



Victorian Aboriginal Education  
Association Inc.

# Wurreker Awards

Nominations Booklet

A dark blue background featuring a complex, repeating pattern of Indigenous Australian art. The pattern includes stylized wavy lines, concentric circles, and handprints, creating a textured, layered effect.

2025

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## Key dates

### Nominations open

8 April 2025

### Nominations close

29 May 2025

### Awards Night

18 September 2025

**\*Dates subject to change**

# President's Message

This year, VAEAI is celebrating the 20th Annual Wurreker Awards. How exciting to mark this milestone! 20 Years of celebrating Koorie student success and achievement in Vocational Education and Training (VET).

When the Wurreker strategy was first initiated, the aim was for more Koorie students to become engaged in VET and associated pathways that would lead to fulfilling and successful careers.



Koorie enrolments in VET have steadily increased in the years since and remain high. High enrolment rates have continued even during the recent global pandemic years. With high numbers of Koorie learners enrolling in VET, VAEAI wants to see continuous system improvement so that Koorie students are supported to complete courses and move into various pathways of their choice – including VET qualifications, university courses and employment that best align with their interests, goals and aspirations. We want to see excellence for all Koorie students – the success that we see celebrated through the Wurreker Awards should be the norm.

Pursuing Koorie success in education remains VAEAI's ongoing goal. With the continuous support of our principal Wurreker partner the Department of Jobs, Services, Industries and Regions (DJSIR), the Wurreker strategy keeps leading the way to high quality VET courses and pathways.

Last year, VAEAI launched Protocols for Koorie Education in Victorian Learn Local Services in partnership with the Adult Community & Further Education (ACFE) Board. The impact of this protocols document has been a resounding success, heard first-hand during our on-site visits with VET providers who regularly use the resource. From supporting service providers in fostering culturally safe learning environments, to building lasting relationships with local Koorie Communities, those resources are paving the way for Koorie learners to thrive in the VET and Higher Education sectors.

VAEAI is now developing an ACFE webinar based on these protocols, bringing to life best practice to many providers who are keen to work with Koorie Communities in a respectful and supportive way. VAEAI is equally keen to facilitate building those strong connections as we know they can lead to fantastic opportunities and outcomes for our learners.

For the 20th edition of the Annual Wurreker Awards, we are counting on you to nominate Koorie students in VET and Higher Education, local training providers and local employers in your community who deserve to be recognised for their commitment to the VET and Higher Education sector – spreading the purpose of Wurreker, the message-carrier. I look forward to seeing you at the 2025 Wurreker Awards.

**Geraldine Atkinson**

VAEAI President

*Geraldine Atkinson*

# Selection process

The selection process for each Award category is as follows:

## Call for Nominations

Opening date is the 8 April 2025. Nominations will end at 29 May 2025

## Addressing Eligibility Requirements

Nominees must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in each of the categories. Nominations that do not meet the eligibility requirements will not be considered.

## Selection Panel

Selection panels will consist of people who have specialist knowledge in vocational education and training, adult education, higher education and employment.

## Shortlisting

Shortlisting of award nominations will be undertaken by members of a selection panel based on how well nominees address the selection criteria for each award category. Shortlisted nominees will be invited to attend the awards ceremony as VAEAI guests.

## Interviews

Nominees who meet the selection criteria will participate in a phone interview with members of the relevant Selection Panel at least four weeks prior to the Awards ceremony.

## Assessment of Nominations

Each award category will be judged on a points system that will be applied at both the shortlisting and interview stages of the selection process.

## Decision Dates

Final decisions concerning Award Winners will be made upon completion of all nominee interviews for each Award category. Award winners will not be notified until the Awards ceremony which will be held in 2025.

## Awards Night

Formal presentation of certificates and awards.

# Individual awards

# Individual Awards eligibility requirements

Previous finalists are eligible to nominate for this years awards

## Community Based Employee

Outstanding achievement in community based employment programs or initiatives.

### Eligibility

- Must be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.
- Must be employed by a Victorian Community Based Organisation.
- Must have achieved excellent outcomes from participation in a community-based employment program or initiative.

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## Public Sector Employee

Outstanding achievement in public sector based employment programs or initiatives.

### Eligibility

- Must be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.
- Must be employed in the Victorian public sector.
- Must have made a significant contribution to their workplace and/or made significant progress in their career.

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## Private Sector Employee

Outstanding achievement in private sector based employment programs or initiatives.

### Eligibility

- Must be an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.
- Must be employed by a Victorian Private Sector employer.
- Must have made a significant contribution to their workplace and/or made significant progress in their career.

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## Teacher/Trainer

This category is open to both Koorie and Non-Koorie applicants, who have excelled in the delivery of training to Victorian Koorie students.

### Eligibility

- Must be a Teacher / Trainer employed by a TAFE, Victorian Registered Training Organisation, Learn Local, University or Group Training Organisation.
- Must be able to demonstrate innovative, flexible and effective training delivery to Koorie students.

