

# Ag Innovation Award - 2027

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Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

## **Overview**

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Ag Innovation Award celebrates innovative solutions developed by Stage 6 Design and Technology students that contribute to the future of agriculture, food production, rural industries and regional communities.

With a prize pool of over \$20,000, the Award recognises students who apply design thinking, creativity, research and problem-solving skills to address real-world challenges and opportunities within the agricultural sector. The Award provides schools and students with an opportunity to showcase their work to industry while highlighting the important role innovation plays in shaping the future of Australian agriculture.

The Award also supports schools to further invest in student learning, innovation, technology, agricultural education and future-focused programs through substantial cash prizes awarded directly to schools.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The Ag Innovation Award aims to:

- Encourage innovation, creativity and problem-solving that supports agriculture, food production, rural industries and regional communities.
- Strengthen connections between education and industry.
- Showcase the contribution young people can make to the future of Australian agriculture.
- Promote practical, scalable and sustainable solutions to agricultural challenges.

## **OUTCOME**

Selected finalists will be invited to showcase their Major Design Project through the Ag Innovation Award.

The overall winner and placegetters will receive cash prizes and recognition from the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW.

Further details regarding prize categories and amounts will be announced prior to the closing date.

## **IMPORTANCE**

Australian agriculture is a world leader in innovation, productivity and sustainability. As the industry responds to changing technologies, environmental challenges and evolving consumer expectations, new ideas and fresh thinking will be critical.

The Ag Innovation Award encourages students to develop innovative solutions that can improve agricultural productivity, sustainability, efficiency, safety and community outcomes while fostering the next generation of agricultural innovators.

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## IMPACT

The Ag Innovation Award seeks to:

1. Inspire young people to pursue careers and opportunities in agriculture and related industries.
2. Showcase innovative ideas that address current and future agricultural challenges.
3. Strengthen links between schools, industry and regional communities.
4. Promote creative thinking and entrepreneurial approaches within agricultural industries.
5. Celebrate student innovation that contributes to a productive, sustainable and resilient agricultural sector.

## ELIGIBILITY

The Ag Innovation Award is open to all secondary schools in New South Wales with students enrolled in the Stage 6 Design and Technology and Industrial Technology course. Schools may submit one or more student Major Design Projects that demonstrate innovation relevant to agriculture, food production, rural industries or regional communities. Entries must be submitted by the school on behalf of the student(s), with the support and approval of the principal or delegated staff member.

There is no limit to the number of entries a school may submit; however, each project must be submitted as a separate application.

Prize money will be awarded to the winning school(s) and is intended to support the ongoing development of agricultural education, innovation programs, Design and Technology projects, Industrial Technology, STEM initiatives, or other related learning opportunities within the school community.

By entering the Award, schools agree that submitted projects may be promoted by the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW for educational and promotional purposes, with appropriate acknowledgement of the student(s) and school.

Projects must demonstrate a clear connection to one or more of the following:

- Agriculture
- Food production
- Agricultural engineering
- Sustainability and environmental management
- Animal production and welfare
- Water management
- Agribusiness
- Rural and regional communities
- Agricultural supply chains
- Farm safety and efficiency

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| Success Criteria                             | Limited                                                                                                                                         | Developing                                                                                           | Strong                                                                                                                                 | Outstanding                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Innovation and Creativity</b>             | The project demonstrates limited originality or innovation.                                                                                     | The project demonstrates some creative thinking and attempts to address an identified challenge.     | The project demonstrates innovative thinking and presents a well-developed solution to a genuine challenge or opportunity.             | The project demonstrates exceptional originality, creativity and innovative thinking with strong potential to influence future practice.                           |
| <b>Agricultural Relevance and Impact</b>     | The connection to agriculture, food production, rural industries or regional communities is unclear.                                            | The project demonstrates some relevance to agriculture or related industries.                        | The project clearly addresses a meaningful challenge, opportunity or need within agriculture, food production or rural communities.    | The project has significant potential to deliver measurable benefits to agriculture, food production, rural industries or regional communities.                    |
| <b>Practical Application and Feasibility</b> | The project has significant potential to deliver measurable benefits to agriculture, food production, rural industries or regional communities. | The project demonstrates some practical application but may require significant further development. | The project demonstrates a realistic and achievable solution with clear practical applications.                                        | The project demonstrates exceptional practicality and strong potential for adoption, commercialisation or broader industry use.                                    |
| <b>Sustainability and Future Thinking</b>    | Limited consideration has been given to environmental, social or economic sustainability, or future impacts.                                    | The project demonstrates some consideration of sustainability or future industry needs.              | The project incorporates sustainable design principles and demonstrates awareness of future agricultural challenges and opportunities. | The project demonstrates outstanding long-term thinking, delivering innovative, sustainable solutions with lasting environmental, economic and/or social benefits. |
| <b>Design Process and Problem Solving</b>    | The design process is incomplete or lacks evidence of research, testing and problem solving.                                                    | The project demonstrates an organised design process with some research, testing and refinement.     | The project demonstrates a thorough design process supported by research, testing, evaluation and effective                            | The project demonstrates an exemplary design process with sophisticated research, critical                                                                         |

