

# MEDIA STATEMENT

**FOR RELEASE:  
Friday 24 March 2023**



## **Innovation and ingenuity take centre stage at Consult Australia Awards**

World-leading projects and world-class leaders were applauded last night at the Consult Australia Awards.

Australia has 58,600-plus design, advisory and engineering consulting businesses around the country – and this makes the annual Consult Australia Awards a hotly-contested competition.

The awards, held in Sydney at The Everleigh on Thursday 23 March 2023, honoured consulting firms operating across Australia’s built and natural environment sectors in 2022.

Thirteen categories were awarded, including client service, project excellence, innovative design, and superior sustainability.

“We received a record number of award submissions this year, which speaks to the strength of the industry as a global centre of excellence,” says Consult Australia’s Chief Executive Officer, Jonathan Cartledge.

Andrew Mather received the prestigious **Consult Australia President’s Award** for his four-decade industry contribution. “Andrew is a former national president, mentor, guide and speaker who rolls up his sleeves whenever we put out the call for help,” says Rowenna Walker, Consult Australia National President and Aurecon’s Managing Director – NSW/ACT.

The **Champions of Change Award for Female Leadership** was presented to AECOM’s Melanie Collett for her technical skills, experience in water resource management and for her work to mentor emerging women leaders.

Aurecon’s Pratik Shrestha was presented with the **Future Leader Award** in recognition of his passion for innovation and his work to lead a world-first robotics technology trial at Western Australia’s first and largest mass-engineered timber building.

Boutique structural engineering consultancy Geotron was named **Small Firm of the Year**. “Our judges applauded Geotron’s winning combination of engineering excellence and commitment to innovation,” Mr Cartledge notes.

Employee-owned environmental and social consulting business Umwelt took home the **Medium Firm of the Year** category. “Umwelt’s people-focused culture caught our judges’ attention – especially the #MeDay initiative that gives every team member an extra 12 days of annual leave to do whatever makes them happy,” Mr Cartledge adds.

Jacobs was presented with the **Large Firm of the Year** gong. “With a talent force edging above 55,000 people and \$14 billion in annual revenue, Jacobs has a huge global footprint – and is using that to champion important issues from climate change to diversity.”

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A list of award winners and more information about the [Consult Australia Awards](#) is available online.

“Australia’s design, advisory and engineering firms are fiercely competitive, and everyone wants to know what leadership looks like,” says Mr Cartledge.

“Our awards point directly to that leadership and challenge everyone in the built and natural environments to move further and faster together.”

**A full list of award winner citations is provided overleaf...**

## **About Consult Australia**

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting businesses in design, advisory and engineering – an industry with 58,600-plus businesses across Australia. Consult Australia champions the full spectrum of a sector that directly employs more than 285,000 people. Our members provide professional consulting solutions to individual consumers, private sector companies, and public sector clients across all three tiers of government. From building design to advisory services on major infrastructure, our members shape, create and sustain Australia’s built and national environments. See: [www.consultaustralia.com.au](http://www.consultaustralia.com.au)

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## **Award for Client Service Excellence**

*The Emergency Department Modular Hospitals Procurement Program, Aurecon*

The design of a typical emergency department takes 18 months and construction a further three years. But as Melbourne faced a wave of COVID-19 in late 2021, the Victorian Health Building Authority (VHBA) didn't have the luxury of time. VHBA appointed Aurecon, as Program Manager & Principal Consultant, to deliver three of the largest, most technical modular healthcare facilities in Australia to date. With the help of innovative procurement, transparent communication and team alignment, Aurecon successfully managed the design, engineering, construction and delivery in just five months.

## **Collaboration for Project Excellence**

*Sydney Water Planning Partnership, Sydney Water, Aurecon and Arup*

This 10-year partnership between Sydney Water, Aurecon and Arup is the largest consultant engagement for an Australian water utility. An industry 'first' in terms of integrated engagement, the partnership spans everything from planning to project management, heritage advice to geotechnical engineering, community consultation to delivery of a \$1 billion annual capital works program. A 'one-team' partnership approach means Sydney Water can scale up or down as needed. The result? A sharper focus on the customer and the community, and a legacy of value-for-money water infrastructure.

