



RUBY AWARDS 2026

Nomination guidelines



Government
of South Australia



CreateSA

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About the Ruby Awards

As the only Australian state delivering a government-led annual awards program for the creative sector, the Ruby Awards are the Government of South Australia’s commitment to honouring the people, projects and organisations shaping our creative landscape.

The 2026 Ruby Awards feature a refreshed category structure designed to better reflect contemporary creative practice and the priorities of that state’s 10-year cultural policy, [A Place to Create](#).

Five new categories recognise South Australian storytelling, access and inclusion, sustainability, and new creative work.

Key dates

Description	Date
Nominations open	12pm Wednesday 1 July 2026
Nominations close	5pm Wednesday 12 August 2026
Finalists announced	October 2026
Ruby Award presentation event	Friday 13 November 2026 (evening)

For more information

Visit create.sa.gov.au/rubys



Terms and conditions

- Nominated works must have been presented in South Australia between **1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026**.
- Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.
- If you have previously been nominated or shortlisted for a Ruby Award, you are welcome to nominate for a 2026 award.
- If you have previously won one of the following four awards, you cannot nominate for it again:
 - Premier's Award for Lifetime Achievement
 - Stevie Gadlabarti Goldsmith Memorial Award
 - Geoff Crowhurst Memorial Award
 - Frank Ford Memorial Award.
- You can nominate the same work in up to two award categories. Each nomination must explain how the work meets the criteria for that category.
- If you are nominating an individual, you must include written confirmation that they agree to being nominated.
- By submitting a nomination, you give CreateSA permission to use your application materials to promote the Ruby Awards and South Australia's arts, culture and creative industries. This may include advertising, publicity and displays.
- All nominees must be available to participate in promotional activities if requested. This may include media interviews, photography and filming.
- Nominees must be available to attend the awards presentation event on Friday 13 November 2026.
- The judging panel's decisions are final.
- CreateSA cannot provide feedback to unsuccessful nominations.

Assessment and criteria

Judging panel

An independent panel of judges assesses all Ruby Awards nominations. The judges are experienced in South Australia's arts, culture and creative industries and regularly attend arts events, performances, exhibitions and programs.

The judges assess each nomination against the assessment criteria to decide which nominees best meet the requirements for each award.

The judges' decisions are final and not open to discussion or debate.

Criteria

There are three key criteria for every award category – artistic merit, impact and timeliness.

Artistic merit

The panel may consider:

- innovation, originality, quality, creativity and ambition
- the skills, experience and creative achievement of the artists and/or arts workers involved
- evidence of experimentation, creative risk-taking and bravery.

Impact

The panel may consider:

- how the work, event, activity or nominee has contributed to South Australia's arts, cultural and creative industries
- how it has made an impact or championed a cause relevant to the award category
- how it engaged audiences and/or benefitted others
- the context in which the work, event or activity took place.

Timeliness

The panel may consider:

- how the timing of the work, event or activity maximised its participation, relevance, impact or benefits to South Australia's arts, cultural and creative sector
- how it responded to current priorities, emerging needs or timely opportunities
- why the nominee currently deserves recognition.

Preparing nominations

Before you start, read the information below to make sure you have everything you need. We have also prepared a [checklist](#) to help you.

Individuals and organisations can nominate themselves or others.

Each award has its own nomination link – these are included in these guidelines or online at create.sa.gov.au/rubys

Nominations are created and submitted through SmartyGrants, so you will need a SmartyGrants account. If you already have one, sign in using your existing account details. If you are new to SmartyGrants, create an account before starting your nomination.

The nomination form includes a mix of multiple-choice and written questions.

You can preview the nomination form before you start and/or download a copy. We recommend drafting your nomination offline, then pasting the content into the form.

After you submit your nomination, you will receive an automatic confirmation email. If you don't receive it, check your junk or spam folder. If it's still missing, email CreateSA for assistance at RubyAwards@sa.gov.au

Required images

You must include at least one high-resolution colour image with each nomination. It must be:

- .jpeg file format
- 300 dpi
- landscape orientation
- a high-quality representation of your nomination.

If your image is larger than 25 MB, include a working URL instead.

For individual awards, upload a professional headshot or another clear image of the nominee.