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                       |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                              | problem solving.                                                                                                                                         | evaluation, iterative development and evidence-based decision making throughout.                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Communication and Presentation</b> | The project is difficult to interpret or lacks clear communication of the design solution and supporting evidence. | The project communicates the design solution adequately with some supporting documentation and presentation. | The project is professionally presented, clearly communicates the design solution and effectively supports key decisions with appropriate documentation. | The project is presented to an exceptional professional standard, communicating ideas with clarity, confidence and high-quality visual and technical documentation suitable for industry audiences. |

## Ag Innovation Award

### Special Regulations

#### 1. Eligibility

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) is the organiser of the Ag Innovation Award (the Award).

The Award is open to all NESA-registered secondary schools in New South Wales with students enrolled in the Stage 6 Design and Technology and Industrial Technology courses.

Schools may submit one or more Major Design Projects that demonstrate innovation relevant to agriculture, food production, agribusiness, environmental sustainability, rural industries, or regional communities.

Entries must be submitted by the school and endorsed by the Principal or an authorised representative. There is no limit to the number of entries a school may submit; however, each project must be submitted as a separate application and address the Award's Success Criteria.

#### 2. Award Prizes

The Ag Innovation Award offers a total prize pool of \$20,000 to support innovation and educational excellence in New South Wales schools.

Prize money will be awarded directly to the winning schools and is intended to support the ongoing development of agricultural education, Design and Technology, STEM, sustainability, innovation programs, resources, equipment and student learning opportunities.

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The following prizes will be awarded:

| Award            | Prize    |
|------------------|----------|
| Winner           | \$15,000 |
| Runner-Up        | \$3,000  |
| Highly Commended | \$2,000  |

The judges reserve the right not to award a prize if entries do not meet the required standard and may award additional commendations at their discretion.

### 3. General Regulations

All RAS competitions are conducted in accordance with the General Regulations of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW, available at [www.rasnsw.com.au](http://www.rasnsw.com.au).

These Special Regulations apply specifically to the Ag Innovation Award. By submitting an entry, schools, students and their representatives agree to be bound by both the General Regulations and these Special Regulations.

### 4. Award Period

Entries will open and close on the dates published annually by the RAS. Applications received outside the published entry period may not be considered.

Entries must be submitted electronically to: [education@rasnsw.com.au](mailto:education@rasnsw.com.au) The RAS reserves the right to amend the entry period or Award timeline where necessary.

### 5. Winner Notification

Finalists and winning schools will be notified via the email address provided in their submission. The date of announcement will be published annually by the RAS.

### 6. Intellectual Property and Promotion

By entering the Award, schools grant the RAS a non-exclusive licence to use submitted project information, photographs, videos and supporting materials for judging, educational, promotional and reporting purposes. The RAS will acknowledge the student(s) and school wherever practical when showcasing projects. Ownership of all intellectual property remains with the student(s) and/or school.

### Privacy

Information collected from entrants is managed in accordance with the RAS Privacy Policy, available at:

[www.rasnsw.com.au/privacypolicy](http://www.rasnsw.com.au/privacypolicy)

Information will only be used for the administration, promotion and evaluation of the Award and related educational initiatives.