## **Future Leader Award**

*Pratik Shrestha, Aurecon*

Smart technical skills, a passion for advanced technology and a commitment to strong client relationships are hallmarks of Pratik Shrestha's career. An active industry contributor, a guest lecturer and generous mentor, Pratik, Aurecon's Associate for Building Structures, also champions ideas that could help Australia's built environment make a large, sustainable leap forward. Pratik led a world-first robotics technology trial at Murdoch University's Boola Katitjin – Western Australia's first and largest mass-engineered timber building. Robots installed around 100 of the building's 200,000 timber screw fixings – providing a proof of concept that could automate a labour-intensive task, boost productivity, reduce costs, improve safety and ultimately deliver more sustainable timber buildings.

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## **Innovative Design Award**

*Allianz Stadium, Aurecon*

With a unique approach to design and digital workflows, Aurecon contributed to the delivery of Sydney's Allianz Stadium in record time while achieving cost savings and sustainability outcomes. The \$828 million stadium, which opened in August 2022, was constructed against a backdrop of COVID-19 supply chain challenges and wet weather. With the program compressed by six months, Aurecon introduced a novel digital engineering workflow system. The stadium's roof – which can shelter up to 42,500 fans – features almost 5,000 individual pieces of steel, each with a unique geometry. This design is lighter than traditional stadia and uses 40% less steel. Designed for disassembly and reuse, the roof showcases leading-edge circular economy principles.

## **Champions of Change Award for Female Leadership**

*Melanie Collett, AECOM*

With 24 years of experience in water resource management, AECOM Australia New Zealand's Director of Technical Excellence Melanie Collett is a role model to many. Melanie helps clients to meet both commercial and sustainability imperatives, and led AECOM to update its Safety in Design guidelines to include sustainability. As a founder of the global AECOM Water Academy, Melanie helped to establish an advanced training program for emerging technical leaders. An active mentor and coach, Melanie has empowered more than 20 of AECOM's female technical practice leaders. And as an industry expert, Melanie reviews university engineering courses to ensure students are equipped with up-to-date skills.

## **Superior Sustainability Award**

The judges awarded joint winners in this category.

*Gap Road, Sunbury, Rail Bridge (Level Crossing Removal), AECOM*

From the early stages of design right through to completion in June 2022, the Gap Road rail bridge was more than just a physical structure. AECOM's innovative design improved sightlines across the road, upgraded lighting to enhance safety and deter vandalism, and elevated the aesthetics through patterned pavements. The project team partnered with Indigenous artist Teena Moffatt to celebrate and recognise First Nations culture and heritage in an artwork that adorns the bridge. The community-centred design strengthens social, cultural and community connections and fosters a sense of town pride.

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*SA Water Zero Cost Energy Future program, Aurecon*

Australia's water industry is energy intensive, consuming around 3,000 GWh of electricity each year – and SA Water is responsible for almost one fifth of that. SA Water's Zero Cost Energy Future program, delivered in partnership with Aurecon, saw 367,000 solar panels installed at 33 sites across the state. Most utility-scale solar projects are developed at a single location, and this project is a water industry world-first which demanded 33 individual designs, construction sites and delivery teams. The program has helped neutralise SA Water's electricity costs, which had climbed to nearly \$83 million in 2019, and to deliver sustainable savings to customers.

## **People First Award**

*New and Enhanced Flexibility and Well-Being Support, Jacobs*

A suite of benefits and services that go above-and-beyond industry standards provide true value to Jacobs' greatest asset – its people. Jacobs' policies recognise that flexible working needs to be flexible. The myFlex policy offers flexibility to anyone, in any role and for any reason. The 'parental leave for all' policy enhances benefits for primary and secondary carers. The myLink return-to-work program supports employees before, during and after a period of parental leave. And a partnership with ReThinkCare offers parents and caregivers access to 24/7 support as they raise happy, healthy and resilient children.

