

Vice Chancellor's Awards for Excellence 2025 Guidelines

1. Purpose of the Awards

The purpose of the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence is to recognise and reward exceptional performance that supports the [Federation University Australia Strategic Plan 2021–2025](#)

2. Eligibility

The eligibility for the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence are as follows:

- Individuals or teams may nominate;
- academic, TAFE teaching and general/professional staff employed either on a continuing or fixed-term contract;
- fixed-term staff are required to have been in their current position for a minimum of six months, which extends for at least one year after the closing date to be eligible to be nominated for an award;
- a recipient of an award in a particular category is not eligible for nomination in the same category the following year;
- a staff member may only be nominated in one category per year: and
- a staff member cannot be a nominator and a nominee.
- self-nomination is not permitted, meaning you must have two people endorse your nomination.

Note: An individual who does not meet the minimum six months on a continuing or fixed-term appointment extending at least one year following the closing date for the Awards, but has significantly contributed to the team's performance, may be included. However, this member's contribution will be formally recognised with an award certificate only.

3. Awards

There are 11 categories and 13 awards.

The Vice-Chancellor will determine the monetary amount for each award category at the start of the financial year. The amount will be \$2,000 per category unless the Vice-Chancellor determines otherwise.

The recipients can use the funds for work-related business purposes, which can include professional development. Where a team receives an award, they can determine how the funds will be distributed and expended.

Funds for work-related business purposes will be transferred to a nominated cost centre where it can be used for approved work-related business purposes.

Recipients of awards are required to complete and submit the Application for Award Funds form to access award funds within 30 days of receiving the award. Where a team receives an award, the team member nominated as the team leader (or the more senior team member) can complete the form on behalf of the team.

Commendations do not receive a monetary amount.

Each recipient will receive an award certificate from the Vice-Chancellor.

4. Categories and selection criteria

The purpose and selection criteria of each category are as follows:

4.1. Living our Values Award

This award recognises those who have gone above and beyond to exemplify our [Living Values](#) of Inclusion, Innovation, Excellence, Empowerment and Collaboration.

Nominees should have achieved exemplary application and behaviours in at least three of the values:

- Examples of alignment with the behaviours underpinning our living values; and
- Evidence of impact on the delivery of our strategic objectives (transform lives, enhance communities and strong and sustainable university).

4.2 Inclusion Award

This award recognises those who have contributed through leadership, programs, activities or initiatives that support equity and foster diversity and inclusion within Federation University and/or the wider community.

Nominees must have achieved excellence in three of the selection criteria:

- outline the leadership program, activities or initiatives that improve opportunities, experiences and outcomes for diversity and inclusion overall, or for one or more of the University's diversity and inclusion priority areas:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples;
 - people of culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
 - gender identity or sexuality;
 - people with a disability including ongoing medical or mental health conditions;
 - gender equity in the workplace (particularly women in STEM and women in leadership); and
 - people working with students from low socio-economic backgrounds.
- contribute to supporting employment, retention and/or career development opportunities for the University's diversity and inclusion priority areas (above);
- actively and effectively promoting and increasing involvement of diversity and inclusion priority area students or staff in governance and decision making of the University; and/or
- provide evidence of the impacts or changes achieved.

4.3 Leadership and Transformation Change Award

This award recognises and rewards transformational leadership that shows our values in action, inspires our students and partners and empowers our staff.

Nominees must demonstrate excellence in all selection criteria:

- provide evidence of the impact of the transformational change initiative towards achievement of University priorities;
- demonstrate excellence in leading transformation change in a consultative and meaningful manner;
- commitment to building capability; and
- commitment to Federation University Australia's strategic objectives and Living Values Charter

4.4 Excellence in Innovation Award

This award recognises those that demonstrate innovation and entrepreneurialism to deliver the university's strategy, e.g., in delivering new growth opportunities or innovative offerings, working creatively and/or improving efficiency or through successful project implementation.

Nominees must demonstrated excellence in all these selection criteria:

- clear description of the innovative new offering, practice and/or project;
- demonstrate with evidence the benefits of the innovative practice or project in delivering the university's strategy; and
- demonstrate with evidence the impacts or changes that were achieved through the implementation of the innovation.

4.5 Excellence in Community Engagement and Impact Award

With a proud history of engaging with its multiple communities and enriching the student experience, the University remains committed to playing an active role in advancing and championing environmental, social and economic development in its communities. This award recognises staff who clearly demonstrate impact in community engagement.

Nominees must demonstrate excellence in three of the selection criteria:

- commitment to Federation University Australia's strategic objectives and priorities;
- service or contribution over a sustained period beyond the normal expectations of the staff member's role that has had a significant community benefit;
- impact and evidence of mutually beneficial outcomes for both the community partner and the University;
- enhancing the reputation of the University as one actively engaged with the region/s and the communities it serves; and/or
- evidence of how the nominee reflects the values of the University in their interactions with the community.

4.6 Excellence in Industry Engagement and Impact Award (Higher Education and VET)

This category includes two awards: (1) Excellence in Industry Engagement and Impact in Higher Education and (2) Excellence in Industry Engagement and Impact in Vocational Education and Training.

This award recognises the diverse contributions that individuals or teams make to facilitate engagement with industry that makes a real-world impact.

