

2026 NSCA Foundation
HSI DONESAFE

National Safety Awards of Excellence

NOMINATION GUIDE



33RD ANNUAL
NATIONAL SAFETY
AWARDS OF
EXCELLENCE

Welcome Message

Welcome to the prestigious 33rd National Safety Awards of Excellence, Australia's premier recognition program for outstanding workplace health and safety achievements. For over three decades, these awards have highlighted innovative programs and initiatives that prioritise the wellbeing of individuals in the workplace.

Behind every nomination over the past 33 years are dedicated individuals and teams striving to make their workplaces safer and healthier. While they may not seek recognition, their contributions are invaluable in fostering positive workplace cultures and enhancing overall safety performance.

I am delighted to announce that nominations for the 33rd National Safety Awards of Excellence are now open. If your organisation has made a significant impact on health, safety, and wellbeing, I encourage you to share your story. No matter the scale of your initiative, if it has driven meaningful improvement, we want to hear about it. With eleven award categories available, this is your opportunity to gain national recognition for your efforts.

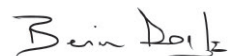
The journey will culminate on **Thursday 5th November 2026** at the **National Safety Awards of Excellence Gala Dinner**, held at the Shangri-La Sydney. Whether you are a sole trader, an SME, a multinational corporation, or a public sector organisation, I urge you to take part. This is more than an awards program—it's an opportunity to benchmark your safety

initiatives and elevate your organisation's profile.

To those considering a nomination, I extend my best wishes. I also want to express my sincere gratitude to **HSI DoneSafe**, our major sponsor, and our valued category sponsors. Your support is instrumental in making these awards a success.

Let's come together to celebrate excellence in workplace health and safety and honour those making a tangible difference across Australia.

Bernie Doyle
CEO, Chairman & President
NSCA Foundation



KEY DATES

Entries open	10 April 2026
Entries close	Extended to 31 July 2026
Judging period	July - August 2026
Live Finalist Announcement.....	31 August 2026
Awards Gala Dinner.....	5 November 2026

NONINATION CATEGORIES

Category 1.....	Best Continuous Improvement of a WHS Management System
Category 2.....	Best Solution of a WHS Risk
Category 3.....	Best WHS Training Program
Category 4.....	Best Safety Communication Campaign
Category 5.....	Best Individual WHS Achievement
Category 6.....	Best Safety Leadership Program/Initiative
Category 7.....	Best Health and Wellbeing Program
Category 8.....	Best Return and Recovery at Work System
Category 9.....	Best Solution for Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work
Category 10.....	Best WHS Product or Service Innovation
Category 11.....	Best Safety Team
Pinnacle Award	Award for Excellence in WHS

WHY ENTER?

The NSCA Foundation's National Safety Awards of Excellence is Australia's longest running independent awards, recognising outstanding Work Health and Safety initiatives. For the 33rd year, these awards continue to celebrate organisations and people that actively promote workplace health and safety as a cornerstone of elite business performance.

Entering the National Safety Awards of Excellence provides an opportunity to showcase and celebrate how your organisation and individuals are leading the charge in providing best practice in health and safety.

Each submission will be independently judged through a formal judging process by a panel of expert assessors. Organisations that have achieved

excellence in their field of work by the introduction, development or improvement of health and safety programs, initiatives and/or standards are recognised for their achievements. Finalists are formally recognised with winners announced at the National Safety Awards of Excellence Gala Dinner on Thursday 5 November 2026 at the Shangri-La Sydney.

In summary, the National Safety Awards of Excellence are a celebration of Best Practice, Best People and Best Performance.

Here are just a few reasons to get involved...

Best Practice

- » Raise the profile of your organisation and people in a national forum
- » Share specialist knowledge and network with industry leaders
- » Great opportunity to review and re-assess your health and safety objectives, and benchmark against industry leaders
- » Achieve broad reaching recognition

Best People

- » Enhance your recognition as an Employer of Choice
- » Leverage your award-winning credibility to attract, retain and motivate employees

- » Create a loyal and passionate workforce
- » Encourage innovation and improvement amongst your employees

Best Performance

- » Utilise your award-winning status to enhance business development
- » Enjoy the support of the NSCA Foundation in marketing your organisation
- » Benefit from your focus on safety to increase productivity and generate sustainable competitive advantage
- » Develop your reputation as a leader and diligent corporate citizen

We encourage individuals and organisations, regardless of industry or organisational size, to get involved and to benefit from that involvement. We want to share your story of success with Australia.

[Enter today!](#)

WHO CAN ENTER?

