

2026

ASVO Award Nomination Guide



The 2026 ASVO Awards for Excellence celebrate the amazing professionals who live, work, and breathe the wine industry in Australia.

These awards focus on professionalism, best practice, as well as innovation, community and demonstrated leadership.

ASVO award winners will be recognised and celebrated at the awards dinner in November 2026. This document provides guidelines and conditions of entry for submissions into the 2026 ASVO awards for excellence.

Why enter the awards?

- The benefits gained for entering the ASVO Awards for Excellence are numerous and include:
- A chance to critically review your own individual or business practices and performance,
- The opportunity to identify best practices, initiatives and achievements,
- A chance to work together as a team within your business as you prepare your submission.

Key dates and deadlines

- Awards submissions open: 1 May 2026
- Awards submissions close: 30 June 2026
- Judging period: July
- Nominees notified August
- Awards presentation night: Thursday, 12 November 2026

Benefits to winners

Award winners will enjoy:

- The opportunity to promote their selection as an awards finalist to clients, colleagues and the general public,
- The chance for greater recognition in the industry, and in general,
- The opportunity to leverage publicity via ASVO marketing channels,
- a trophy that can be displayed for years to come.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

The ASVO Awards for Excellence has three individual awards categories. Consider carefully the category that best reflects your attributes

ASVO Winemaker of the Year

This award recognises vigneron and winemakers for their contributions to the wine industry.

- Nominees typically work in the following roles; winemakers, oenologists, vigneron, winemaking consultants
- Demonstrates a broad positive contribution to the Australian wine industry and / or community, improvement from standard practice in their field through adoption of innovative practices, technologies or standards.
- Contributions to the culture of their organisation and the broader wine industry in either a regional, state or national capacity.

ASVO Viticulturist of the Year

This award recognises vigneron and viticulturists for their contributions to the wine industry.

- Nominees typically work in the following roles: viticulturists, vineyard managers, viticultural technical officers, viticultural consultants, and other similar roles.
- Demonstrates a broad positive contribution to the Australian wine industry and / or community, improvement from standard practice in their field through adoption of innovative practices, technologies or standards.
- Contributions to the culture of their organisation and the broader wine industry in either a regional, state or national capacity.

ASVO Wine Scientist & Technology Award

This award recognises researchers for their contributions to the wine industry.

- Nominees typically work in the following roles: research, laboratory operators, technology developers, engineers, educators, and other similar roles.
Nominees must be working in wine research or related science.
- Demonstrated track record of research, and development and extension
- A focus on maximising adoption impact and sustaining practice change
- Exceptional research record of significant contribution to the wine industry.
- Successes in research contributions, such as Grants, Patents, Collaborations, Contracts, books, and Publications.

ASVO Emerging talent of the Year

This award recognises individuals who are early in their career and are demonstrating exceptional potential and significant contributions within the wine industry.

- Individuals who have less than 10 years of full-time work experience or no more than 5 years post PhD.
- Demonstrated notable achievements or accomplishments in their field or role, despite being early in their career or involvement.
- Displayed initiative, proactiveness, and enthusiasm in taking on new challenges, seeking out opportunities for growth, and making meaningful contributions.

Judging methodology

The ASVO Awards for Excellence are judged by some of Australia's most experienced experts and practitioners — handpicked because of their objectivity and commitment to best practice. Each award entry will be judged against set criteria that recognises factors such as excellence in practice, significant achievements, professional development, best practice, as well as adhering to the ASVO values.

Guide to Writing a Successful ASVO Award Nomination

Please read the following information carefully before commencing your nomination. Nominations can be submitted via ASVO's website.

Steps to nominate

Once you've confirmed you meet the entry criteria as outlined in this document, follow these steps to complete your nomination:

Step 1: Decide which category you would like to nominate in.

Step 2: Read the nomination guide document.

Step 3: Prepare your answers to each question (all questions are listed in this document) and collate your supporting documents. We suggest you do this before you start the online form.

You are encouraged to upload supporting documents such as case studies and testimonials as appropriate.

Step 4: Complete the online form and submit your nomination.

Writing the nomination

A compelling nomination should clearly demonstrate the nominee's contributions, impact, and alignment with ASVO's values. Use specific examples, data where possible, and a clear structure.

1. Describe the nominee's contribution to the wine industry at the national/local level

- Start with a clear and concise statement summarizing your key contribution.
- Provide specific details about what you have achieved, including any innovations, leadership roles, or major initiatives.
- Highlight the national or local significance—explain how your work has influenced the industry, policies, sustainability, research, or education.
- If possible, include measurable outcomes (e.g., increased vineyard efficiency by X%, developed a new winemaking process adopted by Y wineries).

