

Hon David Pisoni MP Minister for Innovation and Skills

Monday 17 August 2020

Finalists announced for the 2020 SA Science Excellence and Innovation Awards

Nineteen ground-breaking scientists, researchers, innovators and educators have been named finalists in this year's South Australian Science Excellence and Innovation Awards.

The awards celebrate outstanding scientific contributions, life-changing research and innovative ideas by the state's top leaders, teams and educators working across the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM).

This year's finalists are working on landmark research and innovative projects that span across many different industries – from understanding cancer, to new approaches to analytical chemistry and discovering sustainable development opportunities for South Australia's unique environment.

"Congratulations to all finalists for their outstanding achievements, rigorous research and important contributions to our economy and the wider community," Minister for Innovation and Skills David Pisoni said.

"The record number of nominations in this year's awards reflects the high-quality work and cutting-edge ideas being developed in South Australia, with almost 100 entries received across six categories, including our new Innovator of the Year award.

"The role of science has never been more important to unlock new thinking and innovation across the state's key growth industries including defence, cyber security, health, and agriculture."

South Australia's Chief Scientist Professor Caroline McMillen said the recent global developments highlight the importance of science research and collaboration to solve key challenges facing Australia and the world.

"The number and quality of submissions for these awards showcases the diversity and strength of our STEMM community – remarkable individuals who are pushing the boundaries of new knowledge and harnessing collaborations to drive innovation and put South Australia on the global stage as 'The State of Science'," Professor McMillen said.

"This is a time when countries across the globe have recognised the critical importance of rigorous scientific evidence as they address some of the most challenging and complex issues faced in history.

"The Science Excellence and Innovation Awards allow us to celebrate that importance by sharing and celebrating new discoveries and applications that will underpin a healthy community, environment and economy for the future."

Chief Entrepreneur for South Australia Jim Whalley said it was pleasing to see a strong number of applications for the new Innovator of the Year Award.

"Over the past few months, we have seen incredible levels of innovation and collaboration between industry and research, particularly in South Australia," Mr Whalley said.

“The new Innovator of the Year category together with our FIXE Entrepreneurship and Startup strategy ensures we continue that good work by bringing together academia and industry to solve manufacturing challenges, commercialise new ideas and drive productivity gains.”

With COVID-19 restrictions slowly easing in South Australia, an update on the arrangements to celebrate finalists and winners in a safe environment will be announced later in the year.

For more information on all the finalists, visit www.scienceawards.sa.gov.au

**The 2020 SA Science Excellence and Innovation Award finalists are:
South Australian Scientist of the Year**

- Professor Emily Hilder, University of South Australia
- Professor Timothy Hughes, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI)
- Professor Sharad Kumar, University of South Australia
- Professor Colin Raston, Flinders University

Innovator of the Year

- Australian Centre for Child Protection Project Team
- Cryoclock
- Micro-X

STEMM Educator of the Year – Primary/Secondary level

- Katie Gloede, Adelaide Football Club
- Thomas Oliphant, Pembroke School
- Kristie Talbot, Modbury School

STEMM Educator of the Year – University/ Registered Training Organisation level

- Dr Wayne Boardman, the University of Adelaide
- Dr Maurizio Costabile, University of South Australia
- Professor Kerry Wilkinson, the University of Adelaide

Excellence in Science and Industry Collaboration

- Great Australian Bight Research Project, SA Research and Development Institute (SARDI)
- Medical Device Partnering Program, Flinders University
- Out of the Smoke, The Australian Wine Research Institute

PhD Research Excellence

- Dr Samuel Costello, the University of Adelaide
- Dr Erinn Fagan-Jeffries, the University of Adelaide
- Dr Melissa Middeldorp, the University of Adelaide