Award nominations are open to any Australian or New Zealand operated business, organisation, alliance or individual in the public or private sector with a workplace health and safety initiative that complies with one of the nine categories.

We encourage all organisations, regardless of sizes, to apply to the awards as entries are judged on the innovation and excellence of the health and safety initiative and award criteria. The only exception to this is Category 2 where sub-categories have been set up based on organisation size. Please ensure you select the relevant sub-category.

Previous year's nominees are eligible to enter the same category again with the same initiative if they have not previously won or been highly commended. NSCA Foundation encourages that these submissions only resubmit if they are accompanied by new material attesting to the significance of the project or program or further developments with the project or program that are significant.

Any third-party suppliers/contractors utilised in the development of the organisation's initiative must be recognised.

NSCA FOUNDATION AWARDS TEAM

Telephone: 02 8875 7820

Email: awards@nscafoundation.org.au

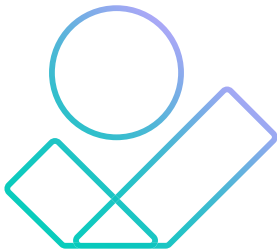
Website: www.nationalsafetyawards.com.au

www.nscafoundation.org.au

HOW TO ENTER

Entering the National Safety Awards of Excellence is simple and free of charge:

1. Visit www.nationalsafetyawards.com.au, click on the "Submit your Nomination" button and follow the instructions to create an online account.
2. Complete your entry and submit it via your online account prior to **9AM AEST on 31 July 2026**.
3. Additional electronic attachments supporting your answers can be submitted via your online account.
4. Ensure that all electronic attachments are clearly labelled and referred to by that name within the submission.
5. You may upload as many attachments as relevant for the submission, however, no individual attachment can exceed 10MB.
6. Each question response is limited to 500 words per question. You may add additional information in the supporting attachments.
7. Ensure your application has been proof-read and doesn't leave any answers open to interpretation. The judging panel will not 'read between the lines' and you will be judged with what has been provided.
8. All submissions must comply with the conditions of entry. Please refer to the National Safety Awards of Excellence website for the full conditions of entry.



CATEGORY 1

BEST CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF A WHS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

This category requires you to describe an improvement you have made to your WHS/ OHS management system and the effect it has had on your staff and business. Finalists of this category must demonstrate that the improvement is part of an ongoing process.

Examples of improvements could include new ways of integrating with other organisational systems and incorporating change management, managing new and emerging risks, and upgrading compliance systems.

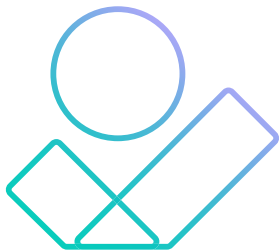
For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. Why did you need to improve your WHS/OHS Management System?
2. How did you improve your WHS/ OHS Management System?
3. What barriers were encountered during the process and how did you address them?
4. What was the timeframe involved?
5. What was the effect of the improvement?

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CATEGORY 2

BEST SOLUTION OF A WHS RISK

- A. Small to Medium business: 1–199 employees
- B. Large business: 200+ employees

This category requires you to describe an innovative solution to an identified WHS/OHS risk or issue. It can be a newly identified risk or issue (due to a change in work activities, etc.) or it can be a risk or issue previously identified with a new solution that has been implemented.

Finalists in this category must demonstrate that their solution is innovative, proven to work in an organisation (showing evidence, e. g. testimonials, photos and reports), has demonstrated a return on investment and significantly eliminates a workplace risk.

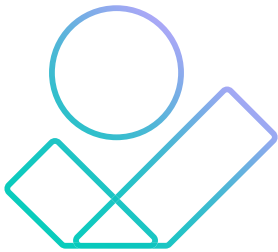
Please note: Solutions delivered for commercial purposes should be submitted into Category 10.

For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. Describe the WHS/OHS risk.
2. What was the innovative solution that you implemented?
3. How did you implement the solution?
4. What barriers/problems were encountered during the implementation of the solution/ change?
5. What was the timeframe involved?
6. What was the effect of the solution?

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CATEGORY 3

BEST WHS TRAINING PROGRAM

This category requires you to describe an innovative WHS/OHS training program that has been implemented in your organisation. The training program can be one-off or ongoing.

Finalists of this category must demonstrate that their training program has led to sustainable improvement in workplace behaviour, performance and/or processes.