For nominated works, you can upload images such as:

- publicity photos
- production or rehearsal photos
- examples of the work
- published or media images.

Additional images and supporting material

You can include supporting material to help the judges assess your nomination against the criteria for artistic merit, impact and timeliness.

This might include:

- additional images
- video footage, such as trailers, interviews or production footage
- promotional material, such as programs, flyers or postcards
- media coverage, including reviews, interviews and articles
- audience or community feedback
- testimonials or letters of support.

You can upload multiple images if they help demonstrate the quality or impact of your work.

If a file is larger than 25 MB or cannot be uploaded to SmartyGrants, include a URL instead.

You can provide links to:

- websites
- social media profiles
- videos (landscape MP4 is preferred)
- online articles, interviews or reviews.

If you need help, email CreateSA at RubyAwards@sa.gov.au

Supporting materials for finalists

If you are shortlisted, you will be asked to provide:

- a 15–20 second landscape MP4 video about your work, or
- if you cannot provide a video, four additional high-resolution landscape JPG images (300 dpi).

If you already have a suitable video, you are welcome to include it with your nomination.

Accessibility

You can prepare your application in the format that works best for you. You can:

- complete the online form
- upload documents
- provide links to written or audiovisual material.

If you need to submit your nomination in another format or have other access requirements, please contact CreateSA.

Applicants who are Deaf or identify as a person with disability

Disability-led organisation Access2Arts can help individual applicants prepare their application.

Auslan users

Auslan interpreters can be arranged for meetings. Applications can also be submitted in Auslan as a digital recording.

Culturally and linguistically diverse applicants

Interpreters can be arranged for meetings and to help translate applications.

National Relay Service users

If you use the National Relay Service:

- TTY users: phone 133 677 and ask for (08) 8363 8670
- Speak and Listen users: phone 1300 555 727 and ask for (08) 8363 8670.

Definitions

- **Community**

A community is a group of people connected by something they have in common. This could be where they live, their culture, religion, gender, disability, or an online community.

- **Work**

A work is any creative activity, project or program. It can include events, performances, productions, exhibitions, films, artworks, publications, workshops, demonstrations, presentations, community engagement activities or other creative initiatives.

- **Group**

A group is two or more people working together, who are not a legally established organisation. This may include collectives, such as artist-run initiatives. Groups may work together for one project or for a longer period.

- **Regional**

Regional refers to regional and remote areas of South Australia that are outside metropolitan Adelaide.

- **Contribution**

A contribution can include a body of work, creative originality, professionalism or leadership.

- **New**

A new work is one that was first launched, premiered, exhibited or opened in South Australia between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026.

Award categories

A PLACE TO CREATE AWARD – CELEBRATING SOUTH AUSTRALIAN STORIES

This award recognises a work by South Australian creatives, groups or organisations, which explores, interprets or shares South Australian stories, heritage or lived experience.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to:

- arts, cultural and creative industries
- community organisations
- individual creatives and groups
- local and state government
- not-for-profit sector
- private enterprise.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

If the nominee has previously won this award, they cannot be nominated again for the same category.

Nomination details

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 300 words**, include a **project summary** describing the work, including where and when it took place.

Then, in **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the work has made a significant impact or championed a cause relevant to celebrating South Australian stories, in line with the assessment criteria.

Nominate now

[A Place to Create Award - Celebrating South Australian Stories 2026](#)

PREMIER'S AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

This award recognises an extraordinary South Australian who, over a sustained period of 25 years or more, has made an outstanding contribution to the arts, cultural or creative industries.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to:

- arts, cultural and creative industries workers
- community workers
- individual artists or creatives
- local and state government workers
- not-for-profit sector workers
- private enterprise workers
- volunteers.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

If the nominee has previously won this award, they cannot be nominated again for the same category.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the nominee has made a significant impact on the arts, cultural and creative industries across their career, in line with the assessment criteria.

The written confirmation of the nominee's consent is not included in the word count.

Nominate now

[Premier's Award for Lifetime Achievement 2026](#)

STEVIE GADLABARTI GOLDSMITH MEMORIAL AWARD

This award is named in honour of Narungga and Kaurna man Stevie Gadlabarti Goldsmith, a prominent South Australian Aboriginal community leader and cultural educator.

