



QLS LEGAL PROFESSION  
DINNER & AWARDS

# 2018 AWARD GUIDELINES



Queensland  
**Law Society**<sup>®</sup>

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# QLS Legal Profession Dinner and Awards 2018

## 1. Award categories and criteria

### General award criteria

All nominations are subject to the following criteria:

- Any nominated solicitor must be practising in Queensland and be a current member of the Society.\*
- Any nominated law practice and Community Legal Centre must practise in Queensland.
- Queensland Law Society Council members or employees of the Society are not eligible for nomination.
- Nominated solicitors must be of good character. The employees of the Society's Professional Leadership division and the QLS Ethics Centre will be responsible for undertaking due diligence with respect to all nominees. The due diligence will include (but is not limited to) legal review of the nominee's disciplinary history.
- Details of nominated law practices will also be checked by the Professional Leadership division of the Society for consideration of suitability, to ensure there are no matters concerning the nominees that would bring the Society, the profession or the applicable award into disrepute.

### Award winners

Award winners from each category will receive:

- Promotional coverage – Our publications, sent to all QLS members and interstate Society counterparts, will feature finalists and award winners.
- 2018 QLS Legal Profession Award Winner logo – Individuals and/or firms will receive a logo to be used on advertisements, websites and marketing materials, including personal email signatures and business cards.
- National awards – Endorsement from the QLS President and CEO for Australasia awards.
- Trophy and certificate – Winners receive a trophy and certificate, which can be publically displayed in their premises.

\*Excludes Queensland First Nations Legal Student of the Year award and Queensland First Nations Lawyer of the Year

## President's Medal

The award recognises the contribution, commitment and professionalism, and outstanding performance of an individual to the Queensland legal profession.

The Society's President's Medal is open to all individual solicitors who practise in Queensland.

The President's Medal will be presented to the successful candidate by the President of Queensland Law Society at the annual Legal Profession Dinner and Awards on 9 March 2018.

To be eligible for the award, the nominated solicitor must satisfy the following criteria:

- Be a local legal practitioner (ie a Queensland solicitor) and be a current member of the Society who has shown active involvement in the Society. Current serving Councillors of the Society and Officers are excluded from nomination; and
- The person is of high standing in the Queensland legal profession; and
- The person has made a personal and professional contribution which demonstrates advances made in one or more of the following fields:
  - a. Community access to justice; and/or
  - b. Queensland or national legal policy or legislation which delivers significant benefits to Queenslanders; and/or
  - c. Significant service or support to Queensland solicitors; and/or
  - d. Upholding the rule of law; and/or
  - e. The administration of justice in Queensland.

The past, present and continuing contributions and achievements spanning the course of the nominee's career will be taken into account.

A nominee will not be eligible for this year's award if awarded the President's Medal in any of the previous consecutive five years.

## QLS Agnes McWhinney Award

The QLS Agnes McWhinney Award is named after Queensland's first admitted female solicitor, and recognises outstanding professional or community contribution by a woman solicitor and the significant involvement of women in the legal profession and the community.

To be eligible for the award, the nominated solicitor must satisfy the following criteria:

- Be a current member of Queensland Law Society and demonstrate outstanding achievements in both community and legal endeavours.
- Demonstrate outstanding achievement in any one or more of the following:
  - a. Leadership or high achievement in a field of legal endeavour
  - b. Community leadership and support for organisations which contribute to community welfare
  - c. Professional leadership which has enhanced the perception of the legal profession in Queensland
  - d. Significant work which has contributed to improving access to justice in Queensland.

The past, present and continuing contributions and achievements spanning the course of the nominee's career will be taken into account.

### **Innovation in Law**

QLS Innovation in Law award is open to all law firms or individual solicitors who practise in Queensland, and recognises excellence in the development and/or application of technology.

To be eligible for the award, the nominated solicitor or nominated organisation must satisfy the following criteria:

- Successfully implemented an innovative project or solution in the delivery of legal services or the management of a legal business/firm; or
- Implemented an innovation that has demonstrable benefit to clients, the business, the profession and/or employees; or
- Advances access to justice or protects the interests of clients, the business and professional integrity through the introduction of the innovative project or initiative; or
- Supports and promotes a strong culture of innovation within the business or the profession; or
- Shapes the future of the legal profession and seeks to generate ethically-based positive change through innovation.

### **Community Legal Centre (CLC) Member of the Year**

This award is open to all solicitors (who are members of the Society) working or volunteering in a Queensland Community Legal Centre (CLC).