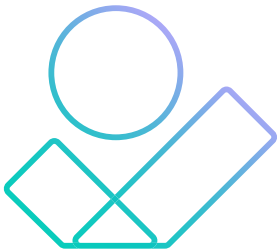
For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. Describe the purpose for the training program.
2. Describe the process for developing and delivering the training program.
3. Did you have to overcome constraints/barriers to develop and deliver the program? How were they addressed?
4. Describe the effect of the training program.

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CATEGORY 4

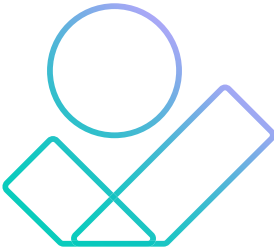
BEST COMMUNICATION OF A SAFETY MESSAGE

This category recognises organisations who have effectively and innovatively communicated a WHS/OHS message to their workforce. The communication of a message can be a one-off event or an ongoing program.

Finalists of this category must be able to demonstrate that their communication methods and processes have led to sustainable improvement in workplace behaviour, performance and/or processes.

For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. Describe the purpose for the safety message.
2. Describe the process for developing and delivering the message.
3. Did you have to overcome constraints/barriers to develop and deliver the message? How were they addressed?
4. Describe the effect of the safety message.



CATEGORY 5

IAN CHISHOLM AWARD FOR THE BEST INDIVIDUAL WHS ACHIEVEMENT

This category recognises the outstanding contribution of an individual (with or without formal WHS/OHS responsibilities). To be nominated, the individual must have played a significant role in a recent WHS/OHS initiative and gone above and beyond their normal duties, which has resulted in a sustainable improvement within an organisation (or area they work or volunteer).

Please note: No self-nominations will be accepted. Individuals must be nominated by their peers, work colleagues, managers and/or organisation.

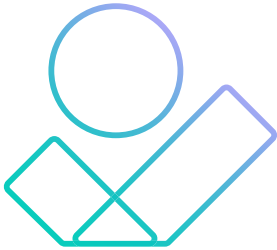


Ian Alexander Chisholm (1928 - 2012)

This award is named in recognition of Ian Chisholm AM who dedicated nearly thirty years of service to the National Safety Council of Australia.

For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. Describe the situation/work task/activity/behaviour of the workplace prior to the nominee's contribution.
2. Describe the contribution the nominee has made.
3. Did the nominee require management approval for the contribution? If yes, describe the process for gaining the approval.
4. What barriers were encountered during implementation of the solution/change?
5. What was the timeframe involved?
6. Describe the effect that the nominee has had on the situation/work task/activity/behaviour.
7. Explain how the nominee has gone above and beyond their normal duties. Compare and contrast the nominee's achievement with their position description.



CATEGORY 6

BEST SAFETY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM/INITIATIVE

This award recognises the decisions and actions of directors, CEOs and/or executive managers to make safety a business priority.

This category requires you to describe how your directors, CEO and/or executive managers have made safety a business priority and the impact it is having on the organisation.

Finalists of this category must demonstrate that their organisation's program/initiative is on an equal footing with other business priorities, is integrating safety with other parts of the business, and either eliminates or significantly reduces psychosocial as well as physical workplace risks.

For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. Why did you need to implement the program/initiative?
2. What was the program/initiative that your organisations implemented?
3. How did your organisation implement the program/initiative?
4. What barriers were encountered during the implementation of the solution/change?
5. What was the timeframe involved?
6. What was the effect of the program/initiative?

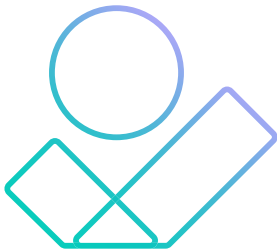
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CATEGORY 7

BEST HEALTH & WELLBEING PROGRAM

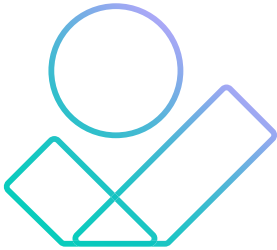
This category requires you to describe an innovative health and wellbeing program that has resulted in improvements within your organisation. The program can be a one-off event or an ongoing program.

Programs include, for example, reducing 'presenteeism', addressing mental health issues, tackling bullying and harassment and improving physical health.

Finalists of this category must demonstrate that their health and wellbeing program has had a positive effect on the participants and/or the workplace through changes in workplace behaviour/performance/processes.

For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. Why did you need to improve the health and wellbeing of your workforce?
2. How did you improve the health and wellbeing?
3. What barriers were encountered during implementation of the solution/change?
4. What was the timeframe involved?
5. What was the effect of the health and wellbeing program?



