

MEDIA RELEASE

WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2024

2025 AUSTRALIANS OF THE YEAR FOR TASMANIA ANNOUNCED

2025 Australian of the Year for Tasmania - Sam Elsom (Triabunna)
2025 Senior Australian of the Year for Tasmania - Associate Professor Penelope Blomfield (Sandy Bay)
2025 Young Australian of the Year Tasmania - Ariarne Titmus OAM (Launceston)
2025 Local Hero for Tasmania - Keren Franks (Howrah)

Awards event livestreamed via australianoftheyear.org.au

Wednesday 6 November 2024, 8:45PM (Hobart time): The 2025 Australian of the Year Awards recipients for Tasmania have been announced at a ceremony in Hobart this evening.

The four Tasmanian recipients will join those from the other states and territories for the national awards to be announced on 25 January 2025.

The 2025 Australian of the Year for Tasmania is Sam Elsom, the Founder of Sea Forest.

(Note: Sam was unable to attend the event)

Sam Elsom is a climate solutions innovator who's commercialised a new way to reduce methane emissions. Methane is a significant contributor to global warming because it's 28 times more harmful than carbon dioxide.

Sam founded Sea Forest, one of the first start-ups to successfully turn asparagopsis, a native Australian red species of seaweed, into a livestock feed supplement. Sea Forest's SeaFeed supplement contains bioactive compounds that stop methane production in the animal's gut. Adding just 0.2 per cent of the supplement to livestock feed can reduce the methane emissions of cows and sheep by up to 90 per cent, while increasing productivity.

Sea Forest was named as a finalist for the \$1.9M Earthshot prize set up in 2020 by Prince William and nature documentarian Sir David Attenborough.

By dramatically reducing methane emissions, 43-year-old Sam is strengthening the sustainability of livestock industries, slowing global warming and potentially changing the course of our planet's future.

Gynaecological oncologist Associate Professor Penelope Blomfield is the 2025 Senior Australian of the Year for Tasmania.

Associate Professor Penelope Blomfield's life's work has been dedicated to improving the quality and longevity of life for her patients and others affected by gynaecological cancers.

In 2000, she became the first female gynaecological oncologist in Tasmania and has remained at the forefront of the continuous advancement of medical research, both as an associate professor at the University of Tasmania and an active contributor to a range of research studies.

Holding various leadership and advisory positions in her field, Penelope has provided submissions to government committees, advice to numerous cancer advocacy groups and contributed to multiple research papers.

In 2018, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to her field, Penelope was appointed by the Federal Minister for Health to the Cancer Australia Advisory Council and was reappointed in 2021.

Penelope, now 65, is passionate about addressing the disparities faced by many women diagnosed with a gynaecological cancer and champions best and innovative care.

The 2025 Young Australian of the Year for Tasmania is Olympic swimmer Ariarne Titmus OAM.

(Note: Ariarne was unable to attend the event)

At the age of only 24, Ariarne Titmus OAM has already achieved more in her sporting career than most could ever dream of.

Ariarne first made a name for herself on the global stage in 2018, winning two gold medals and a silver medal in the freestyle events at the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast.

After Ariarne began working with expert coach Dean Boxall in 2016, she was named Swimming Australia's Swimmer of the Year in 2019. Ariarne has demonstrated extraordinary dedication and grit to improve her performance in the pool, and some of her long-time idols have now become her rivals both in Australia and overseas.

Ariarne holds several world records and has won gold medals in both the 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris Olympics. With her quiet strength and determination, she is a role model for young swimmers who want to improve and test the boundaries of what is possible.

Keren Franks, Founder, Young Leaders of Tasmania, is the 2025 Local Hero for Tasmania.

Keren Franks has firsthand experience of the power of inclusion for people living with disability and those around them. The 50-year-old has touched the lives of countless young Tasmanians by bringing to life her groundbreaking vision.

Through her daughter Bella's experience in school, Keren saw that an inclusive model of education can yield enormous benefits, not only for students with disabilities but for mainstream students, too.

This was the catalyst for the creation of the community not-for-profit organisation, Young Leaders of Tasmania (YLOT) in 2017, of which Keren is CEO. After a successful pilot program, YLOT expanded rapidly to run a range of programs statewide, with the central aim of facilitating social role modelling, skill development activities and facilitating peer-to-peer interaction in support schools and mainstream schools.

YLOT's programs help to change community perceptions around disability, foster inclusion and acceptance, increase workforce participation in the disability sector, and provide opportunities for young Tasmanians.

National Australia Day Council CEO Mark Fraser AO CVO congratulated Tasmanian recipients.

"The Tasmanian award recipients are inspirational and we look forward to welcoming them to Canberra," said Mark.

"By looking at things a little differently, Sam is making a global impact; Penelope has spent a lifetime saving and fighting for lives; Ariarne's determination has made the nation proud and lit a spark for others to follow their dreams; and Keren is breaking down barriers so we can all benefit from inclusion."

For more information on the Australian of the Year Awards, visit australianoftheyear.org.au.

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PHOTOS: From the awards announcement event can be downloaded as available after approx. 9:45pm Hobart time from this link (credit NADC/Salty Dingo): [TAS Media Distribution photos - High res](#)