



BUSINESSNEWS

ENTRY SUBMISSION GUIDE

Celebrating young
entrepreneurial spirit
in Western Australia
since 2002



2026 40UNDER40 AWARDS

About the *40under40* Awards

The 2026 *40under40* Awards is Western Australia's pre-eminent program that recognises and celebrates the state's leading entrepreneurs, innovators, and future business leaders under the age of 40.

Business News took a measured risk in establishing the awards program back in 2002. Twenty-four years on, we have applauded almost 1,000 members of our state's young business and community elite, celebrated their exploits and watched them go on to even greater heights.

We feel proud to have built the *40under40* Awards and developed its enduring legacy among our business community. Western Australia has a rich tradition of business drive and determination that has created the incubator for the *40under40* Awards. The awards have become an institutional part of the fabric of WA's business ecosystem focused on enabling business in the state.

We look forward to receiving your submission!

Award Timelines

Monday, 13 October	Nominations & Entries open
Monday, 15 December	Nomination registrations close
Friday, 30 January	Entry submissions due
Friday, 20 March	Judging complete
Wednesday, 22 April	Awards Gala Dinner tickets sales close
Friday, 1 May	<i>40under40</i> Awards Gala Dinner Grand Ballroom, Crown Perth

Eligibility criteria

The 2026 *40under40* Awards are open to Western Australian business owners and executives who are under the age of 40 as of 31 December 2025.

40under40 Award

With thanks to the Australian Institute of Management Western Australia, each 40under40 winner will receive a \$1,000 voucher to access AIM WA training courses. All winners will also receive a complimentary 6-month premium subscription to *Business News*.

**Individuals already subscribed to Business News will receive 3-months complimentary on their current subscription.*

First Amongst Equals Award

Each year, one exceptional individual is selected from the 40 winners as the First Amongst Equals and is made an ambassador of the programme for that year.

The First Amongst Equals winner receives a '40under40 First Amongst Equals' trophy, along with a \$5,000 voucher for AIM WA training courses and a complimentary 12-month premium subscription to *Business News*.

**40under40 awards First Amongst Equals inductees and winners from the previous three years are ineligible to enter.*

People's Choice Award

Introduced in 2012, the People's Choice Award winner is determined by the public, who can view entrant profiles and vote for their favourite candidate online. Voters are only able to vote once. This award is available for all entrants regardless of whether they make the top 40.

Conditions of Entry

1. Entrants must be willing to provide their business name and biographical details to *Business News* for editorial coverage if successful in winning an award.
2. Answers to questions may be used in edited form to explain the entry's success. If detail is considered commercial in confidence or otherwise secret, the applicant must write NOT FOR REPUBLICATION in each part of the entry where detail should be withheld from any article resulting from the awards process.
3. All entries must be submitted online.
4. The judges' decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. The Chairman of Judges has right of veto on all final judging results.
5. The People's Choice Award will be awarded to the entrant with the most public votes.
6. All completed online entry submissions must be submitted before 5:00pm WST on Friday, 30 January 2026.

Business News reserves the right to publish winners' photographs and biographical details. *Business News* reserves the right to vet and substantiate information contained in entries.

No responsibility can be accepted for lost or corrupted entries. Incomplete entries will be disregarded. Submission of an entry indicates acceptance of the Conditions of Entry. Failure to comply may result in disqualification.

Business News reserves the right to withdraw an entrant in the event that the entrant's business goes into administration or the persons actions are not lawful within 12 months of having received a *40under40* Award.

Nomination fees are not transferable or refundable.

Questions? We are here to help! If at any time you need some assistance with your entry, please contact our office:



Phone: 08 9288 2139

Email: events@businessnews.com.au

Process

Nomination

Business News encourages you to nurture and grow the entrepreneurial spirit in our state and nominate outstanding young business leaders that may be your colleagues, clients or suppliers, family or friends, to be considered for the *40under40* Awards.

We also encourage entrants to self-nominate and share their career journey – the setbacks, the successes, the plans.

Entrants are encouraged from all industries and fields of endeavour.