Nominees must demonstrate excellence in all criteria:

- provide an example of excellence in engagement with industry that:
 - delivered a demonstrated positive impact (including project outcomes, gains and quantifiable benefits); and
 - showcased a collaborative approach by all parties involved.
- delivered an innovation in concept, objective approach, design, delivery or content that had one or more of the following: value for investment, sustainability and/or scalability; and
- evidence of how the nominee reflects the values of the University.

4.7. Research Excellence Award and Research Excellence (Early Career Researcher) Award

This category includes two awards: Research Excellence and Research Excellence (Early Career Researcher).

This award recognises staff members who have demonstrated exceptional and sustained research contributions in advancing knowledge and research outcomes.

Nominees must demonstrate excellence in all the criteria:

- research excellence through consistent and exceptional research performance; and
- impact of research.

4.8. Excellence in Research Partnerships and Impact Award

This award recognises the importance that research academics play in developing, enhancing and managing research partnerships and contributing to research outcomes for industry, government and community.

Nominees must demonstrate excellence in two of the selection criteria:

- evidence relating to the initiation, development, management or enhancement of research partnerships, commercial research engagement and/or commercialisation;
- benefits and impact that the partnership and the project bring to the University as a whole (i.e., research funding, shared expertise, access to government funding, publications or enhanced reputation);
- impact and value of industry-engaged research; and/or
- evidence of how the nominee reflects the values of the University.

4.9 Vocational Teaching Excellence Award

This award celebrates the diverse and outstanding contribution to vocational learning and the quality of the student experience.

Nominees must demonstrate excellence in all the selection criteria.

- delivered the University's values of excellence and innovation in teaching practice;
- excellence in enhancing the student experience and success;
- professionalism and commitment to teaching and learning in the training and TAFE system; and
- the provision of links with industry and/or community.

4.10 Enhancing the Student Experience Award

This award recognises the outstanding contribution made to enhance the quality of the student experience beyond the formal teaching environment.

Nominees must demonstrate excellence in all the criteria:

- development and implementation of an innovative initiative, activity, service or project which enhanced the quality of the student experience beyond the formal teaching environment;
- evidence of how the student experience was enhanced. This could include:
 - positive student feedback leading to improved student outcomes;
 - media engagement;
 - wide-scale benefits for students and/or; and
 - high-impact benefit for a targeted cohort.

4.11. Excellence in Delivering the Co-Op Model Award

This award recognises those who demonstrate excellence in cross-university and industry collaboration to deliver our Co-Op model. For example, working together to adapt, evolve and address complex challenges, building strong cross-functional relationships or communities of practice across the organisation to enable the transformation to Co-Op.

Nominees must demonstrate excellence in all these selection criteria.

- leadership in building strong, productive and mutually beneficial relationships to deliver the Co-Op model; and
- evidence of the impacts on the transformation to Co-Op.

5. Nominations

The Vice-Chancellor will call for nominations each year.

Leaders across the university should encourage nominations to ensure that at least one nomination per area.

Staff members who are employed on continuing or fixed-term appointments may nominate other staff members. Self-nomination is not permitted.

Nominations must:

- Be completed using the prescribed form, completing all relevant fields and staying within word limits in the portal [Application Microsoft Form - 2025 Vice-Chancellor's Awards](#); extra documentation will not be accepted.
- Complete the nominator form with two signatures; one from your nominator, ideally your line manager or Director, and one from your Vice-Chancellor's senior team member;
- Include a photo of self or team being nominated which is suitable to be used in university communications materials; and
- Indicate your availability to attend the certificate presentation ceremony.

6. Selection

6.1. Selection panel

The Vice-Chancellor will appoint selection panels as appropriate to assess applications.

6.2. Evaluation of nominees and selection of recipients

The selection panel will evaluate all nominees per category against the selection criteria based on the completed nomination form. It is the selection panel's prerogative to seek further information to clarify nominations. However, the panel may also decide to solely base the evaluation and decision on the information provided. In addition to the selection criteria per category, the panel will also evaluate and assess nominations against the breadth of support, i.e., the extent of the recognition and support for the nomination.

The selection panel will provide the Vice-Chancellor with its recommendations within 10 working days after it has concluded its evaluation.

7. Notification of selection panel outcomes

Within 10 working days from receiving the Vice-Chancellor's endorsement on the recommendations for recipients of the awards, the award recipients and unsuccessful nominees will be informed of the outcome in writing. Award recipients will also be announced across University communication channels and be presented with their award by the Vice-Chancellor.

8. Timetable

The following annual timetable for the awards is applicable:

Task	Responsible	Date
Nominations for awards open	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Wed 27 August

Submit awards application	All staff	Wed 27 August to Mon 29 September
Nominations close	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Mon 29 September
Selection panel convenes	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Mon 13 – Wed 15 October
Recommendations to VC	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Fri 24 October
Recipients contacted	Vice-Chancellor's Office	Mon 27 – Fri 31 October
Awards announced	Vice-Chancellor Communications	Thurs 20 November
Certificates presented	Vice-Chancellor Communications	11 December Mt Helen 2 December Gippsland 2 December Berwick

9. Review of award and award categories

Federation University Australia will review the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence guidelines and award categories as and when necessary to ensure alignment with the desired culture and strategic objectives of the University.

10. Contact

Email vcawards@federation.edu.au

Updated: 11 August 2025