## **Technological Innovation Award**

*Smart Sewer Network Tool, Stantec*

In the past, engineers would manually identify where and how to connect homes to a sewer network. But Stantec's innovative tool saves valuable time by automating this repetitive task. Stantec's Sewer Network Tool uses coding languages and criteria to identify cost-efficient networks. The tool tests thousands of options for possible connections based on elevation, asset and lifecycle costs, soil makeup and more. So far, Stantec has used the tool to connect sanitation services to more 34,000 previously unsewered properties across Australia and New Zealand – and to do so at the lowest cost to communities.

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## **Small Business Excellence**

The judges awarded joint winners in this category.

*Operations, Collaboration, and Innovation for the Construction Industry, Geotron*

Overcoming the disconnect between project participants at the early procurement stages is a perennial challenge – but one exacerbated by the global pandemic. Boutique structural engineering consultancy Geotron responded with a minimal viable product called Gmetrik. This innovative digital web-based platform enables all stakeholders involved in a building project to collaborate at the concept stage of design. This exciting software development project highlights just how imaginative solutions can tackle some of the industry's toughest challenges.

*Engineering Management Excellence, Ediom*

Established in 2019 by Georgina Mahony and Terry Cotton, Ediom prides itself on its team of technical translators. After spotting a gap between traditional design consultants, contractors and project management consultancies, Ediom began to focus on achieving excellence in engineering management or, as its team likes to call it, "technically knowledgeable management". From brownfield rail to train depots, major road to systems engineering, Ediom has tackled a wide range of projects and has expanded to a team of 20 people working in Victoria, New South Wales and the ACT.

## **Consult Australia President's Award**

*Andrew Mather*

A visionary leader in sustainable design and engineering, Andrew Mather has dedicated his four-decade career to creating a better world – and Consult Australia's members have been the beneficiaries of this commitment. Andrew's contribution is extensive and has delivered real-world industry impact. He was Consult Australia's National President from 2015 to 2017 and a member of the NSW committee from 2014 to 2022. He spent four years as a mentor for Consult Australia's FutureNet Business Leaders Program, was a member of the Champions of Change group, and is currently a national awards judge. An influential industry voice on topics from, Andrew is sought out by everyone from established leaders to rising stars.

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## **Small Firm of the Year**

### *Geotron*

A boutique but growing structural engineering consultancy, Geotron was started in 2015 from a home office and today has seven employees. Geotron has amassed an impressive portfolio of projects, ranging from school infrastructure to sport facilities, mid-rise residential to industrial facilities. One of Geotron's clients, the Police Citizens Youth Clubs has engaged the team to design projects at 30 sites including a \$23 million sports facility in Wagga Wagga. Geotron's commitment to engineering excellence and approach to innovation were applauded by the judges.

## **Medium Firm of the Year**

### *Umwelt*

Established in 1993, Umwelt has grown to become a leading employee-owned environmental and social consulting business with a strong presence across Australia. Umwelt is working on an impressive array of projects, from renewable and alternative energy technologies to defence infrastructure – but it is the work to enhance its people offering that caught the judges' attention. In 2021, Umwelt introduced #MeDay – an initiative that gives every member of its team an extra 12 days of leave each year to do whatever makes them happy. #MeDay complements Umwelt's other long established workplace programs, including an employee share plan.

## **Large Firm of the Year**

### *Jacobs*

With a talent force edging above 55,000 people and \$14 billion in annual revenue, Jacobs has a huge global footprint. With that global footprint comes a global responsibility – and Jacobs is taking an industry-leading position on a variety of issues, including climate change, mental and physical wellbeing, and diversity. Jacobs has set an ambitious net zero target across the value chain by 2040, for instance, and was one of the first companies to set science-based targets. By investing in technology, scientific discovery and cutting-edge manufacturing, Jacobs demonstrates how engineers are the world's great problem solvers.