

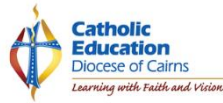
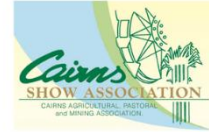
BUSINESS LIAISON ASSOCIATION

AGRICULTURAL FUTURE AWARDS

SPONSORED BY



2026 AWARD SPONSORS



Agricultural Awards

About the Business Liaison Association (BLA)

The Business Liaison Association (BLA) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to building meaningful connections between education and industry across Far North Queensland – from Cardwell to the Torres Strait and west to the Tablelands and Gulf.

Each year, we empower more than 12,000 students from over 37 schools to explore diverse career pathways, engage with industry mentors, and make informed choices about their futures. By bridging the gap between the classroom and the workplace, we help young people step confidently into their next chapter – and in the process, strengthen the local workforce.

BLA embraces multicultural diversity and First Nations perspectives, fostering respect, understanding, and inclusion for all cultures and identities.

Our Mission

To inspire, inform, and empower the next generation while forging lasting partnerships between schools, business, tertiary institutions, and the community. Together, we're cultivating a skilled, sustainable regional workforce ready for the opportunities of tomorrow.

Our Agricultural Award Sponsors

Hosted by the Business Liaison Association (BLA) in partnership with local schools and community stakeholders in Cairns, North Queensland.

The Business Liaison Association extends its sincere appreciation to Bromfield Swamp, Canegrowers Tablelands, FNQ Growers, Lecker Farming Pty Ltd, and Mackays Group for their valued sponsorship of the Agricultural Futures Award.

Through their support, we continue to strengthen pathways between education, training, and employment – empowering the next generation of agricultural professionals across Far North Queensland.

Overview

These awards are designed to support students from Cairns and surrounding regions as they progress toward becoming the next generation of industry leaders and professionals across diverse agricultural disciplines, including:

- Veterinary Science
- Plant Genetics, Pathology and Entomology
- Animal and Agricultural Science
- Agronomy
- Rural Journalism and Marketing
- Soil Science
- Agricultural Software Development
- Agricultural Engineering and Robotics
- Environmental Sustainability
- And related agricultural fields

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

- Be currently enrolled in Year 12 in 2026.
- Demonstrate an intention to pursue a career in agriculture or a related field through university, TAFE, a registered training organisation, traineeship, apprenticeship, or early entry program.
- Be undertaking relevant subjects, which may include (but are not limited to):
 - Agricultural Science or Agricultural Practices
 - Biology, Physics, or Science in Practice
 - Engineering, Engineering Technology, or Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Prize & Bursaries

Winner	\$1000.00
Runner Up	\$600.00
X3 Encouragement Awards	\$500.00

Process

1. Required Documentation

Applications must include the following documentation:

- Completed Application Form
- **Student Written Response** outlining interests, achievements, and demonstrated engagement in agriculture. Students may consider addressing the following points in their response:
 - Provide a brief background about yourself, including where you live, your interests, and your connection to agriculture.
 - Outline your career aspirations and explain your involvement in agricultural studies or activities. Discuss why you wish to pursue employment in this field.
 - Explain how your intended career pathway will contribute to the local, state, and national agricultural industries and the communities they support.
 - Imagine yourself ten years beyond completing Year 12. Describe where you see yourself working and living in ten years.
 - How would you describe the current state of the agricultural sector in Australia? What changes or developments do you anticipate in the Australian agricultural industry over the next ten years?
- **Assessment Samples** - One (1) assessment sample from at least two (2) different subjects. Graded assessments may be submitted; however, marking guides are not required.
- **School Endorsement** - Applications must include a signed endorsement from the school's Head of Department and/ or Principal (or delegated authority).
- **Tertiary Pathway Confirmation** - The school must confirm that the student intends to pursue agriculture as a future tertiary pathway. This confirmation may be included within the Head of Department's endorsement.
- **Application Fee** - A non-refundable application fee of \$88.00 (incl. GST) per school applies (not per student). An invoice will be issued accordingly.

