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Rookwood Weir among Queensland Engineering Excellence Award winners

The state's most innovative engineers and engineering projects have been named at the 2024 Engineers Australia Excellence Awards – People and Projects Queensland, held at voco Brisbane City Centre last night.

"The [Engineers Australia Excellence Awards](#) serve as a reminder of the crucial contributions engineers make to improving our lives. These awards celebrate their work while providing inspiration and guidance for future engineers, ensuring that the profession continues to thrive and evolve," said Engineers Australia General Manager – Queensland, Stacey Rawlings.

Local winners will go on to represent their division at the national awards' gala dinner on 21 November at the Brisbane City Hall.

Queensland Project of the Year

Rookwood Weir Project (Sunwater, Acciona, GHD & McCosker)

The Rookwood Weir Project, a major infrastructure development on the lower Fitzroy River, demonstrates excellence in engineering and social responsibility. The project has delivered significant environmental benefits through innovative design improvements, reducing the need for excavation. The Alliance construction model fostered collaboration, with a strong focus on safety, well-being, and mental health. The project also promoted Indigenous and female employment, offering apprenticeships and supporting local agriculture. Recognised with an 'Excellent' rating from the Infrastructure Sustainability Council, the Rookwood Weir Project sets a benchmark for sustainable, world-class projects in regional areas.

Queensland Professional Engineer of the Year:

Sascha Kurz – Infrastructure Project Solutions

Sascha Kurz has had a diverse engineering career and is currently the Director of Infrastructure Project Solutions, a consultancy she founded. As an advocate for the profession, she is the current Chair of the Engineers Australia College of Leadership and Management Committee in Queensland. The judging panel praised her multifaceted career, noting her passion, authenticity, and inclusive leadership style. Sascha's ability to turn ideas into actionable outcomes exemplifies her as a standout engineer.

Queensland Emerging Professional Engineer of the Year

Kelen Marczak Polli - Arup

Kelen Marczak Polli, a Stormwater and Civil Engineer originally from Brazil, moved to Australia in 2018 and currently works at Arup. She is an active volunteer, recently supporting Engineers Australia's Global Engineering Talent (GET) program, which helps overseas-qualified engineers navigate employment opportunities in Australia. The judging panel was impressed by Ms Marczak Polli enthusiasm for the engineering profession and her dedication to both local and global communities.

Risk Engineering Society Risk Engineer Achievement Award

Craig Smith – BMD Construction

Craig Smith, Chief Risk Officer at BMD Group, is recognised for his outstanding leadership in risk management across multiple sectors, including transport, resources, and urban development. His work has strengthened the organisation's risk culture and resilience, particularly during the COVID pandemic. Mr Smith's commitment to mentoring and promoting diversity, alongside his active involvement in professional programmes, highlights his dedication to advancing risk management practices in the engineering industry.

Biomedical College David Dewhurst Award

Dr Lloyd Walker – National Disability Insurance Agency

Dr Lloyd Walker is the recipient of the 2024 David Dewhurst Award for his pioneering work in biomedical and rehabilitation engineering. His leadership in advancing disability services and assistive technologies has had a

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13/09/2024

profound impact on the field. Dr Walker's advocacy and collaborative efforts have significantly shaped rehabilitation engineering in Australia and internationally, making him a well-deserved award recipient.

Chemical College Chemical Engineer Achievement Award Professor Ian O'Hara – Queensland University of Technology

Professor O'Hara is an esteemed engineering educator and chemical engineer, known for his expertise in biofuels, bioenergy, and biomaterials. A trusted advisor to the Queensland Government, he is a prominent advocate for Queensland's biotechnology sector and has played a pivotal role in showcasing Australia's capabilities in this field globally. His dedication to advancing sustainable energy solutions has positioned him as a leader in both academia and industry.

Events like these are not possible without the support of our Excellence Awards category partners:

- Edith Cowan University - Emerging Professional Engineer of the Year
- Bluebeam - Professional Engineer of the Year
- Department of Transport and Main Roads - Engineering Associate of the Year
- Metecno - Project of the Year

Engineers Australia: As Australia's national engineering body, we champion our 127,000 plus members, providing resources, connections and growth for high-value work in our communities.

Ends.

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