# Submitting a nomination



Scan to download  
nomination forms

1. Download the nomination form: <https://www.vaeai.org.au/9608/>
2. Complete the questions on the form.
3. Include at least two referees who can support your application.

**Nominations must be received by no later than close of business 29 May 2025.**

If you have any queries regarding the VAEAI Wurreker Awards, please contact the VAEAI office on (03) 9481-0800 or [wurrekerawards@vaeai.org.au](mailto:wurrekerawards@vaeai.org.au) or your Wurreker Regional Broker.

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## Individual award questions

### Community Based, Private and Public employee

1. What contributions has your nominee made towards their organisation and/or the Koorie community?
2. Why are they deserving of this Award?

### Teacher/Trainer

1. Where do they work as a Teacher or Trainer?
2. How have they made a positive impact towards the learning development of Koorie students?
3. Why are they deserving of the Teacher/Trainer Award?

# **Employer Awards**



# Employer Awards eligibility requirements

Previous finalists are eligible to  
nominate for this years awards

## Community Based Employer

Development and/or delivery of community employment programs or initiatives.

### Eligibility

- Must be a Victorian Community Based Employer.
- Must be able to demonstrate good/best practice in the design and delivery of Koorie employment programs or initiatives.

## Public Sector Employer

Development and/or delivery of innovative employment and training initiatives and/or programs.

### Eligibility

- Must be a Victorian Public Sector or Local Government Employer.
- Must be able to demonstrate good/best practice in the design and delivery of Koorie employment programs or initiatives.

## Private Sector Employer

Development and/or delivery of Innovative employment and training programs or initiatives.

### Eligibility

- Must be a Victorian Private Sector Employer.
- Must be able to demonstrate innovation in employment and training targeted to Koorie people.

# Submitting a nomination

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## Employer award questions

### Public Sector Employer

1. What contributions has the nominee made towards the employment and development of Koorie learners?
2. How does the nominee engage community within their work and how do they demonstrate a shared respect, meaning and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the workplace?
3. Why are they deserving of the Public Sector Employer Award?

### Private Sector Employer

1. What contributions has the nominee made towards the employment and development of Koorie learners?
2. How does the nominee engage community within their work and how do they demonstrate a shared respect, meaning and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the workplace?
3. Why are they deserving of the Private Sector Employer Award?

### Community Based Employer

1. What contributions has your nominee made towards the employment and development of Koorie learners?
2. How does the nominee engage community within their work and how do they demonstrate a shared respect, meaning and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the workplace?
3. Why are they deserving of the Community Based Employer Award?

# **Training Provider Awards**

# Training Provider Awards eligibility requirements

Previous finalists are eligible to nominate for this years awards

## Koorie Organisation – Dr Mary Atkinson Award

The development and/or delivery of training programs which build the skills of the workforce and the overall capabilities of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) in Victoria.

### Eligibility

- Applicants must be a Victorian Aboriginal Community controlled organisation.
- Must be able to demonstrate its role in the development and/or delivery of effective Koorie training programs.

## Innovative Koorie Learner Pathways: TAFE Provider

This award is for new and innovative Community driven/led programs and initiatives (including partnerships) that have resulted in improved pathways and career or employment outcomes for Koorie learners in Victoria.

### Eligibility

- Must be a Victorian TAFE Institute.
- Must be actively involved in community driven partnership arrangements which support career development and employment outcomes for its Koorie students.

## Innovative Koorie Learner Pathways: Non-TAFE Provider

This award is for new and innovative Community driven/led programs and initiatives (including partnerships) that have resulted in improved pathways and career or employment outcomes for Koorie learners in Victoria.

### Eligibility

- Must be either a Victorian Learn Local, Private Registered Training Organisation or University.
- Must support the Wurreeker Strategy through active involvement in community driven partnership arrangements which support career development and employment outcomes for its Koorie students.

# Submitting a nomination

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2. Complete the questions on the form.
3. Include at least two referees who can support your application.



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## Training award questions

### **Koorie Organisation – Dr Mary Atkinson Award**

1. What programs or initiatives impressed you from this organisation?
2. Why are they deserving of the Dr. Mary Atkinson – Koorie Organisation Award?

### **Innovative Koorie Learner Pathways – TAFE Provider**

1. Why are they deserving of the Innovative Koorie Learner Pathways TAFE Award?
2. What contributions has your nominee made towards driving programs, initiatives or partnerships in the TAFE sector?
3. How has the output of this provider resulted in improved pathways and career or employment outcomes for Koorie learners in Victoria?

### **Innovative Koorie Learner Pathways – Non-TAFE Provider**

1. Why are they deserving of the Innovative Koorie Learner Pathways Award – Non-TAFE provider Award?
2. Is your nominee a community driven program or initiative that contributes to Koorie training and education?
3. How has your nominee contributed to improving pathways and career or employment outcomes for Koorie learners in Victoria?



# Wurreker Broker Contacts

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# Wurreker Awards 2025

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