2. Submission Process

- Applications must be submitted by the school's Agricultural, Science, or Technology Department.
- All documentation must be compiled and submitted as one single PDF file, including assessment samples and all signed documentation.

- Completed nominations must be received by:
Monday, 22 June 2026. Week 10 – Term 2
- Applications must be submitted to:
Ms Tamara Gallagher
Innisfail State College
Email: tgall33@eq.edu.au
Phone: (07) 4078 0222
- Late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances.

3. Selection and Interviews

- Applications will be reviewed and shortlisted by a selection panel comprising a Business Liaison Association representative and industry sponsors.
- Shortlisted applicants will be notified by:
Friday, 17 July 2026. Week 1 – Term 3
- Online interviews will be conducted via Zoom during the week commencing:
Monday, 3 August 2026. Week 4 – Term 3
- Final recipients will be determined based on the following criteria:
 - Academic merit
 - Demonstrated engagement with agriculture
 - Clarity of career aspirations
 - Interview performance
- Award recipients will be notified of their invitation to attend the presentations by:
Thursday, 13 August 2026. Week 5 – Term 3
- The final award announcement will take place at the Aspire Awards Presentation Night.

4. Consent and Ethical Standards

- By entering the competition, students and schools provide consent for photographs and video footage to be taken during interviews and award events. These may be used for promotional purposes by the Business Liaison Association (BLA) and its partners.
- Entries must be the original work of the student. The use of generative AI tools (including ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or similar platforms) is not permitted in drafting or writing submission materials. Submissions found to breach this condition will be disqualified.
- Students and schools are encouraged to positively promote their achievements on social media, acknowledging the support of the Business Liaison Association where appropriate.

- The Business Liaison Association reserves the right to withdraw awards, bursaries, or recognitions where a recipient publicly defames, misrepresents, or undermines the values or reputation of the BLA, its community stakeholders, or affiliated partners.

Payment Information

An invoice will be issued to the school on the official closing date of the award.

Awards Night Presentation

Winning students will be formally recognised at the invitation-only Aspire Awards Presentation Evening, details as follows:

- Date: Thursday, 17 September 2026
- Time: 4:45 pm – 7:30 pm
- Venue: Cairns Performing Arts Centre (CPAC)

Award Recipient Requirements

- All award recipients are required to attend the Awards Ceremony in full formal school uniform, in accordance with their school's uniform policy.
- A formal invitation will be issued to each recipient, parent, and their respective school.

Application Form

Please forward the application to both:

Tamara Gallagher
Innisfail State College
tgall33@eq.edu.au

Abigail Peter
Business Liaison Association
events@bla.org.au

Please complete the details below correctly.

Student Candidate Information

Legal Name: _____ DOB: _____

Preferred Name: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____ Year Level: _____

Address: _____

Please note: If a student is unable to attend the Awards Night, a parent or guardian will be invited to attend and accept the award on the student's behalf.

Parent Name: _____ Parent Mobile: _____

Parent Email: _____

School Information

School Name: _____ Office Ph: _____

Teacher's Name: _____ Teacher's Mob: _____

Teachers Email: _____

Teacher's signature: _____ Date Signed: _____

Principal to Complete

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Name: _____ School: _____

Predicted level of Achievement

Subject	Predicted Result
1 _____	_____
2 _____	_____
3 _____	_____
4 _____	_____
5 _____	_____
6 _____	_____

Additional

Please outline your intended post-school pathway, including your QTAC course preferences, Expression of Interest for a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) course, or intention to continue as a School-Based Trainee.

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____

Terms and Conditions

I confirm that I have read and understood the guidelines, eligibility criteria, and all information accompanying this application. I declare that the submitted work is my original work and has been completed within the past twelve (12) months. If I am selected as a winner of this Competition, I grant permission to the Business Liaison Association (BLA) to reproduce, publish, and promote my work across media platforms, including, but not limited to, television, associated websites, and social media platforms (including Facebook and similar channels). I acknowledge that my work may attract media interest on behalf of the Business Liaison Association, and I agree to make myself reasonably available for related promotional and media activities where practicable.

Student Signature

Date