) of Western Australia and the City of Swan worked in partnership to plan, design and construct the Yagan Memorial Park itself and to program and implement the Burial and Opening Ceremony.

The Elders were called upon and empowered to develop the project brief at the outset, and to guide discussion of issues and endorse all decisions. Nyoongar artists and Indigenous horticultural trainees played a key role in the interpretation of and the hands on construction of the park.

A unique place has been created to commemorate the life, death and spirit of the great Nyoongar leader and warrior, Yagan (c. 1795–11 July 1833) and as a burial site for Yagan's repatriated Kaat.

Yagan's body was buried on the site where he was killed and his Kaat was taken as a trophy to England. Since the early 1980s, a number of Nyoongar groups sought the return of Yagan's Kaat, however, after 164 years it was finally brought back to Australia for burial in accordance with Nyoongar custom. Now that the Kaat is respectfully laid to rest,

Yagan's spirit is set free to continue on its eternal journey.

This project establishes precedence and highlights the great results that can be achieved through partnerships between local government and the Indigenous community. The knowledge gained from this initiative will be utilised in future projects and in turn promote reconciliation.

The City of Swan considers it a great honour and privilege to have been so closely involved with the Derbarl Yerrigan Committee and the Department of Indigenous Affairs on such a significant Indigenous Heritage project. The City congratulates all involved and looks forward to future successful collaborations.

## ENGAGING AND STRENGTHENING INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

(small council, under 15,000 ratepayers)



### Victoria Daly Shire Council, Northern Territory

#### Leadership for Indigenous Women

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The Leadership for Indigenous Women project aims to strengthen Indigenous communities by empowering Indigenous women's participation in decision making issues that affect their lives, contributing to people's quality of life. It demonstrates the ability of Victoria Daly Shire to be innovative and demonstrate best practices when delivering business and services to its remote Indigenous communities. The project has required consultation, planning, forming networks, linking to government initiatives, training and reflection.

The focus of the project has been to build Indigenous women's capacity towards leadership and their ability to influence governance in the remote communities of Victoria Daly Shire through engagement, encouragement, and empowerment in training and skills development. The initial consultative process means all women had the opportunity to be represented in a community group.

The Leadership for Indigenous Women project benefits everyone: women, families, community, regional partnerships and the shire. It means having a more equitable representation of men and women, a broader discussion with Indigenous women being involved in decision making processes. Already, there is a level of representation of Indigenous women at local board levels within the shire with approximately 25 women on the local boards and there are still many not involved

in local government politics but who have the potential to be good leaders. Approximately 50 women were identified in communities to be encouraged to benefit from the program.

The project has extended across organisations and networks, bringing together Indigenous and non-Indigenous women to meet and develop the skills needed to improve community governance and service delivery arrangements that strengthen Indigenous community life and family life. Finally, the Leadership for Indigenous Women project aims to be sustainable: address distance, wet season flooding and movement of people by building communication networks and an understanding of varying Indigenous culture to strengthen communities.

## EXCELLENCE IN ALCOHOL MANAGEMENT



### Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Queensland

#### Collaborative Approach to Liquor Management (CALM)

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Sunshine Coast Regional Council funds and co-ordinates CALM liquor accords on the Sunshine Coast, partnering with the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health, Queensland Transport and the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation in supporting the accords across the region.

The accord is based on 12 principles, which were developed in partnership with local licensees, state government, council, other agencies and local businesses.

The first CALM liquor accord on the Sunshine Coast was established at Mooloolaba in 2007 with 18 members; now due to demand there are seven accords with a total of 120 licensee, business, government and non-government members.

The goal of the CALM Sunshine Coast liquor accord is to enhance community safety and wellbeing across the region through the development of, and commitment to, strategies and initiatives focused on alcohol harm minimisation and community development.

The project aims to target alcohol related violence by assisting licensees, government agencies and the local community develop strategies to reduce incidences. This includes developing projects aimed at addressing

increases in population on the Sunshine Coast by up to 500,000 people four times annually during peak tourist seasons.

CALM is designed to assist government agencies and peak bodies achieve key results in the areas of liquor management and harm reduction and invite licensees, traders and community members to provide initiatives to reduce alcohol related violence, crime and drink driving offences.

The CALM project has contributed towards the reduction of harms and enhanced local amenity through the unprecedented decline in alcohol related violence and complaints received about licensed premises since the commencement of the accords, which has provided a whole of community benefit.

In 2010 Institute of Public Administration Australia Queensland Public Sector Excellence Awards recognised the CALM program as Best Practice in Local Government.

