

Calling dairy innovators

- Pitch and profile your dairy innovation or research project
- Seeking the latest in dairy science, innovation and tech
- Innovations and projects that can demonstrate their impact
- Open to farmers, innovators, scientists and researchers
- Innovations and projects should be 'farm-ready'
- Finalists to present at ADC 2026 Melbourne
- Winner receives \$3,000 bursary to assist professional development

Have a great innovation or project that can make a difference to the Australian dairy industry?

The ADC Innovator Award is seeking fresh and emerging dairy innovations and projects that have the greatest potential to impact the Australian dairy industry.

This is an opportunity to profile and highlight your research, innovation, on-farm trial or scientific exploration in front of the national industry at ADC 2026 Melbourne 11-13 February 2026.

Overview

- Opportunity to showcase your dairy related innovation or project to the Australian dairy industry during a dedicated session on the main stage at ADC 2026 Melbourne.
- Innovations must be relevant to the Australian dairy industry and have demonstrated potential for impact – they need to be 'farm-ready' and have strong adoption capability within 12 months of February 2026.
- A competitive application process answering key questions about your project, it's impact and relevance to the Australian dairy industry. Applications to be accompanied by a 45 second video explaining your project.
- Preliminary judging round will identify 4-5 finalists based on their innovations and projects, relevance to dairy farmers and ability to communicate.
- Nominated finalists will undertake communication and presentation training before presenting a 5 min talk and Q&A as part of a dedicated session at ADC 2026 Melbourne 11-13 February 2026.

Australian Dairy Conference
Melbourne
11-13 February 2026



2025 winner – Grant Rogers
Knowby Platform

Award requirements

- Demonstrated relevance and ability to impact or enhance an aspect of the Australian dairy industry
- Suitable innovations and projects include research projects, new technologies, or on-farm trials relevant to dairy.
- Innovations and projects that can have an immediate impact on the dairy industry will be preferred. For example, the innovation or project should be 'farm-ready' within 12 months from February 2026 – to ensure relevance and application to dairy farm operations.
- Applicant needs to demonstrate an ability to communicate their innovation or project to the Australian dairy audience and showcase its relevance to the industry.
- The ADC Innovators Award is open to all ages and individuals involved in the Australian dairy industry.
- Finalists must be able to attend ADC 2026 Melbourne 11-13 February 2026 and attend all training components.

Assessment criteria & competition stages

Applicants will be required to communicate their innovation or project to a farmer audience demonstrating relevance to the Australian dairy industry.

Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Ability to communicate your project/innovation to a farmer audience. How well you can convince Australian dairy farmers that your project or innovation will help or enhance their operation.
- Relevance to the Australian dairy farming audience & ADC purpose of innovation and advancing the industry.
- Strength of supported background research, data, usage, trials or science-led investigations into the success or performance of your project or innovation.
- Implementation of the project or innovation – how 'farm-ready' is your project/innovation? Preference will be weighted towards projects and innovations that have demonstrated ability to be implemented in the short-term.



Application stages

Application process

Applications for the ADC Innovators Award open on 2 September 2025.

Applications for the ADC Innovators Award close on Thursday 9 October 2025.

As part of the application process, participants must submit:

1. Online application form - 250 word responses to each question:
 - Tell us about your project and/or innovation?
 - What impact will your innovation/project have on the Australian dairy industry?
 - Why do you want to attend ADC 2026?
2. A 45 second video outlining: Why should you and your project/innovation be considered for the ADC Innovators Award

Preliminary round

Applicants will be shortlisted based on online application. Applicants who progress to the Preliminary round will be invited to deliver an online 5min presentation followed by question time with a judging panel on 16 October 2026.

ADC Innovators Award Finalists will be determined by preliminary round judging with the nominated finalists announced by the end of October 2025.

Finalist professional development

All finalists will be provided with professional development to assist with preparing to present to the national dairy delegation at ADC 2026 Melbourne.

Presentations will need to be submitted by 16 January 2026 in order for presentation and communication training (online session) on 23 January 2026. This session is conducted to develop understanding of the ADC forum and develop communication skills

A face-to-face presentation workshop will be held on Wednesday 11 February at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in the morning to fine tune presentations, work on stage presence and provide a rehearsal environment for finalists.

Attendance ADC 2026

Finalists are responsible for organizing their own accommodation and logistics of their own travel to and from ADC 2026 Melbourne. A travel bursary is available if required. Finalists will be required to attend the following functions:

Wednesday 11 February 2026

- Presentation training and workshop (pre-conference 9am – 3pm)
- ADC First Timers Function 5.30pm
- ADC Welcome Function 6.30 – 8.30pm

Thursday 12 February 2026

- ADC Conference Day 1 – present as part of plenary sessions
- ADC Gala Dinner & Innovators Award winner announcement

Friday 13 February 2026

- ADC Conference Day 2
- ADC Happy Hour Drinks



Winner of the ADC Innovators Award will receive:

\$3,000 bursary for professional development which may include conference attendance, undertake a course, study tour or similar.

ADC Innovators Award Finalists will receive:

- Complimentary delegate registration to ADC 2026 Melbourne including all social functions.
- Professional development - communication training to enhance presentation skills (two sessions).
- Travel bursary of up to \$700 to cover accommodation and travel (if required). Travel costs needs to be claimed through the ADC Secretary via admin@australiandairyconference.com.au with travel receipts.

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ADC Innovators Award milestones

Date	What	Details
2 September 2025	ADC Innovators Award Applications open	- Online submissions open - 45 sec video explaining project / innovation
9 October 2025	ADC Innovators Award Applications close	- Online submissions close - Shortlist applications
16 October 2025	Preliminary Judging Round	- Preliminary judging round with short-listed applicants to determine finalists for ADC 2026. - Applicants who progress to the Preliminary round will be invited to deliver an online 5 min presentation followed by question time with a judging panel.
16 January 2026	Presentation	- Submit presentation for training prep
23 January 2026	Online Training	- Online presentation training
11 February 2026	ADC Innovators Award Communication Training	- Professional development session to prepare for presenting to ADC 2026 delegation
12 February 2026	Finalist Judging	- 5 min talk during ADC plenary session & facilitated Q&A. - Media interview
	ADC Innovators Award announced	- ADC Gala Dinner Thursday 13 February 2026

Have a question or would like more information regarding the ADC Innovators Award?

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