- The nomination fee of \$420 includes one ticket to the Awards Gala Dinner for the nominee and one entry submission writing workshop.
- The fee is payable by credit card at the time of nomination.
- Once entered, the nominee will be supplied with a unique username and password in order to complete the online entry submission.
- Nomination deadline is 5:00pm WST on Monday, 15 December 2025.

Online entry submission

Due Friday,
30 January 2026



Awards Gala Dinner

Friday,
1 May 2026

Submit your entry

- Open www.40under40.com.au and login into the *Business News* website.
- Enter the required information and attach all required documentation including photos.
- Word count restrictions apply and are clearly identified.
- Information can be saved and nominees may return to the site multiple times to add/edit data, prior to submitting the entry.
- Submission deadline is 5:00pm WST on Friday 30 January, 2026.

What happens after entries have been uploaded?

- All entries will be submitted to a judging panel, who will meet on several occasions to discuss the scoring process. Read more about the judges on the *Business News* website.
- Entrants may be requested by the judging panel to provide additional information, substantiate data presented and/or be interviewed.
- Entrants will be contacted to confirm their attendance at the Awards Gala Dinner.
- Winners will be announced at the Awards Gala Dinner, to be held on Friday 1 May, 2026.
- The 18 May 2026 edition of *Business News* will contain a special lift out section, featuring all winners, and photos from the Awards Gala Dinner.

Useful Tips

- Compile the required information in an editable document (e.g. MS Word), before logging on to the submission site to copy/paste your answers.
- You may return to the entry submission pages multiple times, so upload your information early to allow yourself a few days to reconsider your answers, before submitting the entry. This time for reflection is important. Try not to rush your submission at the last minute. It is what the judges have to go on, so take care to ensure it is your best effort.
- Please take note of the judging descriptors, marks and word limits for each question.
- Do not submit any information other than what has been required in this guide, unless expressly requested by *Business News*.
- Ask a trusted senior colleague(s) and/or family member(s) to proof read your answers.
- Consider appropriate photos to use.
- **Attend the *Business News* Entry Submission Writing Workshop.**

Information Required

Personal

COMPULSORY

- ☐ Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/other)
- ☐ Given name
- ☐ Surname
- ☐ Date of birth
- ☐ Mobile telephone number
- ☐ Email address
- ☐ Work (daytime) telephone number
- ☐ Special needs or dietary requirements
- ☐ Social media contacts
- ☐ LinkedIn page link

Business/Organisation

COMPULSORY

- ☐ Business/organisation name
- ☐ Your position in business/organisation
- ☐ Address
- ☐ Telephone number
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Details of the person to whom you report (if applicable)
- ☐ Number of staff that report directly to you or are under your management
- ☐ Size of business – number of staff currently
- ☐ Date (mm/yyyy) business first commenced or
- ☐ Date (mm/yyyy) you commenced at company/business

Business/Organisation Metrics

OPTIONAL

- ☐ Size of business – revenue for FYE 30 June 2025
- ☐ Size of business – revenue for FYE 30 June 2024
- ☐ Size of business – revenue for FYE 30 June 2023

Information Required

Introduction

COMPULSORY (100 – 150 words)

- ☐ In 100 to 150 words please give a short biography or description that summarises who you are, what you do (e.g. your current role), what your business or organisation does (this can include a brief history of your organisation, core products and services, target market), and what you have achieved. You may also want to describe your past businesses and experiences.

This summary may be edited and used as your biography on the *Business News* website, for the People's Choice voting page and may be used during event proceedings at the Awards Gala Dinner night.

(You may opt out of participating in the People's Choice award – tick the relevant box when completing your online submission.)

Category

COMPULSORY

It is assumed you are either an entrepreneur/owner of your own organisation or an 'intrapreneurial manager' within an organisation you work for or with.

