



**2024**

**State Achievement Awards:  
Finalists Booklet**

Sustainable Innovation for the Future





## Acknowledgement of Country

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Local Government Information Technology SA would like to acknowledge the Kaurna People of the Adelaide Plains as the traditional owners of the land on which we work, live, and play. We would like to pay our respects to Elders past and present.

## Introduction

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The LGITSA State Achievement Awards have been developed to unearth, recognise, and reward outstanding team and individual efforts in a wide range of inspiring, innovative, and creative approaches to delivering better Information Management (IM) and Information Technology (IT) service solutions for the local government sector.

It's more than acknowledging excellence. It's about appreciating and celebrating those that are truly having an impact on their organisation and the communities in which they are located. Showcasing evidence of progress today as well as promise for the future, the awards aim to deliver a new blueprint for local government to survive and thrive in this constantly changing world.

This booklet showcases the 2024 LGITSA State Achievement Awards finalists.

## Excellent Team of the Year Award

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This distinguished award recognises a team in the field of Information Management (IM) and/or Information Technology (IT) that has demonstrated exceptional performance and made a significant contribution to their workplace or community. It celebrates teams whose collaborative efforts have not only surpassed the usual expectations but have also achieved remarkable advancements in their field.

This award celebrates those who, through their united skills and cooperative spirit, have set new standards of excellence, contributing notably to the improvement and evolution of local government or their organisation. Nominees should showcase how their innovative approaches, exceptional results, and impactful contributions have truly set them apart in local government.

### Award Criteria

- Demonstrated exceptional teamwork and collaboration, leading to significant advancements in their field or improvements in their organisation.
- Presented innovative solutions or projects that have set new standards of excellence in public service within the IM or IT sectors.

Excellent Team of the Year Award

## Cyber Security Focus Group

### City of Charles Sturt Cyber Security Focus Group

*City of Charles Sturt*

Cyber security is a team sport, particularly in the Local Government context of resource and budget constraints. The City of Charles Sturt Cyber Security Focus Group is a highly collaborative and dedicated team, passionate about improving the Council's cyber security posture and protecting community and employee data.

The team's achievements have significantly advanced the maturity of the Council's cyber security and elevated its profile far beyond 'an IT thing', creating a strong cyber-aware culture across the organisation. As an example of the team's commitment to going above and beyond, 'Cyberman' (AKA Senior Infrastructure Engineer) has even donned a costume to help relay the important message!

#### Project Team Members

Karin Swiatnik, Manager Information Technology  
John Wills, Principal Advisor Technology & Security  
Marc O'Conaill, Coordinator IT Architecture  
Jon Richards, Senior Infrastructure Engineer  
Bryan Watson, Coordinator IT Operations  
Pankaj Sharma, Coordinator IT Applications  
Samuel Li, Senior Cloud Platform Engineer

Excellent Team of the Year Award

## Volume and Value

### Information Services, City of West Torrens

#### *City of West Torrens*

The IS team have delivered numerous high value initiatives against a backdrop of restructure after three of our four Executive roles changed and our business recovering remuneration parity lost during the covid years.

The spirit of our team has provided critical cultural support in the pursuit of supporting BAU and modernising our business.

Numerous transformational business initiatives including:

- IM policy and actions aligned with the new State Records principles
- Elevating our cyber resilience
- "Set and forget" direct debit payment system (1st)
- AI GPT-4 chatbots for our community and workforce
- Transitioning our Finance and Budgeting to cloud systems
- 99.98% availability

#### Project Team Members

Chris James, Manager Information Services  
Di Colls, Team Leader Information Management  
Jess Pyke, Records & Information Officer  
Jy Savage, Information Management Officer  
Kerry Ardlie, Information Management Officer  
Jess Iannone, Business Lead - IT Operations  
Jason Bury, Senior Network Administrator & Security  
Steffen Helgerod, Senior Spatial & BI Analyst  
Ed Otto, IT Customer Support  
Liz Bailey, Team Leader IT Business Applications  
Matthew Ey, Business Application Support Officer  
Clinton Trestrail, IT Digital Services Officer  
Dale Drechsler, Team Leader Digital Services  
Harry Driscoll, Senior IT Application Support Analyst

Excellent Team of the Year Award

## **Port Pirie Regional Council Records Team**

**Port Pirie Regional Council Records Team**

*Port Pirie Regional Council*

In January 2023, Port Pirie Regional Council (PPRC) had a new team leading Records Management, comprising three part-time staff each with different expertise. Maddison Starke, Maryann Clarke and Renée Carroll each brought to the team different knowledge and skills, and by collaborating together and drawing on their individual strengths, together they have achieved remarkable advancements to Records Management, to a level of excellence that none could have achieved on their own.