# Category Winners

## INNOVATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT



### City of Tea Tree Gully, South Australia

#### Water Security for Tea Tree Gully

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The City of Tea Tree Gully has demonstrated world leadership in water security by implementing a number of innovative and best practice infrastructure works, technologies and practices within existing developed urban environment.

The key objectives of the project were to reduce water use through efficiencies, technology, replacement/new and upgrading of water infrastructure while at the same time replacing potable water with alternative sources while still maintaining services and community expectations.

The Council developed and implemented an Integrated Water Resource Management Strategy over a period of about six years. The Strategy involved:

- construction of 8 wetlands, 10 aquifer storage and recovery facilities and 33 kilometres of ring mains to collect and recycle water
- development of a sewer mining and treatment facility
- development and construction of a mechanical stormwater treatment facility
- water efficiency measures in all community buildings
- replacement of irrigation infrastructure with subsurface irrigation.

It is the integration of these and other innovative activities and the use of four different sources of water that has allowed Tea Tree

Gully to achieve its water security and halve its total water usage.

This strategy and the way it has been implemented by council is something that is easily applicable and transferable to other councils across Australia and a number of the features implemented have already delivered multiple benefits for the community of Tea Tree Gully.

The water proofing of Tea Tree Gully has not only benefited the residents of Tea Tree Gully by assuring its future water needs, but also has benefited the rest of the State by ensuring that high quality potable water produced by SA Water is available for other high-end users, as well as helping to reduce the reliance on the River Murray.

## INNOVATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

(small council, under 15,000 ratepayers)



### Cabonne Shire Council, New South Wales

#### Waluwin Community Centre

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Cabonne Shire Council's \$3.6 million Waluwin Community Centre is the "jewel in the crown" for the delivery of rural health services. This was the term used by New South Wales Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Dr Andrew McDonald when he officially opened the building in February 2010.

The most exciting initiative undertaken by Cabonne Shire Council, the centre in the small country town of Molong was Australia's first fully integrated primary health and community care facility.

The result of an amazing partnership between all three tiers of government, health service providers, community organisations and local residents, the facility houses general practitioners, community health workers and allied professionals, such as a speech therapist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, and child and family health nurses, as well as pathology services.

It is also the headquarters of the council's Family Day Care and Family Links services and is the venue for community playgroups, mothers' groups, community meetings and training sessions.

Regarded as a model for the delivery of future health services in country areas, the Waluwin Community Centre has been described as "the pinnacle of best practice in Australia".

This new model of care has a focus on preventative care, involving early detection of illnesses, early diagnosis, intervention and treatment. The result of eight years of extensive consultation, planning and construction, the Waluwin Centre was funded by an eclectic collaboration, including the Federal Government's Regional Partnerships program, New South Wales Health, Greater Western Area Health Service and Cabonne Council, as well as community groups as diverse as the Country Women's Association and Anglican Church.

The Waluwin Community Centre, named after an Aboriginal word meaning health and wellbeing, stands today as a permanent example of how federal, state and local government can come together with the local community to develop a concept into one of the most important community facilities ever constructed in Cabonne Shire.

## INSPIRED CITIES



### Frankston City Council, Victoria

#### Frankston Student Discount Card Scheme (Splash Card)

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Frankston City Council's Student Discount Card Scheme – Splash Card is an industry-leading economic development program that delivers local employment, encourages local shopping and engages youth.

The program predominantly operates through online media; website, email, SMS, Facebook and Twitter – connecting with young people through the avenues that they prefer.

The methodology behind Splash Card leads the way forward for council to engage young people and alert them to local employment opportunities in a no-nonsense fashion that reduces bureaucracy that plagues many local government youth programs.

The program has an array of benefits including retention of locally educated talent through local employment; support for local small businesses; and youth engagement.

The program bridges the gap between local employers and local students. Working locally has never been viewed as a viable option for educated professionals – they have always been drawn into working in professional hubs (e.g. Melbourne CBD). Employing more educated people locally translates to increased intellectual capital, entrepreneurship and, thus, ability for the local economy to grow.

So far, in its 15 months of operation, Splash Card has been distributed to over 25,000 students (20,000 of which are tertiary students). Over 2,200 students have registered their card online and this figure continues to grow, providing council with a powerful database that is being linked to local employment.

The Splash Card is an innovative tool to engage students and young adults to participate in the local economy and community. It is an excellent example of a local government trying out a new concept by building it up from a simple discount card to encourage students to spend in the local economy, to engaging with them through social networking media, and then extending it to advertise local jobs. It demonstrates excellent partnership arrangements with the nearby TAFE, university and local businesses.