Please select the category that best fits you:

- ☐ **Small or Start-up Business** ~ *Owner or Entrepreneur*
Trading up to 5 financial years OR 30 or fewer full time equivalent staff.
- ☐ **Medium Sized Business** ~ *Owner or Entrepreneur*
31 to 99 full time equivalent staff.
- ☐ **Large Sized Business** ~ *Owner or Entrepreneur*
100 or more full time equivalent staff.
- ☐ **Family Business** ~ *Owner or Entrepreneur*
Owner and managed by family member.
- ☐ **Indigenous Business**
Must be 50% or above indigenous ownership.
- ☐ **Intrapreneur** (*an employee with entrepreneurial attributes*)
An employee in a large organisation who drives change.
- ☐ **Professional Services**
e.g. Lawyer, Architect Accountant etc.
- ☐ **Community, Social Enterprise or Not for Profit**

Among the forty selected 2026 40under40 winners, there will also be a winner in each category as well as an overall 'First Amongst Equals' winner. There are no pre-allocated amounts of overall winners from any of the categories.

Judges reserve the right to move an entrant into another category if deemed more applicable.

Judging Guidelines

The following 6 questions directly determine your *40under40* judging score out of 100. The marks per question and word limit are clearly shown. Judges only have your submitted information to go on, so make sure you answer every question as well as you can, giving evidence to back up your points. (You can write in full sentences, in bullet point form or short punchy phrases – whichever you prefer and gets the meaning across clearly.)

Personal Achievements

□ Question 1 – WHY YOU?

COMPULSORY 30/100 (300 words)

- Why should you win a *40under40* Award ?
- What are your most significant and important business/career and community achievements?

Detail the achievements and why you or others consider them significant and important.

Provide evidence to substantiate your arguments (such as revenue growth, staff numbers, market share, awards).

It's often hard to 'blow your own trumpet', but judges need to know, from your perspective, what you have accomplished to date, what risks have been taken (and the nature of those risks) and what you judge to be your major accomplishments.

Judges are also looking for evidence that you will go on to accomplish even greater things, so explain your trajectory, and what will drive you forward. In 5 or 10 years time, where will you expect to be, and how will you get there?

Only the best answers (that hit **all** these points well) will score in the range of 25–30 marks for this question. Those that hit **most** of these may score 19–24, **some** of these points 13–18, **few** of these points 7–12 and **hardly any** of these points 6 or less.

□ Question 2 – SUCCESS FACTORS

COMPULSORY 25/100 (250 words)

- What do you consider ultimately determined your success?

Demonstrate and highlight how your direct actions were instrumental in achieving this outcome. Judges need to be sure it was your work that led to these successes, specifically.

Detail the factors that you consider had the most impact on achieving your success and why you consider them so.

Back up your points with evidence.

It is perfectly natural (and a sign of good leadership) to thank and credit the team, and that is fine, but judges need to know what you did to create the conditions for the successes.

How did you work with the team, lead the team, get them through the tough times? How did you raise the funds or marshal the resources, grow the business or organisation or department(s) you lead?

What, ultimately, leads to success, and what does success mean to you?

Only the best answers (that hit **all** these points well) will score in the range of 20–25 marks for this question. Those that hit **most** of these may score 16–19, **some** of these points 12–15, **few** of these points 8–11 and **hardly any** of these points 7 or less.

□ **Question 3 – SET-BACKS**

COMPULSORY 15/100 (200 words)

- What were your biggest business/career set-backs or challenges?
- Explain how you dealt with them and what lessons you consider were learnt from the experience(s).

Detail the adversities, risks, challenges or problems you recognised; consider highlighting the entrepreneurial and innovative actions you took to overcome them.

It is perfectly natural to have hardships, often these only make you stronger. Rarely does everything go swimmingly.

The judges want to hear from you about these difficult periods, when plans back-fired, when things got really tough. How did you respond? What did you learn? How did it make you a better business leader?

Only the best answers (that hit **all** these points well) will score 12–15 for this question. Those that hit **most** of these may score 10 or 11, **some** of these points 7–9, **few** of these points 5 or 6 and **hardly any** of these points 4 or less.

□ **Question 4 – VALUES**

COMPULSORY 15/100 (200 words)

- How have your values and behaviours guided you in your professional endeavours?