As a team, they have custom-made a new Business Classification Scheme for PPRC; have facilitated the upgrade of PPRC's EDRMS; and have re-engaged, trained, and supported all staff at each step along the way.

### **Project Team Members**

Danielle Bone, Manager Corporate Services

Maddison Starke, Information Management Officer

Maryann Clarke, Administration Assistant - Information Management Records

Renée Carroll, Administration Assistant - Information Management Records

Excellent Team of the Year Award

## **Revived and Resilient: How a Battle-Hardened Team Transformed Customer Service through Forming, Storming, and Norming**

**Wattle Range Council Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Business Stakeholder Implementation Squad**

*Wattle Range Council*

In an extraordinary display of teamwork and innovation, a dedicated group of business stakeholders navigated through the forming, storming and norming phases to successfully implement a new CRM system. Utilizing a hybrid Agile-Waterfall approach, the team self-organized to tackle challenges head-on, fostering a collaborative environment that blended flexibility with structured planning. This dynamic process ensured a smooth and efficient transition from the old system, significantly improving customer service response times and accuracy. Their collective effort revolutionized service delivery and also highlighted the power of cohesive teamwork and strategic innovation in achieving excellence.

### **Project Team Members**

Peter McArthur, ICT Project Manager  
Megan Tilley, Administration Manager  
Catherine Loder, Manager Development, Health & Compliance  
Aaron Peek, Finance Planning Analyst  
Angela Turner, Administration Officer - Development, Health & Compliance  
Ashleigh Broad, Administration Officer - Operations  
Bridget Johnson, Asset Management Officer - Assets & Environment  
Catherine Allen, Executive Support - CEO/Mayor - Executive  
Jamie Sneddon, IT Manager  
Janice Nitschke, Library and Cultural Services Manager - Library & Cultural Services  
Kristie Rowe, Library Assistant - Library & Cultural Services  
Lauren Newman, Executive Support - Corporate Services & Administration  
Margo Phillips, Executive Support - Development Services & Development, Health & Compliance  
Robert Galambos, Information Technology Officer - Information Technology  
Suzanne Judd, Tourism and Events Coordinator - Community Development  
Susan Gray, Tourism and Customer Support Officer - Community Development  
Lilly Gray, Administration Officer - Operations  
Mackayla Haydon, Administration Officer - Operations



Excellent Team of the Year Award

## City of Unley Business Systems and Support Team

### City of Unley Business Systems and Support Team

#### *City of Unley*

The Business Systems and Solutions team has an enviable culture and way of working together. They're a team of individuals who care about each other both personally and professionally and exhibit a deep consideration and respect for one another.

The team are not afraid to challenge each other and passionately discuss new ideas or ways of working, often coming up with creative solutions to solve problems.

The team acknowledges and appreciates each individuals' experiences, lived and professional, and values their contributions. Their ways of engaging and working together help achieve outstanding results and deliver positive outcomes for our organisation.

#### Project Team Members

Naomi Molloy, Acting Manager Business Systems & Solutions  
James Roberts, Manager Business Systems & Solutions  
Hollie Keon, Manager Business Systems & Solutions  
Bec Zandona, Business Analyst  
Laura Smyth, Business Systems & Support Officer  
Stephen Yates, Spatial and Business Intelligence Analyst  
John Keane, Acting Technology Services Coordinator  
Ruby Kaur, Acting Technology Services Coordinator  
Josh Ogilvie, IT Trainee  
Laxmi Manandhar, Help Desk Agent - Contractor  
Katrina Winderbank, Team Leader Information Management  
Jocelyn Jia, Information Management Officer  
Sheeja Nair, Information Management Officer  
Samantha Everett, Project Officer

## IT Innovation Award

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This award celebrates teams who excel in implementing innovative Information Technology (IT) solutions. It recognises those who not only introduce groundbreaking ideas but also effectively bring them to life. Nominees should demonstrate how their IT solution, or the method of its development or implementation, represents a significant advancement in technology.