# Category Winners

## LEADING COMMUNITY CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION



### City of Cockburn, Western Australia

#### City of Cockburn's Sustainability and Climate Change Program

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In 1996, the City of Cockburn committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Since then the city has grown and developed a well rounded Sustainability and Climate Change Program that provides key enablers for the city to minimise its carbon footprint and proactively lead climate change action within the Cockburn community. The program has a number of very successful features:

- a clearly articulated Greenhouse Action Plan and Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan for the city's business units to follow
- a Community Engagement Strategy that features a suite of educational and awareness raising activities
- clear corporate emission reduction target to work towards.

The city's Sustainability and Climate Change Program applies a range of innovative Mitigation and Adaptation strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help minimise the impacts of climate change. The city commits a considerable amount of funds, upwards of \$650,000 per year into this program, with a large proportion of these funds spent on community engagement. Since 2001, the city has been able to abate approximately 330,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

The program is a blend of initiatives including investment in renewable energy

systems, research, new technology, awareness campaigns and council policy. At the heart of this program is the key objective to actively engage the city's stakeholders. The project's range of education programs, informational brochures, interactive displays and websites have engaged and ultimately inspired the community to invest in renewable energy and adopt sustainable living choices.

Similarly the city's investment in research will shortly see the city become one of the first local governments to map wind resources across their geographical area and make this available to corporate business and the community via an online geographical information system.

The city's innovative waste management initiatives such as weekly recycling, gas capture from landfill and its recycle shop have also significantly contributed to the community climate change action.

## PROMOTING RECONCILIATION



### Manningham City Council, Victoria

#### Manningham Reconciliation Week Program and Exhibition

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Manningham City Council's Reconciliation Week Program offers a diverse range of projects that embody the themes of cultural education, understanding, celebration and action. The program has been evolving since 2006 and in this time has established itself as the benchmark for reconciliation programming and best practice for Indigenous engagement and promotion of reconciliation within the community.

The program success has been enabled primarily by the mentorship provided by

the Wurundjeri people, as well as the strong relationships built over these years with the Indigenous community, building capacity within this community to take leadership roles in the planning and delivery of all aspects of the reconciliation week program. This demonstrates a deep and ongoing commitment by Manningham City Council to the reconciliation process and a genuine dedication to sustainable community development within the Indigenous community.

The program breadth, diversity and innovative approach to communicating reconciliation messages through ceremony, the arts, culture, history, environment, literature and recreation reaches wide audiences, with a strong focus upon youth engagement, based upon a belief that building awareness and respect in young people is the key to social change

regarding issues such as Indigenous disadvantage, as well as enabling sustainable reconciliation.

The program is delivered through the mechanism of community partnerships whereby local community organisations including youth services, community health, education sector, police, environmental and heritage groups all have a strong sense of ownership over program delivery. Each partner has formed positive relationships with indigenous facilitators whereby a shared vision for reconciliation has been established for program delivery. As a direct result of their participation in this program, many of these community partners have established key organisational objectives around reconciliation, and have expressed an ongoing commitment to continued learning and participation in the reconciliation process.

## PROMOTING RECONCILIATION

(small council, under 15,000 ratepayers)



### Narrabri Shire Council, New South Wales

#### Aboriginal Flag raising Celebration

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The raising of the Aboriginal Flag is one simple way to recognise the status of the Aboriginal people and their contribution to Australia.

By symbolising this in holding a flag raising ceremony and civic reception for the community at large, it shows that we are beginning to become one united community regardless of ethnic background, and because of this,

we are working towards a successful reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people where differences are understood and therefore eliminated.

Narrabri Shire Council developed a Yarnup Committee in April 2009 by way of an informal invitation extended to Councillors and local Aboriginal Elders and community members to discuss issues of mutual benefit. Numerous issues were raised at the initial meeting including the raising of the Aboriginal Flag.

Subsequently a request from the Narrabri Local Aboriginal Land Council was received in May 2009 by Council to raise for the first time the Aboriginal Flag at the Council Administration Building in conjunction with NAIDOC Week 2009. The year's focus was 'Honouring of Elders, Nurturing our Youth'.

Council made a resolution to agree to fly the Aboriginal Flag for NAIDOC Week and hold a civic reception during that week. The inaugural Aboriginal Flag raising at the Narrabri Shire Council took place on 1 July 2009.

The celebration was embraced by the entire community with a march commencing at the Narrabri Local Aboriginal Land Council Building for all people wishing to be involved. The march proceeded along the main street of Narrabri which was closed to all traffic while the march took place. On arrival at the council building, a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony was conducted by local Indigenous citizens followed by symbolic speeches by local identities and to conclude, the raising of the Aboriginal Flag.

