

# OPAL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE



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## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure sets out the process and criteria applicable to CQUniversity's Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to CQUniversity staff and students nominating for an Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement, and their referees.

## 3 PROCEDURE

- 3.1 CQUniversity aspires to be Australia's most engaged University and an interactive and collaborative partner in the wellbeing of its many diverse communities. As such, engagement is an integral process within all education and training, research and innovation, and service activity at CQUniversity.
- 3.2 Engaging and connecting with business, industry and community is all about building relationships and establishing partnerships which lead to mutually beneficial outcomes for all stakeholders. Every day, CQUniversity staff and students partner with business, industry and community to create and exchange knowledge, deliver services and find solutions.
- 3.3 The Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement recognise and encourage outstanding engagement by CQUniversity staff and students with the community. The categories available for nomination within these Awards are
- Engaged Education and Training;
  - Engaged Research and Innovation;
  - Engaged Service;
  - Engaged Internal Service

- Engaged Service Learning; and
- Social Innovation.

## **Staff award categories**

### **Engaged education and training; engaged research and innovation; and engaged service**

- 3.4 The three separate categories of Engaged Education and Training, Engaged Research and Innovation, and Engaged Service are open to all current CQUniversity staff members. Within each of these three categories, there will be a maximum of 10 finalist projects and a maximum of two overall winning projects per category, per annum. An Excellence in Engagement Award in each of these categories will consist of:
- a CQUniversity Engagement Opal Pin for each staff member nominated within the winning projects
  - a CQUniversity Engagement Grant of \$2,500 for each of the winning projects, which can be used to further the current engagement project or to establish a new engagement project (subject to approval)
  - recognition of excellence by:
    - citation on CQUniversity's Engagement website;
    - publication in CQUniNews; and
    - CQUniversity Opal Awards Category Winner certificate.
- 3.5 All finalists within these three categories will receive a CQUniversity Opal Award Category Finalist certificate acknowledging their contribution.

#### *Conditions of the grant*

- 3.6 The CQUniversity Engagement Grant will be used in an appropriate manner (as approved by the Engagement and Campuses Office) which will further the development or execution of engagement related activities relevant to CQUniversity. Specific use of grant monies by the winning project teams will be assessed on a case by case basis and the integrity of the award will be maintained by careful application of the eligibility criteria.
- 3.7 Grants will be held by the Engagement and Campuses Office and will be released after the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses), in consultation with the appropriate Head of Department if required, has approved the planned expenditure. A condition of the Award is that the grant is used within one year of its presentation. Any extension on this 12 month period requires the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses).

#### *Selection criteria*

- 3.8 All current CQUniversity staff, including temporary and casual staff, can nominate their project for the Excellence in Engagement Awards under the categories of Engaged Education and Training, Engaged Research and Innovation, and/or Engaged Service.
- 3.9 In all cases, the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement for Engaged Education and Training, Engaged Research and Innovation, and Engaged Service are given for demonstrated outstanding contributions to engagement by working collaboratively with community groups and/or organisations to achieve mutually agreed goals that build capacity, improve wellbeing, and produce sustainable outcomes in the interests of the community and CQUniversity.
- 3.10 The Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Selection Panel will evaluate nominations according to the following criteria:
- evidence of the positive impact of the engagement activity on the community and CQUniversity;
  - evidence of the learning, reflection and growth by the participant/s through their involvement in the engagement activity;
  - the extent to which the engagement activity is aligned with the University's mission, vision and strategy; and

- supporting documentation provided by relevant community groups or organisations. This must include a minimum of two referee statements, preferably from stakeholders who are external to CQUniversity.

