

9/10/2026

QUEENSLAND MUSEUM FIRST NATIONS UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH PROGRAM HIGHLY COMMENDED 2026 GALLERY AND MUSEUM ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) was delighted to announce **Queensland Museum** as a Highly Commended recipient in the **Engagement: Organisations With 7+ FTE Paid Staff** category, for its ***First Nations Undergraduate Student Research Program*** initiative at the **2026 Gallery and Museum Achievement Awards (GAMAA)**, proudly hosted by **Ipswich Art Gallery** on Thursday 8 October.

Now in its twenty-second year, the GAMAA are Queensland's premier awards program for the museum and gallery sector, recognising excellence, innovation and leadership across the State. Special guest, **Ipswich City Council Mayor Teresa Harding**, congratulated this year's recipients and presented winners with individually crafted trophies by acclaimed Queensland glass artist **Jarred Wright**.

Queensland Museum was recognised as a Highly Commended recipient for their *First Nations Undergraduate Student Research Program*, an innovative initiative creating culturally safe pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students into the Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM) sector.

Designed and led by Queensland Museum's First Nations team, the program combines paid research placements, mentoring, cultural learning and professional development to support emerging First Nations leaders while strengthening organisational cultural capability. Participants work alongside museum professionals on projects spanning repatriation, conservation, collections, exhibitions and partnerships, gaining valuable experience while contributing directly to museum practice.

By investing in First Nations knowledge, leadership and workforce development, the program is helping to build a more inclusive and culturally responsive museum sector. The initiative provides students with meaningful career pathways while demonstrating the important role museums can play in advancing reconciliation and supporting the next generation of First Nations cultural leaders.

Museums & Galleries Queensland Executive Director, Rebekah Butler, said "Queensland Museum's *First Nations Undergraduate Student Research Program* is an inspiring example of how

cultural organisations can create meaningful pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to contribute to and lead the sector. By combining mentoring, professional development and hands-on museum experience, the program is nurturing future leaders while strengthening cultural knowledge and capability across the organisation. This recognition highlights Queensland Museum's commitment to investing in people, supporting self-determination and embedding reconciliation in museum practice."

This year's awards attracted nominations from across the state, recognising excellence in exhibitions, public programs, collections management, First Nations and community engagement, leadership, innovation and volunteer contributions.

M&G QLD congratulates each of this year's winners, highly commended recipients and finalists. Their achievements exemplify the passion, creativity and commitment that continue to enrich Queensland's cultural landscape and inspire excellence across the sector.

ABOUT MUSEUMS & GALLERIES QUEENSLAND

Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) is the peak professional industry body for the public museum and gallery sector in Queensland.

Our purpose is to inspire and support excellence in Queensland museums, galleries and keeping places, fostering innovation, connection and cultural leadership.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2026 GAMAA SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

The 2026 GAMAA are proudly supported by the **Ipswich Art Gallery** and sponsored by **Public Galleries Queensland** and **Australian Museums and Galleries Association Queensland**.

The 2026 GAMAA trophies are generously supported by **Brian Tucker**.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Rebekah Butler, Executive Director

Museums & Galleries Queensland

Phone: 07 3059 9740

Freecall: 1800 866 101

Mobile: 0422 579 180

Email: rebekah.butler@magsq.com.au

Website: www.magsq.com.au

MEDIA RELEASE END



Museum and Gallery Services Queensland Ltd
trading as Museums & Galleries Queensland
- ABN 32 109 874 811 is supported by the
Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.