This award acknowledges innovators who adeptly translate theory, research, and experimentation into practical, creative solutions that address real-world problems and deliver substantial impact.

### Award Criteria

- Demonstrates a clear departure from standard practices by introducing a unique IT solution that solves problems in a novel way.
- Articulates the impact of the innovation on the organisation or industry, emphasising how it goes beyond routine upgrades or enhancements to deliver substantial benefits.

IT Innovation Award

## AI Efficiency

### Westworld AI, West Torrens Digital Services

#### *City of West Torrens*

With GPT-4, Dale redeveloped our chatbots to enhance community and workforce interactions. The Public Website Digital Assistant and Compass ChatGPT Client now:

- Provide accurate Q&A on CoWT information and supply relevant web pages
- Translate complex information into simple English
- Allow users to upload, use, and modify information from various documents
- Educate users on AI usage and hygiene
- Maintain costs below \$1,000 annually
- Prevent information leakage and ensure corporate data privacy
- Preloaded with extensive corporate data to provide reliable answers

These AI innovations significantly advance technology, translating research into impactful, real-world solutions, and greatly improving efficiency and productivity.

#### Project Team Members

Dale Drechsler, Team Leader Digital Services  
Clinton Trestrail, IT Digital Services Officer

IT Innovation Award

## Using AI to Enhance Community Engagement Outcomes

City of Unley IT and Communications Teams

*City of Unley*

In 2020, Council developed its Tree Strategy, with a target of 31% total tree canopy cover by 2045.

To monitor progress, in late 2023 Council needed to understand the current situation in order to implement programs and policies to achieve our goal.

An overwhelming response to community engagement meant we needed a new and adaptable way to analyse the results. Our team used AI analytics and machine learning to identify dominant topics and measure sentiment from commentary. This data was presented to Elected Members and community representatives, creating a collaborative and data driven forestry strategy.

### Project Team Members

Naomi Molloy, Acting Manager Business Systems & Solutions

Stephen Yates, Spatial & Business Intelligence Analyst

Vicky Antoniou, Team Leader Strategic Communications & Marketing

IT Innovation Award

## **Digitisation, Automation and Revolution**

### **Citizen Development Project Team**

#### *City of Tea Tree Gully*

The City of Tea Tree Gully was facing a problem common to most Councils, we had more requests from the business for digital and automated services than we can deliver with the resources at hand.

This has a cost to Council that is huge, as staff are daily hamstrung by inefficiency, inaccuracy and waste.

We set out on a journey to see if there was a way to solve this problem, and through a series of twists and turns we have found a solution that could not just solve the problem for ourselves, but for the whole sector.

Citizen Development.

#### **Project Team Members**

Ben Cowley, Business Analyst

Lauren Monteleone, Continuous Improvement Advisor

## IM Innovation Award

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Celebrating excellence in Information Management (IM), this award mirrors the IT Innovation award in its celebration of ingenuity but is tailored specifically to recognise the unique challenges and solutions within the field of Information Management. This award honours visionary teams whose IM project has broken new ground. Nominees should highlight how their IM solution or the process by which it was developed and implemented represents a novel approach to managing and leveraging information in transformative ways.

This award distinguishes the pioneers who turn complex data challenges into impactful, innovative solutions that enhance decision-making and operational efficiency.

### Award Criteria

- Developed or implemented a novel IM solution that has dramatically improved data management, accessibility, or utilisation.
- Illustrated a pioneering approach in the integration or application of IM practices that has transformed organisational processes or decision-making.

IM Innovation Award

## Gawler Community Scorecard

*Town of Gawler*

The Gawler Community Scorecard is an advanced tool that revolutionizes community insight by providing interactive, up-to-date statistics about the Gawler region.

This innovative platform enhances decision-making, promotes transparency, and fosters community engagement. By aggregating data on health, education, safety, and sustainability, the Scorecard enables residents and leaders to identify needs, track progress, and drive continuous improvement. Its user-friendly design ensures accessibility, empowering all community members to participate in shaping Gawler's future. The Scorecard is a testament to Gawler's commitment to informed growth, accountability, and community wellbeing.