Example:

"I led the development of a region-wide sustainability initiative that reduced water usage in vineyards by 30% over three years. This program, adopted by 50 wineries, has become a model for other regions."

Describe what positive difference the nominee is making to the wine sector?

- Focus on the impact of your work—how it has improved practices, sustainability, quality, economic viability, or knowledge in the sector.

- Provide real-world examples: Have you influenced regulations? Developed a new technology? Created education programs?
- Mention any recognition or adoption of your work within the industry.

Example:

"By pioneering a new disease-resistant grape variety, I have helped reduce chemical usage in vineyards, lowering costs for growers while improving environmental outcomes."

Describe how the nominee has sought to share their work with the broader wine industry?

- Detail how you communicate your knowledge and innovations to the industry.
- Mention presentations at conferences, workshops, research publications, media engagement, or mentorship programs.
- If relevant, include numbers (e.g., "presented to 500+ industry professionals," "published in X number of journals").
- Highlight collaborations with industry groups, educational institutions, or government bodies.

Example:

"I have presented findings from my research on vineyard heat resilience at ASVO conferences, contributed articles to industry publications, and hosted webinars attended by over 300 viticulturists."

2. Describe how the nominee's activities are above and beyond their normal role.

Demonstrate that their actions benefit the broader industry, community, or future generations, not just their organisation or role. The following suggestions are for example the nominee does not have to fulfill all of these areas.

1. Voluntary or Unpaid Contributions

- Organising industry events or mentoring programs in their own time
- Volunteering for committees or advocacy roles
- Leading community or environmental projects unrelated to their job description

2. Creating Lasting Impact Beyond Immediate Duties

- Developing open-access resources, toolkits, or training modules
- Introducing innovations adopted by others across the industry
- Advocating for systemic change (e.g. diversity, sustainability)
- Identifying and solving a problem no one else addressed
- Launching a new program, partnership, or improvement process
- Pursuing extra professional development to raise standards in their field

3. Championing Sector-wide or Long-term Initiatives

- Spearheading cross-industry collaborations or reforms
- Advocating for policy improvements that benefit the wider sector
- Leading programs that build capability across regions or generations

4. Personal Investment in People and Culture

- Exceptional leaders often invest significant personal time in developing others:
- Mentoring staff well beyond direct reports or outside their own organisation

- Providing mental health or diversity and inclusion leadership in their own time
- Building a values-driven workplace culture that sets new standards

5. Driving Innovation or Transformation

- Leading digital transformation or sustainability reforms not mandated by stakeholders
- Launching new business models, products, or outreach programs
- Taking calculated risks to improve industry practices

Examples:

Industry / Technical Role:

Although the nominee's position is focused on cellar operations, he initiated a sustainability audit across the entire winery, leading to significant reductions in water use and energy consumption. He volunteered his evenings to research and implement best practices, well outside the expectations of his role.

Community / Leadership:

In addition to managing her team, the nominee founded a regional wine industry mental health support group. She coordinated monthly sessions, partnered with local health services, and provided a confidential support line—all on a voluntary basis outside her work hours.

"In addition to her executive responsibilities, she personally coached emerging leaders from diverse backgrounds, dedicating weekends to one-on-one sessions and building an internal talent pipeline without external consultants."

Early Career Nominee:

While still in a graduate role, Liam independently developed a vineyard data tracking app that is now being trialled across multiple sites. This innovation was not part of his position description, and he pursued it in his own time after hours, demonstrating significant initiative and long-term thinking.

Academic / Research Context:

Dr. Smith's official role is as a senior lecturer in viticulture, yet she has taken it upon herself to mentor early-career researchers across multiple institutions, developing an inter-university research support network in her own time. She also led a pro bono initiative to digitize historic vineyard records for public use, which was not part of her job responsibilities.

Consider the following attributes which demonstrate giving back to the industry.

- **Innovation:** demonstrated ability to bring new and creative approaches to the profession (Winemaking, Viticulture, Wine science and Education), including the use of technology and sustainability practices.
- **Community involvement:** actively participating in and contributing to the local wine industry, including supporting other wineries, participating in industry events, and working to promote the region's reputation as a wine-producing area.
- **Sustainability:** implementing environmentally friendly practices in all aspects of winemaking, including vineyard management, wine production, and waste reduction.
- **Education and mentorship:** sharing knowledge and experience with others in the industry, including all backgrounds and experience in the industry.
- **Demonstrated leadership:** recognition from peers of leadership and contributions to the wine community.