

FUTURE CAMPUS AWARDS 2026

In recognition of key achievements by university staff in Australia and New Zealand, the Future Campus 2026 Awards will recognise the nation’s leading work in Marketing, Communications and Advancement over the past year.

The awards, to be judged by an eminent panel of sector experts, will be presented at the HE FEST 2026 conference on 22 September 2026 in Sydney.

The awards recognise excellence in planning, strategy and outcome and will be judged by an eminent independent panel.

All submissions must be made via our online form at www.hefest.com.au/awards

KEY DATES AND DETAILS

This document is a guide to submitting your award submission.

Submissions for awards:

- Award submissions open - Monday 1 June 2026
- **Deadline for submission of awards – 5pm AEDT on Friday 31 July 2026**
- Submissions will only be accepted after this time in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of Future Campus.
- Individuals and/or teams can be nominated. It is the responsibility of entrants to name entrants they wish to recognise in their award entry. Because of issues with trophies and the need for a degree of brevity, only three individuals may be named, otherwise a team name should be provided.
- The work must be the work of the entrants named
- Selected entries will be profiled in Future campus prior to awards being announced. Profiles by Future Campus have no bearing in relation to selection of award winners.
- Winners Announced – at HE FEST conference on 22 September 2026, Macquarie University campus and published in Future Campus on 23 September.

PRIMARY CONTACT

The primary contact will be the person to whom all communications regarding the award submission will be sent.

Title (Mr, Mrs, Dr, etc.)	
First name	
Last name	
Position	
Organisation	
Email	
Phone or mobile	

AWARD SUBMISSION

Please identify which award category you are entering – noting that entrants can only apply for one category per entry. Applicants are allowed to apply for multiple awards.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Judging criteria for each award is outlined in brief below. Please note that all award submissions must follow the format outlined in the award submission form below. The answers given will then be used to assess entries against the criteria below.

Judges will be asked to evaluate submissions against the criteria below on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is very little and 5 is very high.

No.	Category	Criteria
1	Best University Marketing campaign 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated impact, linking campaign to direct and indirect outcomes of strategic importance to institution • Value for money – demonstrating outcome vs financial cost • Innovation - standing out from others through thought leadership and / or creativity • Targeting – efficiently and effectively targeting audiences • Effective lessons for other projects/ disciplines/institutions • Campaign must have been run during 2025 and /or 2026.
2	The Matchett Award - Best University Communications Campaign 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated impact, linking campaign to direct and indirect outcomes of strategic importance to institution • Open to internal and/or external communication campaigns • Value for money – demonstrating outcome vs financial cost • Innovation - standing out from others through thought leadership and / or creativity • Targeting – efficiently and effectively targeting audiences • Effective lessons for other projects/ disciplines/institutions • Campaign must have been run during 2025 and /or 2026.
3	Best University Recruitment Initiative 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated impact – goals, outcomes and alignment with institutional strategy • Value for money – demonstrating outcome vs financial cost • Innovation - standing out from others through thought leadership and / or creativity • Targeting – efficiently and effectively targeting audiences

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective lessons for other projects/ disciplines/institutions
4	Best University Fundraising Campaign 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated impact – goals, outcomes and alignment with institutional strategy • Value for money – demonstrating outcome vs financial cost • Innovation - standing out from others through thought leadership and / or creativity • Targeting – efficiently and effectively targeting audiences • Effective lessons for other projects/ disciplines/institutions • Campaign must have been run during 2025 and /or 2026.
5	Best Low Budget Campaign 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget for \$15,000 or less (non-salary spend) • Demonstrated impact, linking campaign to direct and indirect outcomes of strategic importance to institution • Value for money – demonstrating outcome vs financial cost • Innovation - standing out from others through thought leadership and / or creativity • Targeting – efficiently and effectively targeting audiences • Effective lessons for other projects/ disciplines/institutions • Campaign must have been run during 2025 and /or 2026.
6	Best Photograph 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images must be created by students or staff at an Australian or New Zealand tertiary institution • Must include description of how and why the photograph was captured • Must include examples of how photograph was used • Must identify why photograph is exceptional in terms of photographic qualities and also impact • Value for money – demonstrating outcome proportional to financial cost • Identification of key personnel involved in project • Innovation - standing out from others through thought leadership and / or creativity • Effective lessons for other projects/ disciplines/institutions • Must relate to initiatives in 2025 and/or 2026
7	Best Agency Partnership 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to initiatives relating to all aspects of Advancement – marketing, communications, recruitment, fundraising, alumni relations • Demonstrated impact – goals, outcomes and alignment with institutional strategy