# Category Winners

## REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS



### Cairns Regional Council, Queensland

#### Cairns Regional Council - Tropical Innovation Awards project

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A first for Australia, the Tropical Innovation Awards establish Tropical North Queensland as a centre for tropical expertise, innovation and sustainable development.

The Awards recognise, reward and support innovation and invention across the region to support economic diversification and sustainability. It is an opportunity for local inventors, innovators and businesses to showcase their ideas, projects and processes to potential investors, mentors, government officials and the public.

As a major focus of Tropical North Queensland region's economic development

agenda, the initiative is not only an awards program but also a potentially significant catalyst to new economic development activity.

The awards highlight the importance of innovation in driving key economic benefits for the region and serve to:

- encourage and support innovation, invention and creativity
- promote Tropical North Queensland as a world-leading innovative region
- encourage the participation of existing and new entrepreneurs and visionaries
- provide opportunities for practical inventions to be realised for commercial application
- develop and drive locally grown export opportunities
- connect award winners with government-funded business development programs, mentors and potential investors

- assist applicants to access a range of support mechanisms to protect, develop and commercialise their products, and
- recognise innovation as an employment generating activity.

The multi-stakeholder partnership model, which is a key element in the success of the awards is particularly transferable to other councils.

Initiated by Cairns Regional Council to support and promote diversification through innovation, the Awards have placed Tropical North Queensland's creativity on the leading edge in a fast changing world. By recognising and rewarding local ingenuity and showcasing original ideas that will generate regional employment, the Awards support and promote diversification through innovation and creativity.

## REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS

(small council, under 15,000 ratepayers)



### Shire of Morawa, Western Australia

#### Morawa Education and Training Alliance

**Contact:** Mr Gavin Treasure  
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**E-mail:** ceo@morawa.wa.gov.au

The Shire of Morawa is a small council with only 568 rateable properties.

The Morawa Education and Industry Training Alliance (MEITA) is a productive partnership between the Shire of Morawa; Morawa District High School; the WA College of Agriculture – Morawa; and Durack Institute of Technology whose collaborations have netted gains in education, training, employment and vocational opportunities across the region.

The mission of the alliance is "to revitalise the Morawa community through education". Successful collaboration with the mining industry and education and training institutions has ensured the achievement of this mission.

The strategies put in place have attracted new teachers and health professionals to the region and to the school community providing a greater sense of worth and stability for the community as a whole, where students now have the opportunity to study specialised courses while continuing to live in the region. The project provides students with a broader curriculum which in turn means that they can complete their education in Morawa and farming families can retain their youth in the region. The catchment area for the Morawa District High School has grown 28 per cent which has also contributed to the provision of additional job opportunities.

The project has also established a Business Enterprise Centre designed to encourage new tradespeople and their families to relocate to Morawa. To date four new servicing businesses have set up at the new centre. Discussion has commenced with Karara Mining Ltd to establish a flexible employment structure that allows farmers and miners to 'job share' during times of drought or seasonal downturn.

Given the demonstrated ability to achieve its target and goals, the MEITA has built a platform of success from which to grow and sustain itself into the future.

## WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT



### City of Ryde, New South Wales

#### Ticket to Ryde - Women Leading the Way at City of Ryde

**Contact:** Ms Simone Schwarz  
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The Ryde City Council's project, Ticket to Ryde, demonstrates an innovative, holistic approach to facilitating access to decision making and management opportunities.

Its internally focused Empowerment Working Group is supporting broader cultural change through a review of Human Resources policies, as well as networking and leadership and management development opportunities. This approach enables women to be more involved in decision

making and offers greater leadership within the organisation, as evidenced by the increase in the number of women in management ranks from 25 to 30 per cent in the last year, through direct action such as the leadership and management program.

The holistic approach also recognises that an organisation's culture, particularly as influenced by Human Resource policies and approaches, can significantly impact on the capacity of women to contribute positively to the workforce.

Ticket to Ryde has also resulted in an increase in the percentage of internal applicants from women being successful in new positions, showing that women are now more confident to apply for internal positions and that management opportunities are available for women in City of Ryde.

Every employee at City of Ryde will benefit from the implementation of the review of Human Resources policies to make them more family friendly. These policies will be accessible to men and women in City of Ryde, making a more flexible workplace that has more satisfied workers.

The Status of Women's Advisory Committee has led to women participating in Council's decision making and in new initiatives of benefit to the women in the City of Ryde. These include making City of Ryde a White Ribbon Community and activities such as the International Women's Day Art Exhibition.

The project will benefit the whole of City of Ryde as it seeks to reflect the gender balance of the community in its management ranks, therefore providing a more balanced Council structure and ability to serve its community.

