

AUSTRALIAN WATER

ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

South Australia's most innovative recognised at water awards

9 November 2020

The winners of the Australian Water Association's South Australian Water Awards were announced at the Gala Dinner on Friday, 6 November at Adelaide Town Hall.

The South Australian Water Awards recognise the contribution of the Association's members for their inspiring leadership and innovative research, programs and infrastructure projects.

"The Association has been running the Water Awards Program for over 20 years to recognise the work our members do for their communities and the industry," Australian Water Association Chief Executive, Corinne Cheeseman said.

"In the face of climate change, a global pandemic and economic recession, the water industry has risen to the challenge and shown resilience and innovation.

"The finalists and winners of the South Australian Water Awards are testament to the outstanding work that our members are doing to provide essential services to the community, and I would like to congratulate them all for their dedication and hard work."

This year's winners will go on to represent South Australia in the national Australian Water Awards, which will be presented at the Association's annual water conference and exhibition, Ozwater'21 in Adelaide on 4-6 May 2020.

Winners:

Organisational Excellence Award

Fulton Hogan Utilities' Problem Based Learning STEM Program for Primary Schools – Fulton Hogan Utilities

The STEM Program for Primary Schools is a novel, problem-based learning program that provides primary school students with a real, tangible problem, and encourages them to work collaboratively, fostering inquiry and logical reasoning. The program challenges students to develop innovative solutions while teaching engineering concepts and highlighting the need to deliver sustainable outcomes. This future-focussed program provides an example for others to invest in the development of our future workforce.

High Commendation:

DIY Plumbing in the APY Lands – SA Water

AUSTRALIAN WATER

ASSOCIATION

Research & Development Excellence Award

Rapid Development and Implementation of a Wastewater Surveillance Tool for the Detection of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) – SA Water & WaterRA

The ColoSSos project demonstrates how South Australian expertise in water quality monitoring and analysis was leveraged to contribute to method development for testing and analysis of wastewater samples. This work has been recognised as a point of reference for others nationally, with the use of this surveillance technique informing public health response across Australia. SA Water's close collaboration with the Department of Health also recognises the importance of communicating the findings to audiences with different backgrounds. This project highlights the potential for water utilities to contribute to society well beyond the typical provision of water supply and wastewater collection and treatment services.

High Commendation:

Optimising RO Energy Use with Machine Learning – Osmoflo

Infrastructure Project Innovation Award (Metro)

Bolivar Wastewater Treatment Plant Clarifier Upgrade Project – SA Water & Aurecon

This project between Aurecon and SA Water exemplifies the very best of modern engineering and construction techniques which has enabled the effective rehabilitation and re-purposing of ageing infrastructure. The project has demonstrated significant economic benefits as well as tangible environmental benefits. The sophisticated design process employed a variety of approaches and techniques with the aim of challenging assumptions to maximise the capacity and life of the existing assets. This project represents a paradigm shift of how existing infrastructure is perceived and used, with significant positive implications for not only the broader Australian water sector, but also for ageing water infrastructure right across the globe.

Infrastructure Project Innovation Award (Regional)

New Wastewater Treatment Plant for Murray Bridge (Brinkley) – SA Water, John Holland & KBR

South Australia's newest wastewater treatment plant, located in Brinkley just outside of Murray Bridge, is able to process up to 4.5 million litres of sewage a day. This project has been recognised with the highest sustainability design rating to date for a water or wastewater project in Australia by the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia (ISCA). While exceeding in technical excellence and catering for current needs and future growth, the project has excelled in contributing to communication and understanding of indigenous culture and improved social and environmental outcomes for the community of Murray Bridge.

Hodgson Medal – Student Water Prize

Use of Artificial Neural Networks and Fluid Transient Waves for Active and Passive Inspection of Water Pipelines – Jessica Maria Bohorquez Arevalo, The University of Adelaide

Jessica's research to apply advanced neural network analytics to existing pressure transient failure detection methods seeks to improve the speed and reliability of mains failure location. With Australia's significant and ageing water main asset base, tools that help early identification of failure and allow targeted response are an important way of managing operating and capital replacement costs. The project has focused on lab scale trials, but future opportunities are to apply the analysis to existing major pipelines and to existing networks in combination with other sensor systems.

AUSTRALIAN WATER

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Young Water Professional of the Year Award (*sponsored by Xylem*)

Meena Yadav, Site Engineer, Allwater

Growing up in India, Meena experienced first-hand people's connection to land and water and the challenges of living without the safe and reliable water and sanitation services that Australians are fortunate to enjoy. She demonstrates a deep commitment to improving access to water and sanitation in India and the opportunity for communities in India and Australia to learn from each other in water management. Meena helped establish the Shramyog development program in India and continues to support this program from Adelaide through technical input and fundraising. She has worked with Allwater for the past two years and is currently a site engineer at Bolivar Wastewater Treatment Plant.

High Commendation:

Lisa Blinco, Water Systems Optimisation Engineer, SA Water

Premier's Medal – Water Professional of the Year Award (*sponsored by the Department for Environment and Water*)

Professor Jennifer McKay, Professor of Business Law, University of South Australia

Professor Jennifer McKay's extensive body of research has provided insights into water law governance and policy in Australia. Her research has helped policy makers to understand the impacts of their policies on farmers, urban dwellers and water users generally. She has also provided constructive suggestions to reform and improve water governance structures, and promote ecologically sustainable development. Her research in relation to trust across and within the water sector has been instrumental in guiding water supply businesses and government strategy. Her passion and enthusiasm are evident and her contributions to the advancement of sustainable water management will have a lasting impact.

The Association wishes to congratulate all the award finalists and winners and thank our generous sponsors for their support of these important industry awards.

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About the Australian Water Association

With a membership of over 5,000 individual and corporate members, the Australian Water Association is Australia's biggest water network inspiring and driving a sustainable water future.

www.awa.asn.au