### Project Team Member

Emma Rennie, Manager Information, Records & Business Improvement



IM Innovation Award

## **Developing a New Freedom of Information Management System (FOIMS)**

*City of Unley*

When State Records announced they were decommissioning their Freedom of Information Management System (FOIMS) and replacing it with a spreadsheet, we were extremely concerned.

This change would potentially leave us to manage complicated FOIs with strict timelines and consultation impacts, without an adaptable and defined process. As there was no “off the shelf” solution, we sought out a vendor to partner with to develop a system suitable for SA legislation that could manage multiple request types, provide clear guidance, and that was affordable.

### **Project Team Member**

Naomi Molloy, Acting Manager Business Systems & Solutions





IM Innovation Award

## **Collaborative Horizons: Transforming Information Management with Microsoft Teams at Holdfast Bay**

*City of Holdfast Bay*

The Enterprise Information Project has transformed City of Holdfast Bay Information Management. By working with the business to implement a unified, fit-for-purpose IM Framework that includes records compliance and an MS Teams/SharePoint structure, clear protocols and information and data ownership have been established.

The IM Team has streamlined record-keeping, enhanced information accessibility, and improved organisational digital literacy. Their strategic and collaborative approach to planning, engagement, and education empowered staff to better understand best practices, enabling organisational change that increased trust in retrieving information and improved efficiencies. The Enterprise Information Project exemplifies the qualities this award seeks to recognise: supportive innovation, effective implementation, and transformative impact.

### **Project Team Member**

Leigh Ray, Information & Technology Lead

## Ideation Award

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This award commends teams and individuals who excel at thinking outside the box, proposing outstanding ideas that could lead to smarter and more sustainable services in the future. It recognises the art of creative problem-solving and the courage to envision bold new concepts. Nominees should showcase how their unique perspectives have uncovered fresh opportunities for development and improvement.

This award also serves as an ideation challenge, encouraging teams during the nomination period to engage in imaginative thinking and present compelling ideas. Nominees gain the valuable opportunity to have their ideas assessed and endorsed by a panel of industry experts, providing significant exposure and industry backing for the most compelling proposals. This is a chance to inspire and be inspired, fostering an environment where visionary proposals are celebrated, regardless of their current stage of development or implementation.

### Award Criteria

- Presented an original idea or concept that shows potential for substantial impact on the organisation's services or processes.
- Demonstrated exceptional creativity and problem-solving skills in developing new ideas that challenge conventional thinking.

Ideation Award

## **Automating Email Requests Using AI**

**City of Unley IT & IM Teams**

*City of Unley*

When seeking out new ways to efficiently and effectively manage customer enquiries, we reviewed our communications channels and focused on opportunities for automating high volume, high effort requests.

We were quickly drawn to requests received via email as while they are flexible for customers, they quickly become complex and lengthy to manage internally. Following analysis, we narrowed in on a pilot to automate change of ownership or address requests using AI learning to remove the manual handling of approximately 2,500 requests annually. Thus, the ideation to use AI to match and label emails and assign to an automated business process.


### **Project Team Members**

Naomi Molloy, Acting Manager Business Systems & Solutions

Jocelyn Jia, Information Management Officer

Ed Ryan, Business Systems Support Officer

James Roberts, Previous Manager Business Systems & Solutions



Ideation Award

## **Central Freedom of Information Processing**

**LGITSA Ideas Factory**

*City of Tea Tree Gully*

Councils across SA have hundreds of people and a high cost of running and administering Freedom Of Information (FOI). FOI is a legislated and beneficial right for everyone to be able to access information, however it is often complex and time consuming.

Centralising FOI-as-a-Service could reduce resource and cost impacts to individual Councils and agencies, as well as providing more rapid responses and outcomes to customers.

### **Project Team Members**

Nathaniel Mason, Team Leader Business Solutions

Russell Warren, Information Management Officer

## Culture & Influence Award

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This category acknowledges the significant influence that IT and IM teams exert on organisational culture, particularly in how they enhance the adoption of technology and foster a mindset of continuous improvement. Recognising that cultural transformation can be beyond the direct control of these teams, this award celebrates their role in shaping and steering cultural shifts towards more agile and informed practices.

As Peter Drucker famously said, 'Culture eats strategy for breakfast', highlighting the paramount importance of cultural influence in achieving strategic goals. Nominees should illustrate their efforts in promoting a culture that is adaptable and responsive to technological advances.