This award recognises artistic, cultural or creative achievement or contribution by a South Australian Aboriginal individual, group or organisation.

Guidelines and eligibility

The award is open to South Australian Aboriginal:

- individuals or groups working or volunteering in the arts, cultural and creative industries
- owned or led organisations or businesses
- individual artists or creatives
- community groups and associations, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

If the nominee has previously won this award, they cannot be nominated again for the same category.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the nominee has made a significant positive impact on or championed a cause relevant to the Stevie Gadlabarti Goldsmith Memorial Award category, in line with the assessment criteria.

The written confirmation of the nominee's consent is not included in the word count.

Nominate now

[Stevie Gadlabarti Goldsmith Memorial Award 2026](#)

COMMUNITY IMPACT – GEOFF CROWHURST MEMORIAL AWARD

This award is named in honour of South Australian theatre director Geoff Crowhurst, a prominent contributor to professional community theatre.

This award recognises the contribution of an individual or organisation to community arts, cultural or creative development through which stronger and more cohesive communities are created.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to:

- arts, cultural and creative industries
- community workers or organisations
- individual creatives and groups
- local and state government
- not-for-profit sector
- private enterprise
- volunteers.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

If the nominee has previously won this award, they cannot be nominated again for the same category.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the nominee has made a significant positive impact on or championed a cause relevant to the Community Impact – Geoff Crowhurst Memorial Award category, in line with the assessment criteria.

The written confirmation of the nominee's consent is not included in the word count.

Nominate now

[Community Impact - Geoff Crowhurst Memorial Award 2026](#)

YOUNG ACHIEVER – FRANK FORD MEMORIAL AWARD

This award is named in honour of Frank Ford AM, founder of the Adelaide Fringe Festival and Adelaide Cabaret Festival.

This award recognises outstanding artistic, cultural or creative achievement or contribution by an individual aged 30 years or younger.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to South Australian based individuals aged 30 years or under (as of 30 June 2026) who are:

- arts, cultural and creative industries workers
- community workers
- individual artists or creatives
- local and state government workers
- not-for-profit sector workers
- private enterprise workers
- volunteers.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

If the nominee has previously won this award, they cannot be nominated again for the same category.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the nominee has made a significant positive impact on or championed a cause relevant to the Young Achiever – Frank Ford Memorial Award category, in line with the assessment criteria

The written confirmation of the nominee's consent is not included in the word count.

Nominate now

[Young Achiever - Frank Ford Memorial Award 2026](#)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This award is for an outstanding arts, cultural or creative work that has had a significant positive impact for children and young people aged 30 years and under in South Australia.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to:

- arts, cultural and creative industries
- community organisations
- individual creatives and groups
- local and state government
- not-for-profit sector
- private enterprise.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 300 words**, include a **project summary** describing the work, including where and when it took place.

Then, in **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the work has made a significant positive impact on or championed a cause relevant to the children and young people award category, in line with the assessment criteria.

Nominate now

[Outstanding Achievement - Children and Young People 2026](#)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT – REGIONAL

This award is for an outstanding arts, cultural or creative work that has made a significant positive impact on a regional or remote community in South Australia, which was created for or presented in regional or remote areas of the state.

Guidelines and eligibility

The award is open to:

- arts, cultural and creative industries
- community organisations
- individual creatives and groups
- local and state government
- not-for-profit sector
- private enterprise.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 300 words**, include a **project summary** describing the work, including where and when it took place.

Then, in **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the work has made a significant positive impact on or championed a cause relevant to the regional award category, in line with the assessment criteria.

Nominate now

[Outstanding Achievement - Regional 2026](#)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT – COMMUNITY

This award is for an outstanding arts, cultural or creative work that has had significant positive outcomes for a community in South Australia.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to:

- arts, cultural and creative industries
- community organisations
- individual creatives and groups
- local and state government
- not-for-profit sector
- private enterprise.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 300 words**, include a **project summary** describing the work, including where and when it took place.

Then, in **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the work has made a significant positive impact on or championed a cause relevant to the community award category, in line with the assessment criteria.