To be eligible for the award, the nominated solicitor must satisfy the following criteria:

- Made outstanding contributions to the community by influencing community justice programs or initiatives which benefit their local community; or
- Demonstrated professional excellence in legal practice through examples of quality legal services and embodies the values of the Society in their interactions with clients and other organisations; or
- Demonstrated outstanding leadership or innovation to enhance the provision, management and delivery of legal services within the CLC and their community.

### **Equity and Diversity – Equity Advocate Award**

This award recognises an individual or team from a legal practice within the State of Queensland that has successfully promoted equity and diversity in the legal profession.

This award is open to individuals, a team or an organisation (whether a law firm, Community Legal Centre, in-house team or government lawyers).

To be eligible for the award, the nominated solicitor or nominated organisation must satisfy the following criteria:

- The nominated individual or organisation has successfully promoted equity and diversity in the legal profession, whether by way of:
  - Effective and innovative initiative(s) within the workplace to generate positive change
  - The individual's or team's activities in the wider profession and/or the community.

### **Equity and Diversity – Large Legal Practice Award**

Presented to a legal practice with 50 or more practitioners that promotes equity in the profession, engages in inclusive and equitable workplace practices, and embraces workplace diversity in a meaningful way.

Any non-government legal practice in Queensland, including Community Legal Centres, can be nominated for consideration for an award. Practitioners can nominate the legal practice where they work. Barristers and Government entities are not eligible to nominate.

To be eligible for the award, the nominated organisation must satisfy the following criteria:

- Successfully promoted diversity within the profession via the education of legal practitioners in relation to anti-discrimination, legislation, harassment, bullying, and unconscious bias
- Promoted equity in the workplace demonstrated through gender, LGBTIQ, disability, ethnicity or other initiatives
- Developed policies supporting equal opportunities and can show how they are employed by staff
- Endorsed flexible work practices which can be demonstrated via staff working part-time, parental leave policies, job sharing, working remotely, and other practices which support work life balance.

The legal practice's commitment to these issues should be demonstrated by:

- Policies that support legal practitioners from diverse backgrounds and accommodate lifestyle needs
- Existence of equitable processes in areas such as recruitment, promotion, and access to training.

If the nominee is part of a national firm structure, the nominee must also provide specific information on Queensland-based diversity initiatives.

### **Equity and Diversity – Medium Legal Practice Award**

Presented to a legal practice with 20-49 practitioners that promotes equity in the profession, engages in inclusive and equitable workplace practices, and embraces workplace diversity in a meaningful way.

Any non-government legal practice in Queensland, including Community Legal Centres, can be nominated for consideration for this award. Practitioners can nominate the legal practice where they work. Barristers and Government entities are not eligible to nominate.

To be eligible for the award, the nominated organisation must satisfy the following criteria:

- Successfully promoted diversity within the profession via the education of legal practitioners in relation to anti-discrimination, legislation, harassment, bullying, and unconscious bias
- Promoted equity in the workplace demonstrated through gender, LGBTIQ, disability, ethnicity or other initiatives
- Developed policies supporting equal opportunities and can show how they are employed by staff
- Endorsed flexible work practices which can be demonstrated via staff working part-time, parental leave policies, job sharing, working remotely, and other practices which support work life balance.

The legal practice's commitment to these issues should be demonstrated by:

- Policies that support legal practitioners from diverse backgrounds and accommodate lifestyle needs
- Existence of equitable processes in areas such as recruitment, promotion, and access to training.

If the nominee is part of a national firm structure, the nominee must also provide specific information on Queensland-based diversity initiatives.

### **Equity and Diversity – Small Legal Practice Award**

Presented to a legal practice with 19 or fewer practitioners that promotes equity in the profession, engages in inclusive and equitable workplace practices, and embraces workplace diversity in a meaningful way.

Any non-government legal practice in Queensland, including Community Legal Centres, can be nominated for consideration for this award. Practitioners can nominate the legal practice where they work. Barristers and Government entities are not eligible to nominate.

To be eligible for the award, the nominated organisation must satisfy the following criteria:

- Successfully promoted diversity within the profession via the education of legal practitioners in relation to anti-discrimination, legislation, harassment, bullying, and unconscious bias
- Promoted equity in the workplace demonstrated through gender, LGBTIQ, disability, ethnicity or other initiatives
- Developed policies supporting equal opportunities and can show how they are employed by staff
- Endorsed flexible work practices which can be demonstrated via staff working part-time, parental leave policies, job sharing, working remotely, and other practices which support work life balance.

The legal practice's commitment to these issues should be demonstrated by:

- Policies that support legal practitioners from diverse backgrounds and accommodate lifestyle needs
- Existence of equitable processes in areas such as recruitment, promotion and access to training.

