

2021 Awards for Excellence – Future Leader

The OneConsult 2021 Awards for Excellence Future Leader Award winner has been announced as James Leiper.

James Leiper from Pritchard Francis has been recognised as this year's Consult Australia 2021 Future Leader Award Winner. This award acknowledges professional staff of firms aged 35 years and under who have made a significant contribution to their firm and added value in a demonstrable way.

Winner
James Leiper
Pritchard Francis

James Leiper is a dynamic Engineer and an industry-leading advocate for sustainability and innovation. Growing up in country Western Australia, James graduated as Dux of Esperance Senior High School in 2005 and went on to study engineering at the University of Western Australia in 2006. He was awarded the Pritchard Francis UWA Scholarship during his third year, which facilitated a 12-week internship at the firm, including a two-week secondment to Bonacci in Melbourne.

James completed his final-year thesis in conjunction with a project designed by Pritchard Francis and went on graduate with First Class Honours in 2009. James began a Graduate Engineer position with BG&E in 2009 and worked on the largest commercial construction project in Western Australia at the time, Fiona Stanley Hospital.

In 2011, James commenced employment with Pritchard Francis where his career has gone from strength to strength, progressing from Engineer, to Project Engineer, to Project Leader, to Associate, and then into the role of Lead – Strategic Development. James has now taken on the challenging new role of Regional Director – Great Southern, having recently relocated to Albany with his young family. James has quickly established the new regional office from the ground up with a dynamic and steadfast approach.

Since making the move in mid-2021 James has swiftly expanded the firm's presence in the region, building extensive relationships and introducing Pritchard Francis to new clients and unique opportunities. As testament to James' aptitude and acumen,

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FOR RELEASE 31/3/22 - 11:00PM



the Albany office has been awarded a multitude of projects in recent months, facilitating the need for a larger office space, and expanding the local team. Throughout his decade-long tenure at the firm, James has continually sought to improve his knowledge and develop his professional skills.

He became a Chartered Professional Engineer in 2014 and is a qualified Green Star Accredited Professional. James is also an Infrastructure Sustainability Council Accredited Professional and in 2017 was awarded Engineers Australia Young Professional Engineer of the Year. Keen to improve his knowledge and professional skills, James continually undertakes professional development and hopes to complete further management courses in the future.

During his progressive career with Pritchard Francis, James has been active in contributing to the firm, especially from a business and technical development perspective. In 2019, he started and sat as the Chair of the Innovation and Sustainability Committee. James' knowledge of the Green Star and Infrastructure Sustainability programs, as well as his passion for sustainability and new construction methods, helped to push the firm's agenda and ensure it remained a priority for all staff.

James has also played a pivotal role in the continuous improvement of the firms' digital technologies. James is an active member of multiple industry groups and has undertaken significant voluntary work throughout his career. Outside of the office, he is very active at local sporting clubs and has completed several running and endurance events including the Busselton Half-Ironman and Great Australian Outback Marathon.

Consult Australia has also recognised Sam Linke and Amy Clark as Highly Commended 2021 Awards for Excellence in the category of Future Leader.

Highly Commended Sam Linke Aurecon

International engineering and advisory company Aurecon's Sam Linke has been recognised as Highly Commended in Consult Australia's Awards for Excellence Future Leader category.

An advocate for equitable and adaptable transport solutions that utilise new technologies and promote sustainability, Sam is an internationally recognised civil

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FOR RELEASE 31/3/22 - 11:00PM



engineer and transport advisor who leads Aurecon's Integrated Transport and Mobility Capability.

Her contributions to place-making projects across Australia and Asia, including Kuala Lumpur Sentral Station Upgrade and the current Suburban Rail Loop in Melbourne, are leading to better transport outcomes.

"For me, delivering transport projects is very much about getting the balance right. I work to ensure every project will be used for as long as possible and is an integrated part of a community," Sam said. "It's not just about making something bigger so it can carry more people. My approach emphasises what I describe as the 'discipline of being thoughtful'. It's about ensuring that everyone has equal access to transport no matter where they live and that public transport options are convenient and easy for people to use."

After returning to Aurecon from parental leave in early 2021, Sam was appointed to her current Capability Leader role. She leads an international team that supports innovation in the transport sector. "I act as a proactive influencer, helping to shape Aurecon's offering through my strong leadership abilities. It's about leading by anticipating client needs and having richer discussions with industry that lead to better, greener, more sustainable outcomes," Sam said. "Being a parent has changed my perspective of how the community uses transport infrastructure. I feel an enormous sense of responsibility to get it right. By viewing what I advocate for through a more personal lens I have become an even more effective leader, understanding transport use from many different points of view."

At 34, Sam is already making a significant impact as a leader in the transport industry. She has been Vice President of the ANZ Division and previously a Board member of the Institute of Transportation Engineers, and she is an active contributor to various transport industry associations, acting as host, MC and organiser for many industry events. Most recently, Sam has worked with non-profit advocacy organisation UITPANZ to deliver training and education on transforming public transport post-COVID-19.