# Category Winners

## WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

(small council, under 15,000 ratepayers)



### Mid-Western Regional Council, New South Wales

#### Inspire | Encourage | Enlighten

**Contact:** Mr Brad Cam  
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**E-mail:** brad.cam@midwestern.nsw.gov.au

Mid-Western Regional Council is committed to pursuing continuous improvement and a culture of excellence. Inspire | Encourage | Enlighten is Mid-Western Regional Council's program for personal growth and development for the women of council. It takes a multi-dimensional approach to addressing the diverse needs of women and the different stages and priorities of their careers and lives. The program is an ongoing and innovative approach

which provides professional development opportunities for female staff members. Inspire | Encourage | Enlighten enhances morale and increases women's contribution and connection to council by providing:

- assertiveness training to improve confidence and self esteem to approach their roles in the organisation with a positive attitude and to take responsibility and initiative for their career progression
- mentoring relationships to foster professional relationships, guidance, and support career development opportunities
- networking events to enhance communication skills, strengthen relationships, and make essential contacts.

The program has an allocated budget and is endorsed and supported by council's General Manager and senior management.

The program supports women in the workforce by:

- improving skills for female employees which in turn improves staffing practice and service delivery
- encouraging knowledge and experience sharing methods and tools for effective information exchange
- incorporating confidence building and leadership practices essential to sustainable cultural improvements and organisational excellence.

Mid-Western Regional Council wants to ensure that all its female employees are able to achieve their goals and ambitions, be proactive and actively participate in decision making at all levels within the organisation.

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



### Moonee Valley City Council, Victoria

#### The Sustainable Employment and Economic Development (SEED) Youth Project

**Contact:** Mr Stuart Gillespie  
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**E-mail:** sgillespie@mvcc.vic.gov.au

The Sustainable Employment & Economic Development Program (the SEED Project) is a transformational program based originally at the Flemington Public Housing Estate that has achieved significant gains for young African people living around the housing estate.

The SEED project started with a simple aim: to provide young people with real on-the-job skills development and the

real life outcomes that come with having a job. For example, being able to support yourself and therefore participate and contribute to the community. SEED has gone beyond that starting point and provided a meaningful model to develop partnerships between business, local government and the community to achieve a lasting network of industry representatives and community members interested in supporting youth pathways.

By connecting with local businesses and community groups, the project has delivered sustainable employment outcomes, and built resilience and confidence in the targeted young people.

A critical component of its success has been the development of a strong mentor support model for youth to sustain future employment placements with employers

and to build the leadership potential of the young people through the cooperation with Flemington Neighbourhood Renewal Project.

By placing young people at the centre of government process, the project has demonstrated a holistic, innovative and coordinated model for community and youth engagement. The development of SEED has also had broader impacts on the young African Australian community at Moonee Ponds.

The project is now set for its next exciting stage by expanding to a regional project with the help and support of Regional Development Australia and a collective group of regional councils.

As a result of the SEED leadership mentoring program, SEED participants played a significant role in organising the national Australia Somali Football Association Championship, 2009.

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

(small council, under 15,000 ratepayers)



### Circular Head Council, Tasmania

#### Seven Up Youth Centre

**Contact:** Ms Yvonne Stone  
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Circular Head Council is taking a proactive role in including and inspiring its young people, encouraging them to actively participate in the community.

With this goal in mind, Circular Head Council, staged 'y engage', an entertaining and interactive youth forum as part of National Youth Week 2009. This forum focused on teasing out some actions and strategies that could be put in place to ensure young people feel included and engaged in community life.

In response to a need for a place for young people to go, a 'youth space', Youth and Community Officers from Circular Head Council and Rural Health Tasmania worked alongside the community's young people to ensure that their dream was realised. Consequently the Seven Up Youth Centre was established.

The project took two years to fully develop, from its initial inception through to the trialling of two possible venues and formats, which provided many learning experiences and enabled the young people to further develop the model.

Throughout the establishment process, young people were continually consulted. Students felt that the name Seven Up reflected the age group at which the centre is aimed, namely grades seven and up, and designed an appropriate logo.

Secondary school leadership teams and Circular Head Council's youth advisory council, the Circular Head Youth Leaders (CHYL) continued to conduct peer surveys, to ensure that the project remained relevant to student needs. Information was disseminated by the young people through social networking sites and other media.

The project culminated with a successful funding submission to the Department of Premier and Cabinet through its Community Capacity Building Grants program on behalf of all the partners, including Circular Head Council. This funding will ensure that the Centre is able to re-open in 2011 and continue to deliver quality programs to service the youth of Circular Head.