#### *Nomination procedures*

- 3.11 The Engagement and Campuses Office will call for nominations from staff who wish to apply for an Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement in the categories of Engaged Education and Training, Engaged Research and Innovation, and/or Engaged Service.
- 3.12 Nominations to each of these three categories must be processed within E-DNA by the closing date. To complete a nomination, staff are required to access [E-DNA](#) via StaffNet, enter their engagement activity (if not already in the database) and complete the nomination form online within the Opal Awards section of E-DNA.
- 3.13 Where a joint nomination is submitted, it must be endorsed by all staff members named within the nomination.
- 3.14 Nominations should be supported by two or more external referees via a written statement, or other evidence, affirming that the nominated project's contribution is outstanding and exemplary of mutually beneficial engagement.
- 3.15 Nominations must address the selection criteria outlined in [Sections 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10](#) above.
- 3.16 Applicants will address the selection criteria in one or two paragraphs each. Referee statements and any other materials seen as supporting the nomination must be uploaded within the Opal Awards section of E-DNA as part of the nomination process. Materials that cannot be uploaded (such as bound publications) should be forwarded to the Engagement and Campuses Office. Such documentation will be retained by the Selection Panel.
- 3.17 Nominations received after the closing date will be considered at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses) and may be held over for the following year's Opal Award round.

#### **Social Innovation**

- 3.18 The category of Social Innovation (Staff) is open to all current CQUniversity staff members. Within this category, there will be a maximum of 10 finalist projects and a maximum of two overall winning projects per annum. An Excellence in Engagement Award in this category consists of:
- a CQUniversity Engagement Opal Pin for each staff member nominated within the winning project/s
  - a CQUniversity Engagement Grant of \$2,500 for each winning project, which can be used to further the current social innovation project or to establish a new social innovation project (subject to approval)
  - recognition of excellence by:
    - citation on CQUniversity's Engagement website;
    - publication in CQUniNews; and
    - CQUniversity Opal Awards Category Winner certificate.
- 3.19 All finalists within this category will receive a CQUniversity Opal Award Category Finalist certificate acknowledging their contribution.

#### *Conditions of the grant*

- 3.20 The CQUniversity Engagement Grant will be used in an appropriate manner (as approved by the Engagement and Campuses Office) which will further the development or execution of social innovation activities relevant to CQUniversity. Specific use of grant monies by the winning project team/s will be assessed on a case by case basis and the integrity of the award will be maintained by careful application of the eligibility criteria.
- 3.21 Grants will be held by the Engagement and Campuses Office and will be released after the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses), in consultation with the appropriate Head of Department if

required, has approved the planned expenditure. A condition of the Award is that the grant is used within one year of its presentation. Any extension on the 12 month period requires the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses).

#### *Selection criteria*

- 3.22 All current CQUniversity staff, including temporary and casual staff, can nominate their project for the Excellence in Engagement Awards under the category of Social Innovation (Staff).
- 3.23 In all cases, the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement for Social Innovation (Staff) are given for demonstrated outstanding contributions to engagement through social innovation by working collaboratively with community and other stakeholders to address entrenched social issues.
- 3.24 The Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Selection Panel will evaluate nominations according to the following criteria:
- evidence of the multi-disciplinary, collaborative approach used;
  - evidence of the strong partnership with, and involvement of, the project beneficiaries;
  - evidence of the innovative solutions used to achieve long-term goals of social change; and
  - supporting documentation provided by relevant community and/or other stakeholders. This must include a minimum of two referee statements, preferably from stakeholders who are external to CQUniversity.

#### *Nomination procedures*

- 3.25 The Engagement and Campuses Office will call for nominations from current staff members who wish to apply for an Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement within the Social Innovation (Staff) award category.
- 3.26 To apply, applicants must complete a CQUniversity Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Nomination Form - Social Innovation (Staff), accessible on the [CQUniversity Policy website](#).
- 3.27 Where a joint nomination is submitted, it must be endorsed by all staff members included on the nomination form.
- 3.28 Nominations should be supported by two or more external referees via a written statement, or other evidence, affirming that the nominated project's contribution is outstanding and exemplary of engagement through social innovation.
- 3.29 Nominations must address the selection criteria outlined in [Sections 3.22, 3.23 and 3.24](#) above.
- 3.30 Applicants will address the selection criteria in one or two paragraphs each. The nomination should be no more than four A4 pages in length, be presented single-sided and affixed with one staple only (please do not bind nominations). Any materials seen as supporting the nomination should be forwarded along with the nomination. Such documentation will be retained by the Selection Panel.
- 3.31 Completed nomination forms (and all supporting documentation) should be submitted by the closing date to [engagement@cqu.edu.au](mailto:engagement@cqu.edu.au). Nominations received after the closing date will be considered at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses) and may be held over for the following year's Opal Award round.