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money – demonstrating outcome proportional to financial cost • Identification of key personnel involved in project • Innovation - standing out from others through thought leadership and / or creativity • Targeting – efficiently and effectively targeting audiences • Effective lessons for other projects/ disciplines/institutions • Initiative must have occurred during 2025 and/or 2026.
8	Best use of AI outside of Learning, Teaching and Assessment 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This award is intended to recognise best use of generative AI outside of learning and teaching • Entries will be judged on impact, value for money, innovation and sector leadership • Demonstrated impact – goals, outcomes and alignment with institutional strategy • Value for money – demonstrating outcome proportional to financial cost • Identification of key personnel involved in project • Innovation - standing out from others through thought leadership and / or creativity • Targeting – efficiently and effectively targeting audiences • Effective lessons for other projects/ disciplines/institutions • Initiative must have occurred during 2025 and/or 2026.
9	Best Student Marketing Campaign 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to undergraduate students in any Australian or New Zealand tertiary institution • Students must develop a 2 minute video pitch and 5 page Presentation (PowerPoint or similar program) • Topic: To be Announced in June • Shortlisted teams will be invited to present their pitch to the HE FEST conference • This competition aims to showcase the capabilities of students • Students from all disciplines are eligible to enter

FUTURE CAMPUS 2026 AWARD SUBMISSION FORM

Key questions and additional information about the awards are reproduced below for your convenience, but please note that all entries must be submitted through our online portal at www.hefest.com.au/awards

An individual application form should be filled out for each category entered. Please note we can make the award to either an individual or a team. The name of the entrant provided will be listed on the trophy if the entrant is selected as the winner.

If entering the Best Agency Partnership award, please write name of agency and institutional partner in the Full Name box below

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM ENTERING AWARD

Full name of individual or team (Max. 3 individuals)

Position

Organisation

AWARD CATEGORY

No.	Category	Please check box
1	Best University Marketing campaign 2026	
2	Best University Communications campaign 2026	
3	Best University Recruitment initiative 2026	
4	Best University Fundraising campaign 2026	
5	Best Low Budget campaign 2026	
6	Best Photograph 2026	
7	Best Agency Partnership 2026	
8	Best use of AI outside of Learning, Teaching and Assessment 2026	
9	Best Student Marketing Campaign 2026	

TITLE

Please write the title of your entry

Maximum: 90 characters

ENTER TEXT HERE

GOALS

Please write goals (dot points preferred)

Maximum: 150 words

ENTER TEXT HERE

CONTEXT

Please outline

- Why you undertook this project or initiative - and what you attempted to achieve
- What others /you had done before and how this project improved outcomes
- What you did to deliver the project
- How you measured outcomes
- Who you involved inside and outside of the university
- When your project started and finished

Embed screenshots of projects as needed

Maximum: **750 words**

ENTER TEXT HERE

INSIGHTS

Please describe what you learned from the project, and insights significant to you /others

Please outline in dot points:

- Measurable outcomes in terms of project and how that contributes to your institution's strategic goals
- SWOT analysis

Maximum: **300 words**

ENTER TEXT HERE

VIDEO

Please submit a video of showcasing your project and insights that would be relevant to others.

- Judges will assess the videos based on the clarity and value of insights relevant to others
- Videos will not be judged based on production values.

Video length: **no more than 2 minutes**

ENTER TEXT HERE

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Submission of awards is free of charge. Acceptance of award submissions does not include conference registration fee, or any other costs associated with conference participation.
- All costs of award entries are the responsibility of award applicants.
- All intellectual property rights in all award submissions, presentations, documentation and materials published or otherwise made available as part of the Future Campus Awards and Conference are owned by the Speaker or are included with the permission of the owner of the rights. All such material is protected by the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth) and other international copyright and intellectual property laws.
- In entering this competition, all entrants grant Future Campus rights to use the contents of Award submissions in whole, edited, or in part, at the sole discretion of the Publisher of Future Campus. This includes video submissions, which may be published by Future Campus at the sole discretion of the Publisher of Future Campus.
- This competition is run in accordance with the Terms and Conditions and Privacy Policy of Future Campus.
- Award winners will be selected at the sole discretion of the judging panel established by Future Campus and no correspondence will be entered into. Judging Panel decisions on the selection of award winners are final.
- Award entrants may be asked to speak at HE FEST 26 ('Conference') to share insights relating to their award entry. Speakers must purchase a conference ticket to attend the Conference.
- Materials provided as part of award submissions will not be returned.
- Future Campus reserves the right not to make an award if judges do not believe entries demonstrate sufficient excellence to be recognised with award.
- Collaborative projects and initiatives are welcome, but must be entered by a single lead individual
- The judging panel will select up to five entries to be shortlisted in each category. Shortlisted projects will be announced at the HEFEST 26 Conference and published on the Future Campus website.
- Any individual or team may submit a maximum of one entry to any category.

ENQUIRIES

Questions and queries in relation to the awards should be directed to Future Campus Publisher Tim Winkler tim@futurecampus.com.au