

MEDIA RELEASE (23 June 2025)

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW NSW JURY CHAIR FIONA MORRISON

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11PM THURSDAY 26 JUNE

Northern Rivers' enviro research & outreach program takes out dual NSW design awards

After the 2022 floods ravaged Lismore and surrounding regions, landscape architects came together with the University of Technology Sydney, Southern Cross University, the NSW Reconstruction Authority and other industry experts to create the [Living Lab Northern Rivers](#) (LLNR) project. Through a permanent shopfront and the creation of reports, exhibitions, design studios and workshops, LLNR aims to create sustainable and resilient opportunities for the region.

In a ceremony held at the State Library of New South Wales on Thursday 26 June, the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) NSW honoured the University of Technology Sydney and Living Lab Northern Rivers with two AILA NSW Awards for the design of LLNR.

LLNR received the top accolade in the Community Contribution category – an Award of Excellence. Notably, LLNR connects local communities and businesses with Government authorities, Landcare organisations, First Nations groups, farmers' cooperatives and environmental groups.

The Jury commended its impact as follows: "Through its innovative regional environmental research and collaborative outreach, the Living Lab Northern Rivers (LLNR) has made a significant difference to improving the health and wellbeing of communities in regional Australia. The project has researched and demonstrated the resources and capacities of local regional people to undertake environmental work — offering a unique snapshot of what may be possible in rural Australia, and what cities might learn from these places."

LLNR also received the AILA NSW Regional Achievement Award.



Above: Living Lab Northern Rivers (LLNR)
University of Technology Sydney and Living Lab Northern Rivers. Image: Elise Derwin

AILA NSW Awards

All winners of an AILA NSW Award will now proceed to the National Landscape Architecture Awards, to be announced in October in Hobart/Nipaluna.

AILA is the peak body for landscape architecture in Australia, championing quality design for public open spaces, stronger communities, and greater environmental stewardship.

What is landscape architecture + how does it benefit everyone in New South Wales?

Landscape architecture brings nature into the heart of daily life, shaping parks, precincts, wetlands, and public spaces that invite us to gather, connect, and belong.

Well-designed landscapes strengthen local economies by attracting visitors and creating jobs, but their deeper value lies in cooling our cities, restoring ecosystems, and caring for Country.

The 2025 AILA NSW Awards celebrate the projects and practitioners reimagining how we live with landscape and each other.

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AILA NSW Jury Chair Fiona Morrison is available for interview. Full awards list on following pages

[Link to the full entry gallery, with additional images and information available](#)

For more information/high resolution images, please contact:

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<u>Category: Civic Landscape</u>		
Project Name	Winner	Award Type
Parramatta Square	JMD design with TCL, Gehl and TZG	Award of Excellence
<u>Category: Climate Positive Design</u>		
Wagonga Inlet Living Foreshore	REALMstudios	Climate Positive Design
<u>Category: Community Contribution</u>		
Living Lab Northern Rivers (LLNR)	University of Technology Sydney and Living Lab Northern Rivers	Award of Excellence
<u>Category: Cultural Heritage</u>		
The Meandering Pathway of Tranquillity	Phillips Marler	Award of Excellence
<u>Category: Gardens</u>		
NINE	McGregor Coxall	Award of Excellence
<u>Category: Health and Education Landscape</u>		
Resilience – Karuah Primary School	Terras Landscape Architects	Award of Excellence
<u>Category: Infrastructure</u>		
Parramatta Light Rail (Stage 1)	Transport for NSW, Context and COX	Award of Excellence
Barangaroo Station Park	Arcadia	Landscape Architecture Award

<u>Category: Land Management</u>		
<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Award Type</u>
Wagonga Inlet Living Foreshore	REALMstudios	Award of Excellence
<u>Category: Landscape Planning</u>		
Adventurous Spaces Guideline	The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure	Landscape Architecture Award
<u>Category: Parks and Open Space</u>		
Wimbo Park Surry Hills	Sue Barnsley Design	Award of Excellence
Callan Park Waterfront Green	Tyrrell Studio	Landscape Architecture Award
Campbelltown Billabong Parklands	Campbelltown City Council in collaboration with Arcadia	Landscape Architecture Award
Pendle Hill Civic Park and Wetlands	Tract	Landscape Architecture Award
<u>Category: Play Spaces</u>		
Parks for People – Beaumont Hills	The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure	Award of Excellence
Ian Stromborg Play Space at Paul Keating Park	ASPECT Studios	Landscape Architecture Award
Gregson Park Playspace	Phillips Marler	Landscape Architecture Award
Fagan Park Children's Forest	Hornsby Shire Council	Landscape Architecture Award
<u>Category: Regional Achievement</u>		
Living Lab Northern Rivers (LLNR)	University of Technology Sydney and Living Lab Northern Rivers	Regional Achievement Award
<u>Category: Research, Policy and Communications</u>		
Food Landscapes Australia	Dr Joshua Zeunert, UNSW	Award of Excellence
Nature Co-benefits in Practice	Tract	Landscape Architecture Award
Biodiversity in Place Framework	Government Architect NSW with Hassell	Landscape Architecture Award

<u>Category: Urban Design</u>		
<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Award Type</u>
Sydney Gateway	Transport Urban Design, CM+ and Context	Landscape Architecture Award
<u>Category: Tourism</u>		
Kangaroo Valley Bush Retreat Renewal	Edmiston Jones	Landscape Architecture Award
<u>Category: Small Projects</u>		
Naremburn Local Centre	Phillips Marler Architecture Landscape Architecture	Landscape Architecture Award
<u>Category: ShadeSmart</u>		
Victoria Avenue Mall Refurbishment – Chatswood	Arterra Design	ShadeSmart Award
Pendle Hill Civic Park and Wetlands	Tract	ShadeSmart Award
<u>Category: Future Leader</u>		
	Alexander Brawn	Future Leader Award
<u>Category: Minister's Award</u>		
Wagonga Inlet Living Foreshore	REALMstudios	2025 Minister of Planning and Public Spaces Award for Public Space
<u>Category: 2025 AILA NSW President's Award</u>		
	Andrew Turnbull	2025 AILA NSW President's Award

ENTRIES

Entries — 51
 Awards of Excellence — 10
 Landscape Architecture Awards — 13
 Regional Achievement Awards — 1
 ShadeSmart — 2
 Climate Positive Design — 1

Jury:

- Fiona Morrison (Jury Chair)
- Roger Jasprizza
- Paul Melrose
- Anna Chauvel

Jury cont'd:

- Ian Andrews
- Kate Whatman
- Melissa Cate Christ
- Andrew Turnbull (ShadeSmart)

Please visit www.aiala.org.au for more information.