### **Queensland First Nations Lawyer of the Year**

Presented to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander individual for outstanding achievements in the law and for pursuing justice outcomes in the legal profession for First Nations people in Queensland.

To be eligible for the award, the nominee must satisfy the following criteria:

- Meet the usually accepted three 'working criteria' as proof or confirmation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage. All of these things must apply:
  - a. Be of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin
  - b. Identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
  - c. Be accepted as such by the community in which you live, or formerly lived.
- Be eligible to hold a practising certificate
- Be a current full or associate member of the Queensland Law Society
- Apply individually
- Have a demonstrated passion and commitment towards the advancement of First Nations people and communities in Queensland
- Have a demonstrated commitment in advocating for the rights of First Nations people and communities in Queensland within the legal environment
- Demonstrate a dedicated contribution to First Nations people and communities through the legal service (eg including access to justice, committee participation, pro bono work, education)
- Demonstrate a commitment to further professional development.

The winner of the Queensland First Nations Lawyer of the Year award, will receive:

- a full-registration ticket to QLS Symposium in 2019, return economy airfares to Brisbane and up to two nights' accommodation (if applicable)
- a ticket to the 2018 National Indigenous Legal Conference, return economy airfares to the location of the conference and up to two nights' accommodation (if applicable)
- a ticket to attend a QLS conference/event in relation to their area of practice
- a commemorative plaque.

## Queensland First Nations Legal Student of the Year

Presented to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander individual for outstanding achievements in the law and for pursuing justice outcomes in the legal profession for First Nations people in Queensland.

To be eligible for the award, the nominee must satisfy the following criteria:

- Meet the usually accepted three 'working criteria' as proof or confirmation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage. All of these things must apply:
  - a. Be of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin
  - b. Identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
  - c. Be accepted as such by the community in which you live, or formerly lived.
- Be enrolled in an undergraduate law degree
- Have maintained a full-time or part-time study load for a minimum of two semesters, achieving academic consistency
- Relevant extra-curricular activities and involvement in First Nations communities that demonstrate a commitment to the advancement of First Nations people in Queensland (eg pro bono work, volunteering, student placements, mentoring work)
- Have a commitment for further professional development and involvement in promoting First Nations people and communities.

The winner of the Queensland First Nations Legal Student of the Year award will receive:

- a full registration to QLS Symposium in 2019, return economy airfares to Brisbane and up to two nights' accommodation (if applicable)
- a ticket to the 2018 National Indigenous Legal Conference, return economy airfares to the location of the conference and up to two nights' accommodation (if applicable)
- a scholarship prize to the value of \$1000 (AUD)
- a commemorative plaque.

## 2. Nomination process

Nominations open on Thursday 30 November 2017 and close at 5pm on Friday 2 February 2018, Brisbane Australia (AEST) time. No nominations will be accepted after nominations have closed.

Self-nominations will be accepted for all awards apart from the President's Medal. Nominations by third parties will be accepted for all awards. Multiple nominations are allowed but must be submitted independently and will be considered accordingly.

Nominations are required to be completed online: [qls.awardsplatform.com](http://qls.awardsplatform.com)

Each nomination must be accompanied by:

- A completed electronic nomination form; and
- Confirmation nominee has provided their consent; and
- One letter from a referee excluding the Equity and Diversity Awards ; and
- Supporting documentation which:
  - a. outlines relevant current and previous professional positions held by the nominee; and
  - b. explicitly addresses each of the specific eligibility criteria for the applicable award.

For the Queensland First Nations Lawyer of the Year and Queensland First Nations Legal Student of the Year awards, in addition to the above, nominations must include contact details of a First Nations referee within the community (first and last name, contact telephone number and email address).

### 3. Selection panel

Nominations will be reviewed by a selection panel comprised of at least three QLS members from the legal profession including the current president (chair of each selection panel).

The selection panels will assess nominations via the QLS Awards platform, and may elect to seek further information from the nominee, nominated organisation and/or nominator. Following the assessments, the selection panel may determine a successful candidate per award category.

