Australian of the Year Awards
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MEDIA RELEASE
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FROM FOSTERING KINDNESS TO EMERGENCY WILDLIFE RESCUE – MEET THE 2027 AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR TASMANIA

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Four extraordinary people have been named the 2027 Australian of the Year Award recipients for Tasmania at a ceremony in Hobart this evening.

2027 Australian of the Year for Tasmania – Danny Mayson-Kinder (Primrose Sands)
2027 Senior Australian of the Year for Tasmania – Christine Chilcott OAM (Meander)
2027 Young Australian of the Year for Tasmania – Grace Chia (Claremont, Hobart)
2027 Local Hero for Tasmania – Greg Irons (Richmond)

From creating a community of kindness in honour of a lost daughter and dedicating a lifetime to volunteering, to giving creative voices a chance to be heard and establishing Tasmania's first wildlife hospital, the recipients of the 2027 Australian of the Year Awards for Tasmania are helping to build a more considerate, inclusive society for people and the natural world alike.

The 2027 Australian of the Year for Tasmania is the Founder of b kinder foundation, Danny Mayson-Kinder. *(Note: Danny was unable to attend the announcement event)*

Danny Mayson-Kinder, 60, is challenging Australia's approach to bullying through her preventative kindness movement, b kinder foundation.

As founder of the b kinder foundation, Danny has channelled unimaginable grief into purpose after losing her 12-year-old daughter Billie in a tragic accident. What began as a tribute to Billie's compassionate spirit has become an evidence-informed charity that's influencing schools, workplaces and communities across the country.

Through the b kinder school program, b kinder summit and b kinder day, Danny has reached more than 400 schools and over 200,000 students. Her preventative approach teaches kindness as a practical, learnable skill – empowering young people to lead their own student-driven kindness movements.

Independent evaluation of the program shows the remarkable impact of Danny's work, including a 36% reduction in students feeling bullied and an 18% reduction in students witnessing bullying. Danny proves that kindness is a powerful, measurable force for change.

The 2027 Senior Australian of the Year for Tasmania is community volunteer Christine Chilcott OAM.

For more than 40 years, Christine Chilcott has made an immeasurable contribution to her community in northern Tasmania as a volunteer across more than 30 organisations.

Her commitment to volunteering encompasses sporting clubs, aged care, education and community groups. She has worked on countless committees and boards, organised events and campaigned for support, never hesitating to offer her time and skills for the good of her community.

Today, Christine is active in about 10 organisations that benefit from her leadership and experience. She is still helping others in the community, running a weekly mobile shop that visits an aged care facility to deliver items to residents and foster social connectivity.

Christine, 72, balances the demands of her voluntary work with the challenges of running a farm and raising a family but is always willing to answer the call to help others. Her selflessness and dedication are an inspiration to those who follow her example.

The 2027 Young Australian of the Year for Tasmania is solo hip-hop and R&B artist Grace Chia.

Grace Chia is a hip-hop artist, creative leader and advocate reshaping Tasmania's music landscape by creating safer, more inclusive spaces for women and underrepresented young people. At 16, she founded CHIA Studios, a creative platform supporting emerging Tasmanian talent.

Grace, 27, has delivered more than 150 workshops using music and art to build confidence, advocacy, connection and belonging. CHIA Studios has produced more than 50 events, including Tasmania's first all-female hip-hop lineup, and delivered programs in youth justice centres, community houses, regional schools and Migrant Resource Centres.

Her music and advocacy challenge misogyny, racism and gender-based violence while creating opportunities for voices too often unheard. She has garnered over 250,000 streams, performed at over 200 events nationwide, and in 2025 she received the Australian Women in Music's Diversity Award.

Through creativity, leadership and advocacy, Grace is showing how young people can build strong communities offering belonging and connection.

The 2027 Local Hero for Tasmania is wildlife rescuer and conservationist Greg Irons.

Greg Irons, 42, is a visionary wildlife conservationist who built and operates Tasmania's first wildlife rescue service and hospital.

Greg's commitment began while still in school after discovering an injured owl and spending a weekend trying to find help. He was left with the realisation that a rescue service didn't exist – a gap that stayed with him.

Greg set out to build this missing service. He started work at Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary when he was 19 years old, ultimately purchasing Bonorong to fund these services at just 25, through a bold mix of vendor and bank finance.

Greg established a 24/7 statewide rescue network and personally trained more than 20,000 people in wildlife rescue. Bonorong volunteers and staff respond to over 22,000 rescue calls each year. Greg also built Tasmania's first wildlife hospital, which supports up to 5,000 patients a year. Under his leadership, Bonorong has grown to more than 80 staff and directs up to $3 million annually toward conservation.

National Australia Day Council CEO Carrie Leeson congratulated the Tasmanian award recipients.

"The Tasmanian recipients share a commitment to caring for others, generously giving their time and skills to make a difference," said Carrie.

"Danny is honouring her daughter's legacy through a movement built on kindness; Christine has selflessly dedicated a lifetime to supporting people and strengthening communities; Grace is giving others a platform to share their experiences and creative voices; and Greg is providing vital care for wildlife."

The Tasmania award recipients will join those from all other states and territories for the national awards, to be announced on the evening of 25 January 2027 in Canberra.

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 from TAS Media Distribution photos - High res (credit NADC/Salty Dingo). Award recipient photos will be available after approx. 9:30pm Hobart time.

LIVESTREAM VISION: The Tasmania awards announcement event is livestreamed from 7:00pm Hobart time via australianoftheyear.org.au. The vision is YouTube based and is accessible for media use.