



KERRY KENNEDY AWARD

The *Spirit of Service Awards* recognise public sector initiatives that drive positive change for the Australian community. Drawing on the learnings from our historically popular and successful Award programs – the *Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Sector Management* (run from 2002 to 2019) and the *Public Sector Innovation Awards* (from 2016 to 2020) – we have created a new contemporary offering that reflects the leadership and excellence practices of a contemporary public sector.

The Kerry Kennedy Award was introduced to the Prime Minister's Awards in 2019, in honour of [Kerry Kennedy](#) who passed away earlier that year. Kerry was an assessor of the inaugural Prime Minister's Awards before becoming actively involved in the running of the Awards as the volunteer Award Coordinator and Chair of the Awards Steering Committee for 17 years. The Kerry Kennedy Award commemorates the outstanding contributions to the Award program and public administration more generally. The Kerry Kennedy Award has been carried over as a Judges' discretionary award as part of the new *Spirit of Service Awards* program.

Kerry was passionate about the profession of public administration, committed to driving excellence in the Australian public sector and in helping teams to improve and sustain their success so that they delivered excellent service to the Australian public. His favourite nominations were those from small organisations who had rolled out big initiatives. Often, they did not quite meet all the Awards criteria in the depth required to make it through as a winner, but it was their ambition and success that enthused him.

The Kerry Kennedy Award will broadly recognise nominations based on the below criteria:

- 1. Organisation size** – a small organisation or agency (both in size and in operating budget) that has fewer resources to call upon when striving for excellence, meaning they need to 'think outside the box' to source for solutions and stretch every dollar to the limit.
- 2. Collaboration and Co-Design** – nominations such as these often achieve their excellence through working cleverly with other agencies, often in other jurisdictions and sometimes also with the corporate and not-for-profit sectors. There is likely some element of co-design with the recipients of the service or project.
- 3. Maturity** – these projects are sometimes at an earlier stage and may therefore be worthy of recognition now. Nominations are often entered too early and are not re-submitted in future years, presumably because the opportunity cost of preparing a nomination can be quite high for a small organisation.

The Kerry Kennedy Award [winner](#) for the 2021-22 Spirit of Service Awards was the Royal Australian Mint for *Donation Dollar - a world-first initiative to inspire and cultivate the collective spirit of generosity in all Australians*.

The [inaugural winner](#) for the Kerry Kennedy Award in the 2019 Prime Ministers Awards was the Tasmanian Department of Premier and Cabinet for *Electric Vehicle Working Group*.