Nominate now

[Outstanding Achievement - Community](#)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT – ACCESS AND INCLUSION

This award is for an outstanding artist, group or organisation whose work champions and encourages access, diversity and/or inclusion.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to:

- arts, cultural and creative industries
- community organisations
- individual creatives and groups
- local and state government
- not-for-profit sector
- private enterprise.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 300 words**, include a **project summary** describing the work, including where and when it took place.

Then, in **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the work has made a significant positive impact on or championed a cause relevant to the access and inclusion award category, in line with the assessment criteria.

Nominate now

[Outstanding Achievement - Access and Inclusion](#)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT – NEW WORK (INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP)

This award is for an outstanding new arts, cultural or creative work by an individual or group, presented for the first time in South Australia between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to:

- individual creatives and groups.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 300 words**, include a **project summary** describing the work, including where and when it took place.

Then, in **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the nominee deserves this award recognition, in line with the assessment criteria.

Nominate now

[Outstanding Achievement - New Work \(Individual or Group\)](#)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT – NEW WORK (ORGANISATION)

This award is for an outstanding new arts, cultural or creative work by an organisation, presented for the first time in South Australia between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to:

- arts, cultural and creative industries
- community organisations
- local and state government
- not-for-profit sector
- private enterprise.

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 300 words**, include a **project summary** describing the work, including where and when it took place.

Then, in **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the nominee deserves this award recognition, in line with the assessment criteria.

Nominate now

[Outstanding Achievement - New Work \(Organisation\)](#)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT – SUSTAINABILITY

This award is for an arts, cultural or creative work, individual or organisation that champions climate action, adopts environmentally sustainable practices, or advances understanding of climate change.

Guidelines and eligibility

This award is open to:

- arts, cultural and creative industries
- community organisations
- individual creatives and groups
- local and state government
- not-for-profit sector
- private enterprise

Nominees must live or work in South Australia or have lived or worked here during a period of major professional development.

Nomination detail

Refer to the [definitions](#), [terms and conditions](#) and [assessment criteria](#) to prepare a nomination.

In **no more than 300 words**, include a **project summary** describing the work, including where and when it took place.

Then, in **no more than 1000 words**, explain how the work has made a significant positive impact on or championed a cause relevant to the sustainability award category, in line with the assessment criteria.

Nominate now

[Outstanding Achievement - Sustainability](#)

Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure you have everything ready before starting a Ruby Awards nomination.

Eligibility

- ☐ I have selected the most appropriate award category
- ☐ The work or nominee meets the eligibility requirements for the category
- ☐ The work was presented in South Australia between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026
- ☐ The nominee meets South Australian residency/work requirements
- ☐ The nominee has not previously won this category (if applicable)
- ☐ I have written consent from the nominee (if nominating someone else)

Preparing a nomination

- ☐ I have drafted my responses offline (recommended)
- ☐ I have prepared a project summary (max 300 words), if required
- ☐ I have prepared a main response (max 1000 words)
- ☐ My responses clearly address the assessment criteria:
 - ☐ artistic merit
 - ☐ impact
 - ☐ timeliness
- ☐ I have included clear examples and evidence to support my claims

Required information

- ☐ Nominee contact details
- ☐ Career stage/status (if required)
- ☐ Artform or sector
- ☐ Location of practice
- ☐ Diversity and inclusion information (if applicable)

Images

- ☐ At least one high-resolution colour image included
- ☐ Image is:
 - ☐ .jpeg file format
 - ☐ 300 dpi
 - ☐ landscape orientation
- ☐ File size is under 25 MB or a working URL is being provided

Supporting materials (optional but recommended)

- ☐ Additional images (publicity, production, or work samples)
- ☐ Video content (trailers, interviews, or footage)
- ☐ Promotional material (programs, flyers, marketing)
- ☐ Media coverage (reviews, articles, interviews)
- ☐ Audience or community feedback
- ☐ Testimonials or letters of support
- ☐ Website or social media links
- ☐ Video files are landscape MP4 format (if included)

Before you submit

- ☐ I have created a SmartyGrants account (or have login details ready)
- ☐ I have reviewed all answers for clarity and completeness
- ☐ All required fields are completed
- ☐ All required and supporting materials are uploaded or linked
- ☐ I understand nominees must be available for promotion and the awards event

After submitting

- ☐ I have received a confirmation email
- ☐ If not received, I have checked my junk/spam folder or contacted CreateSA