#### **Engaged internal service**

- 3.32 The category of Engaged Internal Service is open to all current CQUniversity staff members. Within this award category, there will be a maximum of three overall winning nominations, per annum. An Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement in this category consists of:
- recognition of excellence by:
    - citation on CQUniversity's Engagement website
    - publication in CQUniNews, and
    - CQUniversity Opal Awards certificate.

### *Selection criteria*

- 3.33 All current CQUniversity staff, including temporary and casual staff, can nominate for an Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement under the category of Engaged Internal Service.
- 3.34 In all cases, the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement for Engaged Internal Service is given for demonstrated participation in internal university activities that align with the selection criteria in Section 3.35 and 3.36 below, and which have improved wellbeing and/or sustainability at CQUniversity.
- 3.35 For the purpose of these awards, internal service is defined as “dedicating time and/or expertise to assist work unit/s other than that of the nominee”. All internal service captured within the nomination should be over and above the inherent role requirements of the nominee, and be entered in the E-DNA database.
- 3.36 The Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Selection Panel will evaluate nominations according to the following criteria:
- evidence of the internal service undertaken (including evidence of corresponding E-DNA entries, and confirmation via two referee statements (one from the nominee’s supervisor));
  - evidence and extent that the internal service undertaken is above and beyond the normal day to day commitments of the nominee’s role (including confirmation via the supervisor’s referee statement);
  - evidence of the impact and learnings as a result of the internal service, including that of the nominee, and the associated work units they engaged with; and
  - valid referee statements from the nominee’s supervisor, and one additional CQUniversity representative (preferably from a work unit that the nominee engaged with).

### *Nomination procedures*

- 3.37 The Engagement and Campuses Office will call for nominations from current staff members who wish to apply for an Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement within the Engaged Internal Service award category.
- 3.38 To apply, applicants must complete a CQUniversity Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Nomination Form – Internal Service (Staff), accessible on the [CQUniversity Policy website](#).
- 3.39 Nominations should be supported by two referee written statements, one from the nominee’s supervisor and one from an additional CQUniversity representative (preferably from a work unit that the nominee engaged with). The referee statements must confirm the internal service cited within the nomination, and the supervisor statement in particular, must attest that the service was above and beyond normal job requirements and expectations.
- 3.40 Nominations must address the selection criteria outlined in [Sections 3.33, 3.34, 3.35 and 3.36](#) above.
- 3.41 Applicants will address the selection criteria in one or two paragraphs each. The nomination should be no more than four A4 pages in length, be presented single-sided and affixed with one staple only (please do not bind nominations). Any materials seen as supporting the nomination should be forwarded along with the nomination. Such documentation will be retained by the Selection Panel.
- 3.42 Completed nomination forms (and all supporting documentation) should be submitted by the closing date to [engagement@cqu.edu.au](mailto:engagement@cqu.edu.au). Nominations received after the closing date will be considered at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses) and may be held over for the following year’s Opal Award round.

## **Student award categories**

### **Engaged service learning**

- 3.43 The category of Engaged Service Learning is open to all current CQUniversity students. An Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement in this category consists of:
- recognition of excellence by:

- citation on CQUniversity's Engagement website;
- publication in CQUniNews; and
- CQUniversity Opal Awards certificate.