Aurecon's Managing Director, Clients & Markets Angus Leitch said Sam's willingness to share knowledge across the industry is widely recognised. In 2020, Monash University named Sam 'Industry Advisory Committee Member of the Year' for supporting the design of civil engineering courses actively helping students to make a positive industry start. She helped devise a new subject examining how engineers work with stakeholders. "Sam excels at making advice contextual and integrated so that we don't solve problems in silos, importantly Sam is one of the few that really understand that the advice she gives is all about the people," Angus said. "She's

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FOR RELEASE 31/3/22 - 11:00PM



passionate about giving back to the transport sector and we are all really proud of Sam being recognised by Consult Australia as a Future Leader.”

Highly Commended

Amy Clark

Aurecon

Amy Clark, Senior Engineer within Aurecon’s Building Structures group, has been recognised as Highly Commended in Consult Australia’s Awards for Excellence Future Leader category.

Amy was recognised for her significant contributions to the engineering profession and the communities within which she works. Amy was instrumental in delivering the design for the Central Station project. As the only underground station to be constructed within a live station environment, minimising disruption to commuters was paramount. Amy undertook the complex structural analysis of the new Northern Concourse entrance, metro box atrium structure, and Devonshire Street Tunnel underpinning, ensuring the heritage station remained open to commuters throughout the refurbishment.

As Innovations Lead for the Pitt Street integrated station development, Amy incorporated user-centred design thinking within technical design management, risk mitigation, and interface management to ensure the priorities of end-users were at the heart of every technical design decision. Amy managed the complex technical interfaces between line-wide, asset-management, and building services design and was pivotal in maintaining programme despite the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic mid-delivery.

“As engineers, we are designers, inventors, managers, and makers. We tell the story of how things work. And, ultimately, we are humanitarians. We are privileged to devote our careers to improving the well-being of people and communities, to tangibly contributing to future-shaping projects, and to career-long learning in mastering our craft of engineering,” said Amy.

In conjunction with delivering major infrastructure projects, Amy contributes to the engineering profession and industry more broadly through her advocacy and voluntary work. Amy represents the NSW / ACT region within Aurecon’s Diversity & Inclusion Council for Australia and New Zealand, which drives inclusion within the business.

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FOR RELEASE 31/3/22 - 11:00PM



As a mental health advocate and accredited Mental Health First Aider, Amy offers emergency and preventative support, and promotes awareness to destigmatize mental illness within the demanding project delivery environment. Amy has also delivered sustainable futures design competitions, promoting the inherent humanitarian obligations of the profession in delivering sustainable engineering solutions, in her leadership of the regional Technical Excellence strategy.

Outside of Aurecon, Amy regularly participates in high-school outreach programmes inspiring girls towards careers in STEM. Through guest tenures and as an industry partner, Amy is committed to supporting the next generation of designers, having lectured at both the University of Sydney and the University of Wollongong, and collaborated with research students of computational design at the University of New South Wales.

“The OneConsult Future Leader programme brings visibility to our contribution within the community and gives cause to celebrate our oftentimes quiet-achieving profession. I am honoured by the recognition granted by this award, and am deeply grateful for the opportunities afforded by our clients and colleagues,” Amy added. Recognised for her outstanding contribution to the engineering profession, Amy was also recently awarded Sydney’s Young Professional Engineer of the Year by Engineers Australia.

Congratulations to our Award Winner James Leiper, and our Highly Commended winners Sam Linke and Amy Clark.

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting businesses in design, advisory and engineering, an industry comprised of over 58,600 businesses across Australia. This includes some of Australia’s top 500 companies and many small businesses (97%). Our members provide solutions for individual consumers through to major companies in the private sector and across all tiers of government. Our industry directly employs over 285,000 people in architectural, engineering, and technical services, and many more in advisory and business support. It is also a job creator for the Australian economy, the services we provide unlock many more jobs across the construction industry and the broader community.

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FOR RELEASE 31/3/22 - 11:00PM



NOTES TO EDITOR

1. About Consult Australia

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2. About Nicola Grayson

Nicola Grayson is the Chief Executive of Consult Australia. Nicola is responsible for implementing the organisation's strategy, building ongoing external relationships, and for leading Consult Australia's advocacy and government relations agenda on behalf of members.

Nicola is a member of and former chair of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) Risk, Liability, and Quality Committee. In Australia she chairs the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council's Urban Resilience Task Group and sits on numerous government forums representing the Consult Australia membership. Nicola is the Convenor for Consult Australia's Champions of Change leadership group for gender diversity and inclusion, a member of the Champions of Change Coalition.

Nicola is a government relations specialist, and has represented industry associations in the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Australia. Nicola has worked across a range of sectors including general insurance, consumer finance, alcohol, and education, in addition to consulting engineering. She has an Honours Degree in Law from the United Kingdom and is a member of the Australia Institute of Company Directors.

3. For interview

For more information and to arrange an interview, please contact Nicola Grayson directly on +61499 878 839 or email nicola@consultaaustralia.com.au.