CATEGORY 8

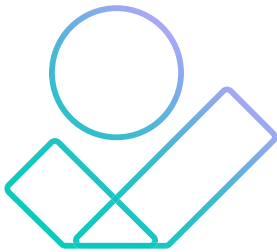
BEST RETURN & RECOVERY AT WORK SYSTEM

This category requires you to describe Return to Work System Initiative(s) you have introduced and the effect it has had on your staff and business. Finalists of this category must demonstrate that their initiative(s) has led to sustainable return to work for injured workers as well as improved return to work rates. Finalists of this category must also demonstrate that the improvement is part of an ongoing process.

Examples of improvements could include, new ways of integrating with other organisational systems and incorporating change management, stakeholder engagement, national and international best practice return to work approaches, managing return to work barriers, and upgrading work task and compliance systems.

For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. Why did you need to improve your Return & Recovery at Work System?
2. How did you improve your Return & Recovery at Work System?
3. What barriers were encountered during the process?
4. What was the timeframe involved?
5. What was the effect of the initiative?



CATEGORY 9

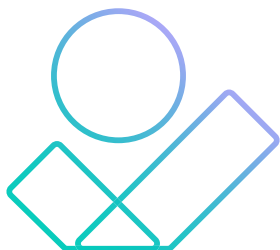
BEST SOLUTION FOR MANAGING PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS AT WORK

This category requires you to describe an innovative solution that has resulted in a reduction or elimination of a psychosocial hazard at work.

Finalists of this category must demonstrate that their solution has had a positive effect on the participants involved in their work through changes in workplace behaviour/performance/processes.

For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. Provide a description of the psychosocial hazards that the solution was aiming to address and how were these identified?
2. What was the solution and how was it developed?
3. How was the solution implemented?
4. What barriers were encountered and how were these overcome?
5. What were the impacts of the solution on the psychosocial hazards?



CATEGORY 10

BEST WHS COMMERCIAL PRODUCT OR SERVICE INNOVATION

This category recognises innovative solutions to a WHS/OHS risk or issue developed for commercial purposes. The solution may address a newly identified risk or an existing risk tackled in a new way.

Finalists must demonstrate that their solution is innovative, proven to work within an organisation (supported by evidence such as testimonials, photos or reports), meaningfully eliminates or reduces a workplace risk, and has clear commercial viability.

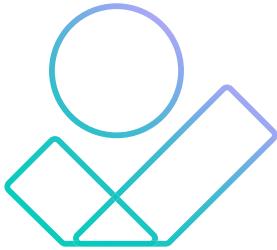
Note: Solutions originally developed for internal use and not intended for commercialisation should be submitted under Category 2.

For entry into this category your submission must answer the following:

1. What is your product/service innovation and describe the WHS/OHS it solves
2. How does your product/service innovation eliminate or reduce the identified risk?
3. What barriers were encountered during the development/testing/marketing of the product?
4. Please describe how you have complied with laws, regulations and standards relevant to the solution
5. What was the timeframe involved and how long has the product/service innovation been operating?
6. If a product, does your organisation hold the patent and/or copyright?
7. Do you have customer references who are willing to be contacted?

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CATEGORY 11

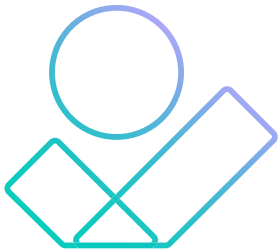
BEST SAFETY TEAM

NSCA Foundation Safety Team of the Year recognises exceptional teamwork and innovation in health and safety. This award celebrates teams that have driven meaningful improvements in safety performance and built a strong safety culture within their organisation.

Finalists must demonstrate excellence across three areas: Teamwork & Collaboration, Innovation & Improvement, and Cultural Impact.

Submissions should focus on these key areas and answer the following:

1. Describe the composition of your safety team, including specific roles and responsibilities of each member as well as the diversity of skills and experiences within the team.
2. What were the primary goals and objectives of your team program or initiative?
3. What innovative strategies or practices did your team implement? How did you implement them and if there were any challenges, how were they overcome?
4. What measurable improvements in safety performance has your team achieved?
5. How has your team's work influenced the safety culture within your organization? Please include examples of how staff engagement in safety has changed.
6. Has the initiative contributed to better industry outcomes? What were the results? Please include a description of this.
7. What key lessons has your team learned through the development and implementation of your safety program?



PINNACLE AWARD

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN WHS

This prestigious Judges' Choice Award is presented annually to the most outstanding achievement in work health and safety of an organisation, alliance or individual. This award is not open for nomination; instead it is the category winners from Categories 1 to 11 who progress to this final stage to claim the top honours position at the awards ceremony.

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