#### *Selection criteria*

- 3.44 All current CQUniversity students can nominate their project for the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement under the category of Engaged Service Learning. Nominations can also be made on behalf of current students.
- 3.45 In all cases, the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement within the Engaged Service Learning category is given for demonstrated outstanding contributions to engagement by working collaboratively with community groups and/or organisations to address a genuine community need (through volunteer service) that is connected to the curriculum of the student's education or training with CQUniversity. The nominated service learning activity will be achieving mutually agreed goals that build capacity, improve wellbeing, and produce sustainable outcomes in the interests of the community and other stakeholders.
- 3.46 The Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Selection Panel will evaluate nominations according to the following criteria:
- evidence of the positive impact of the service learning activity on all stakeholders;
  - evidence of the direct connection of the service learning activity (ie volunteer service) to the student's education and training with CQUniversity;
  - evidence of the learning, reflection and growth by the participant/s through their involvement in the service learning activity; and
  - supporting documentation provided by relevant community group or organisation/s. This must include at least one written referee statement from an external stakeholder (ie external to CQUniversity) that confirms the volunteer service performed.

#### *Nomination procedures*

- 3.47 The Engagement and Campuses Office will call for nominations from students who wish to apply for an Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement within the Engaged Service Learning award category.
- 3.48 To apply, applicants must complete a CQUniversity Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Nomination Form - Engaged Service Learning (Students), accessible on the [CQUniversity Policy website](#).
- 3.49 Where a joint nomination is submitted, it must be endorsed by all students named on the nomination form.
- 3.50 Nominations must be supported by a minimum of one external to CQUniversity referee statement affirming that the nominated project's contribution is outstanding and exemplary of mutually beneficial engagement. The external referee statement must also include confirmation of the volunteer service performed.
- 3.51 Nominations must address the selection criteria outlined in [Sections 3.44, 3.45 and 3.46](#) above.
- 3.52 Applicants will address the selection criteria in one or two paragraphs each. The nomination should be no more than four A4 pages in length, be presented single-sided and affixed with one staple only (please do not bind nominations). Any materials seen as supporting the nomination should be forwarded along with the nomination. Such documentation will be retained by the Selection Panel.
- 3.53 Completed nomination forms (and all supporting documentation) should be returned by the closing date to [engagement@cqu.edu.au](mailto:engagement@cqu.edu.au). Nominations received after the closing date will be considered at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses) and may be held over for the following year's Opal Award round.

#### **Social innovation**

- 3.54 The category of Social Innovation (Students) is open to all current CQUniversity students. An Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement in this category consists of:

- recognition of excellence by:
  - citation on CQUniversity's Engagement website;
  - publication in CQUniNews; and
  - CQUniversity Opal Awards certificate.

#### *Selection criteria*

- 3.55 All current CQUniversity students can nominate their project for the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement under the category of Social Innovation (Students). Nominations can also be made on behalf of current students.
- 3.56 In all cases, the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement for Social Innovation (Students) are given for demonstrated outstanding contributions to engagement through social innovation by working collaboratively with community and other stakeholders to address entrenched social issues.
- 3.57 The Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Selection Panel will evaluate nominations according to the following criteria:
- evidence of the multi-disciplinary, collaborative approach used;
  - evidence of the strong partnership with, and involvement of, the project beneficiaries;
  - evidence of the innovative solutions used to achieve long-term goals of social change; and
  - supporting documentation provided by relevant community and/or other stakeholders. This must include at least one written referee statement from an external stakeholder (ie external to CQUniversity).

#### *Nomination procedures*

- 3.58 The Engagement and Campuses Office will call for nominations from students who wish to apply for an Opal Award for Excellence in Engagement within the Social Innovation (Students) category.
- 3.59 To apply, applicants must complete a CQUniversity Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Nomination Form - Social Innovation (Students), accessible on the [CQUniversity Policy website](#).
- 3.60 Where a joint nomination is submitted, it must be endorsed by all participants named on the nomination form.
- 3.61 Nominations must be supported by a minimum of one external (to CQUniversity) referee statement, affirming that the nominated project's contribution is outstanding and exemplary of engagement through social innovation.
- 3.62 Nominations must address the selection criteria outlined in [Sections 3.55, 3.56 and 3.57](#) above.
- 3.63 Applicants will address the selection criteria in one or two paragraphs each. The nomination should be no more than four A4 pages in length, be presented single-sided and affixed with one staple only (please do not bind nominations). Any materials seen as supporting the nomination can be forwarded along with the nomination. Such documentation will be retained by the Selection Panel.
- 3.64 Completed nomination forms (and all supporting documentation) should be returned by the closing date to [engagement@cqu.edu.au](mailto:engagement@cqu.edu.au). Nominations received after the closing date will be considered at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses) and may be held over for the following year's Opal Award round.