Values relate to your inner beliefs that guide your behaviours. Behaviours describe how you act or conduct yourself.

Maybe you have not analysed your values before, but the judges need to know what deep, ingrained principles drive you. Core values are sacrosanct, they can never be compromised – so what are they in your case?

They want to reward people who display 'the right' values, but you need to explain what these are in your own words. Providing evidence and examples here is essential, in order to back up your argument.

For example, is family important? Making money? Your word? Doing well? Giving back? Growing the organisation? Looking after staff? Looking after customers? Providing a great return for your shareholders or other stakeholders? There could be many, and some may conflict, so how do you resolve this?

Only the best answers (that hit **all** these points well) will score 12–15 for this question. Those that hit **most** of these may score 10 or 11, **some** of these points 7–9, **few** of these points 5 or 6 and **hardly any** of these points 4 or less.

Wider Community

□ Question 5 – PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

COMPULSORY 5/100 (100 words)

- Detail any industry recognition, peer recognition, areas of professional expertise, scholarships, honours, awards, published works, professional partnerships or similar.
- How far have you 'risen' in your profession, and how can you demonstrate that to the judges?

Some awards are worth more than others, as they are national or even international, or are highly competitive. Similarly, professional recognition can vary from being placed on a major board or overseeing a committee to keynote speaking at an annual conference or being interviewed in the media on a particular subject.

Often, recognition may not be as public as this, and may lie in customer testimonials, online reviews or letters from peers.

Only the best answers (that hit **all** these points well) will score 5 for this question. Those that hit **most** of these may score 4, **some** of these points 3, **few** of these points 2 and **hardly any** of these points 1 or less.

□ Question 6 – COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

COMPULSORY 10/100 (100 words)

- Detail any community involvement, whether for the good of one or more people or the entire community.
- The judges are looking for how you have already left your mark on your local community, and what plans you have to grow this in the future.
- More generally what has been the contribution of your business to Western Australia. Have you made Western Australia a better place?

Involvement can be past or present. Examples may include active service or memberships in community organisations, honours and awards received for community involvement or any other action to which the community is the beneficiary.

Giving back to the broader community can be through the day to day work you do, as a medical practitioner, community organiser, NFP (not for profit) leader or the company you run or work in.

It might be that you do this kind of work in addition to your normal day to day job, by sitting on NFP or school boards, coaching a team for a local club, giving to charities or helping others as best you can.

Judges are looking for a well-rounded leader, who can demonstrate they are doing more than building (or working in) a growing organisation, even though that is a noble endeavour in itself.

Only the best answers (that hit **all** these points well) will score 9 or 10 for this question. Those that hit **most** of these may score 7 or 8, **some** of these points 5 or 6, **few** of these points 3 or 4 and **hardly any** of these points 2 or less.

This concludes the direct scoring section of your application

Attachments

COMPULSORY

Colour photographs (high res. 300dpi 15 x 20cm)

- ☐ 1 high resolution 'on the job' or candid work related photo
- ☐ 1 high resolution profile/head and shoulders colour photo
- ☐ other related photo (optional)

Top Business Tip

OPTIONAL

- ☐ Describe briefly those "special words" or "inspirational quotations" which have motivated you to succeed.

Qualifications

OPTIONAL

- ☐ Qualifications (QF1)
- ☐ Name (title) of qualification
- ☐ Institution/body that issued qualification
- ☐ Year qualification obtained (or ongoing)
- ☐ Description of qualification (optional)
- ☐ Qualifications (QF2)
- ☐ Name (title) of qualification
- ☐ Institution/body that issued qualification
- ☐ Year qualification obtained (or ongoing)
- ☐ Description of qualification (optional)

Memberships

OPTIONAL

- ☐ Professional/industry memberships (PIM1)
- ☐ Name of membership/affiliation
- ☐ Description
- ☐ Professional/industry memberships (PIM2)
- ☐ Name of membership/affiliation
- ☐ Description
- ☐ Extra/additional academic and professional information or details you wish to include