



# MEDIA RELEASE

## INNOVATIVE BOOST FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR WINNERS

20 JANUARY 2016

This year, there's an exciting new reason to be part of the Western Australian of the Year awards.

Western Australian of the Year award winners will have the chance to travel abroad to access professional development opportunities to build their knowledge and extend their global networks, thanks to Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates.

Celebrate WA's *WA Ambassadors Abroad* program will give award recipients the opportunity to represent the State overseas, promoting and advocating for Western Australia while growing their own skills and bringing back new and innovative ideas.

The Western Australian of the Year winner will win two Etihad Airways business class airfares, an overnight stay in Abu Dhabi for 2 people, tickets to visit the Louvre Abu Dhabi and \$2,000 towards accommodation and travel expenses.

Other award category winners will each receive one Etihad Airways economy class return airfare and \$1,000 towards accommodation and travel expenses.

On return from their travels, each of the *WA Ambassadors* will be invited to share their learnings with the WA community through a series of speaking engagements.

Celebrate WA CEO, Kevin MacDonald, said the Western Australian of the Year awards rely on the people of WA to nominate others whose commitment and achievements have made significant contributions to the State.

"We're encouraging people from all over the State to nominate those in the community who are making a difference across any of the seven categories, from business and sport to arts and culture.

"We have such incredibly talented people in WA and we hope the opportunities that come with our new *WA Ambassadors Abroad* Program will provide further incentive for people to nominate," Kevin said.

Now in its 43<sup>rd</sup> year, the Western Australian of the Year awards recognise the highest level of contribution made to Western Australia by those who were born in or choose to call the State home.

Nominations can be submitted in seven categories, with the overall Western Australian of the Year selected from the winners of the individual categories.

- Aboriginal Award, sponsored by Wesfarmers
- Arts and Culture Award, sponsored by Woodside
- Business Award, sponsored by Telstra
- Community Award, sponsored by Alcoa of Australia

- Professions Award, sponsored by St John of God Health Care
- Sport Award, sponsored by Hardy Brothers
- Youth Award, sponsored by BHP Billiton

Aboriginal rights advocate, Dr Robert Isaacs OAM was named Western Australian of the Year in 2015 and leading business figure and philanthropist Mr David Flanagan was the overall winner in 2014.

Nominations are free and can be submitted online at [www.celebratewa.com.au](http://www.celebratewa.com.au). Nominations close at 5pm, 12 February 2016.

The award winners will be announced on the eve of the WA Day long weekend, Friday 3 June 2016, at a gala ceremony hosted by not-for-profit organisation Celebrate WA, who are also responsible for promoting and organising the annual WA Day celebrations.

Finalists from each category will join a host of government, media, entertainment and community personalities for a fabulous night of fun and festivity.

Until 2011, the Awards were known as the WA Citizen of the Year Awards. A long list of respected individuals form the alumni including: Professor Fiona Stanley AC, Michael Chaney AO, The Hon Chief Justice Wayne Martin AC QC, Ian Trust and George Jones AM.

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#### **About Celebrate WA**

Celebrate WA is a not-for-profit organisation responsible for promoting and organising the annual WA Day celebrations; promoting excellence and achievement by Western Australians in all fields of endeavour; and encouraging pride in all things Western Australian.

Celebrate WA's Major Supporters include BHP Billiton, the State Government and Lotterywest.

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