### **Notes for referees (all categories)**

- 3.65 In support of a nomination, referees should provide a signed statement, or other evidence, to the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Selection Panel affirming that the nominated project's contribution is outstanding and exemplary of mutually beneficial engagement (or engagement through social innovation where applicable). If refereeing a staff nomination for Internal Service, the supervisor's statement must confirm that the service undertaken was above and beyond the normal day to day commitments of the

nominee's role. If refereeing a student nomination for Engaged Service Learning, the volunteer service performed by the student/s must also be confirmed.

- 3.66 Any publications, reports, and other materials seen as supporting the nomination can be forwarded along with the referee statement. Such documentation will be retained by the Selection Panel.
- 3.67 Referees should note that the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Selection Panel may wish to clarify or confirm, with persons deemed appropriate, any aspects of the nomination.

### **Review of nominations by selection panel (all categories)**

- 3.68 Nominations will be reviewed by a selection panel comprising the below members or their nominee:
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses) (Chair);
  - Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience and Governance);
  - Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research);
  - Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching);
  - Pro Vice-Chancellor (VET Operations and Growth);
  - Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement);
  - International Director; and
  - Director, Social Innovation.
- 3.69 Members of the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Selection Panel will absent themselves from the decision-making process should there be a recognisable conflict of interest.
- 3.70 The Panel should provide a brief summary detailing supportive evidence for their selection. If required, the Panel may call on nominees to support their nomination through discussion/presentation to the Selection Panel during the selection process.
- 3.71 The Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement Selection Panel will forward its recommendations directly to the Vice-Chancellor and President for endorsement.
- 3.72 The Vice-Chancellor and President retains the right to not approve the granting of these Awards should the quality or number of nominations be insufficient.

### **Outcomes**

- 3.73 All nominations will receive formal advice from the Engagement and Campuses Office as to whether they have been successful or not.

### **Presentation**

- 3.74 The Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement will be presented at the annual Staff Awards Ceremony.
- 3.75 The Events and Graduation Office (and/or the Engagement and Campuses Office) will provide advice concerning the arrangements for the presentation of the Awards to recipients.

## **4 RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Compliance, monitoring and review**

- 4.1 The Engagement and Campuses Office is responsible for the management of nominations; the design and production of Award citations; and all publicity concerning the Awards.
- 4.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and Campuses) is responsible for monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this procedure.

## Reporting

- 4.3 No additional reporting is required.

## Records management

- 4.4 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this procedure in a recognised University recordkeeping system.

## 5 DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University [glossary](#).

## 6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[OPAL Awards for Excellence in Engagement Nomination Form – Social Innovation \(Staff\)](#)

[OPAL Awards for Excellence in Engagement Nomination Form – Internal Service \(Staff\)](#)

[OPAL Awards for Excellence in Engagement Nomination Form – Engaged Service Learning \(Students\)](#)

[OPAL Awards for Excellence in Engagement Nomination Form – Social Innovation \(Students\)](#)

## 7 FEEDBACK

- 7.1 University staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing [policy@cqu.edu.au](mailto:policy@cqu.edu.au).

## 8 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee
Administrator	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement, Campuses and Mackay-Whitsunday Region)
Next Review Date	05/06/2022

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	Council 26/07/2010
Amendment Authority and Date	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Community and Engagement) 03/05/2011; Pro Vice-Chancellor (Community and Engagement) 31/07/2012; Vice-Chancellor and President 09/08/2012; Vice-Chancellor and President 08/08/2014; Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement, Campuses & Mackay-Whitsunday Region) 27/07/2016; Vice-Chancellor and President 20/06/2017; Administrator Approved – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement, Campuses and Mackay-Whitsunday Region) 11/07/2018; Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee 05/06/2019.
Notes	