The selection panel reserves the right to withdraw an award after it is made, if further information or a recipient's conduct brings the Society, the profession or the award into disrepute. The selection panel's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Award	Judges
<b>QLS Agnes McWhinney Award</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. QLS President</li> <li>2. QLS Vice President</li> <li>3. QLS Immediate Past President</li> <li>4. Subject matter expert</li> </ol>
<b>Community Legal Centre Member of the Year</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. QLS President</li> <li>2. QLS Deputy President</li> <li>3. QLS Vice President</li> <li>4. Subject matter expert</li> </ol>
<b>Innovation in Law Award</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. QLS President</li> <li>2. QLS Deputy President</li> <li>3. QLS Vice President</li> <li>4. Subject matter expert</li> </ol>
<b>Equity and Diversity Awards</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. QLS President</li> <li>2. QLS Deputy President</li> <li>3. QLS Equity and Diversity Committee Chair</li> </ol>
<b>Queensland's First Nations Awards</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. QLS President or representative</li> <li>2. QLS Chair or representative of the First Nations Reconciliation Advancement Committee</li> <li>3. QLS staff representative from the Reconciliation Action Plan ('RAP') Team.</li> </ol>

## 4. Notification of Winner

Award category winners will be announced at Queensland Law Society's Legal Profession Dinner and Awards on Friday 9 March 2018. No notification will be given to the winner prior to the dinner. Accordingly, if a candidate is unable to attend the dinner, it is suggested that the candidate authorises a person to collect the award on their behalf should they be the successful candidate for the award category. The candidate will need to notify QLS via [awards@qls.com.au](mailto:awards@qls.com.au) if they are unable to attend the event in person and who their authorised person is at least three business days prior to the event.

## 5. Privacy

Nominations for the President's Medal will be received in confidence. All other shortlisted award nominees may be profiled.

Therefore, if a nominee is the subject of a third party nomination, the nominator must confirm that the nominee is aware of their nomination and wishes to participate in the award. By doing so, nominees are consenting to having their statement/bio published in QLS media releases, social media, and QLS publications.

If a nominee is the subject of a third party nomination and does not actually wish to participate in the award, the nominee's information will be not be considered any further and his/her personal information will not be used.

If a nominee refuses to provide consent to inquiries being made about them during the judging process, the selection panel reserves the right to disqualify the candidate.

The Society will use the personal information collected in the nomination form, referee letters and/or supporting documentation for the following purposes:

- a. Conducting the awards, whose purpose is consistent with the Society's objects contained in Rules 5(e) and (g) of the *Legal Profession (Society) Rules 2007* (a copy of those Rules can be found at [qls.com.au/knowledge\\_centre/legislation\\_rules](http://qls.com.au/knowledge_centre/legislation_rules)); and
- b. The selection panel referred to above will view, discuss, deliberate, judge, evaluate and review the merits of the application in order to award a winner (or not award a winner – see below); and
- c. To contact and discuss, where the selection panel deems appropriate, the referees relied upon in the nomination who have attested to the achievements listed in the nomination; and
- d. Interview or seek further information from the nominee as the selection panel sees fit; and
- e. To enable the Society's Professional Standards department to make all due enquiries in relation to any findings of misconduct or unsatisfactory conduct concerning the nominee, and to ensure the nominee has not engaged in conduct which would bring the award or Society into disrepute; and
- f. If the nominee is shortlisted, disclosing the nominee's bio in QLS publications and social media, and the winner's personal information at the awards ceremony and other correspondence when announcing the win.

If you do not wish your details to be used for any one or more of the above purposes, you should advise the Society by contacting [awards@qls.com.au](mailto:awards@qls.com.au) to confirm the withdrawal of your nomination.

In accordance with the *Electronic Transactions (Queensland) Act 2001*, the Society may provide notices to you by electronic communication. By undertaking this process, the nominee's consent to this mode of contact is taken to be given.

The personal information provided may be transferred and stored overseas to administer the Society's communications to the nominee. By entering a nomination form, the nominee consents to this transfer and Australian Privacy Principle 8.1 will not apply to this disclosure. The Society's Privacy Policy and Privacy Codes of Practice containing details about the collection of personal information may be viewed at [qls.com.au](http://qls.com.au) and the Privacy Officer may be contacted at [privacy@qls.com.au](mailto:privacy@qls.com.au).

## 6. Cancellation

The selection committee reserves the right not to honour an award, in its absolute discretion, if it is of the view that none of the nominees have satisfied the eligibility criteria.

The Society may also cancel, suspend or modify these Nomination Guidelines or the available awards for any reason including computer virus, bugs, tampering, unauthorised intervention, fraud, technical failure or any other cause beyond the Society's control which may affect the administration, security, fairness, integrity or proper conduct of the available awards.

The Society may also cancel, suspend or modify the awards if the determination of the winner or presentation of the award is prevented or hindered by any outside agent or event, including but not limited to vandalism, power failure, tempest, natural disaster, acts of God, civil unrest or strikes or other industrial action.