### Award Criteria

- Demonstrated effective influence on organisational culture by demonstrating a team culture that leans into the increasing pace of change.
- Showcased strategies or initiatives that have significantly increased business engagement with IT/IM practice, leading to a more informed and adaptive organisational culture.

Culture & Influence Award

## Forest for the Trees

Arb IT Value

*City of West Torrens*

Less than a decade ago, our Arboriculture team faced inefficiencies and lost requests using a paper-based system, despite having an excellent customer request platform. By transitioning to a fully digital process with smart applications and tablets, together we have eliminated manual data entry errors, ensured accurate tracking of requests and significantly improved customer satisfaction.

This nomination acknowledges the culmination of the IT influence and the change in culture within our Arb team over the last twelve months that has seen us realise a complete digital system including managing tree requests, work management and community engagement.

### Project Team Members

Liz Bailey, Team Leader IT Business Applications

Kahla Hooley, Business Application Support Officer, Information Services (shared role)

Matthew Ey, Business Application Support Officer, Information Services (shared role)

Raoul Brideoke, Work Group Leader Arboriculture

Tim Pudney, Coordinator Parks & Gardens

Mel Keech, Change Improvement Partner

## Sticks, Sticky Tape, & String Award


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This award is granted to a team that has demonstrated extraordinary resourcefulness by achieving outstanding results with minimal resources. It celebrates the innovative use of low-cost or existing assets to significantly enhance a business process or the outcomes of a business function.

This award commends teams that excel in creativity and efficiency, turning modest means into major impacts. Nominees should showcase how their clever and strategic utilisation of limited resources has led to remarkable improvements and measurable success within their organisation or community.

### Award Criteria

- Demonstrated innovation in utilising limited resources to achieve significant improvements in a specific business process or service delivery.
- Showcased the ability to extend the functionality and lifespan of existing assets or systems through creative adaptations or enhancements, significantly increasing operational efficiency or user satisfaction.



Sticks, Sticky Tape, & String Award

## Resource Rendezvous

### Clinton & Heath' Community Resource Collection *City of West Torrens*

The City of West Torrens proudly presents its innovative Community Resource Collection Booking System, a platform that empowers local not-for-profit organisations by providing seamless access to useful resources.

This system not only enhances the efficiency of community programs and events but also fosters greater community engagement and support. By streamlining the booking process and integrating advanced backend functionalities, we ensure that valuable resources are utilised effectively, driving positive change and enriching the lives of our residents. This initiative exemplifies our commitment to innovation and community service. The financial outlay was \$942 pa and reduced processing time by over 150 hours per annum.

#### Project Team Members

Clinton Trestrail, IT Digital Services Officer

Heath Dansie, Community Transport & Resource Coordinator



Sticks, Sticky Tape, & String Award

## Parking Complaints Process Automation

### Application Support

*City of West Torrens*

Faced with a convoluted and inefficient data entry process for Parking Complaints, the team transformed a repetitive and time-consuming task into a streamlined and efficient workflow.

By leveraging the free Power Automate Desktop and the online Power Automate platform included in the council's existing Microsoft E3 license, they developed an innovative solution entirely in-house, without the need for external consultants or additional expenses.

This new automated process seamlessly publishes key information to Teams, providing the Community Safety team with easily digestible data. The result is a significant reduction in manual effort, enhanced accuracy, and quicker response times, demonstrating outstanding creativity and efficiency.

#### Project Team Members

Harry Driscoll, Senior IT Application Support Analyst  
Jasmine Kappler, Team Leader Community Safety  
Samara Farrell, Senior Community Safety Officer  
Ana Tennick, Team Leader Customer Contact



## High Achiever of the Year

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This prestigious award is dedicated to recognising outstanding individuals who have consistently exceeded expectations in IM and/or IT services. It commends those who have shown exceptional dedication, achieving the highest standards of excellence in their field.

This award provides a unique opportunity for sector-wide recognition, showcasing the recipient as a role model and mentor within the industry. Nominees should demonstrate not only their personal achievements and professional acumen but also their contribution to enhancing engagement and retention within their organisations. This award celebrates the exemplary efforts of those who lead by example, inspiring others to strive for similar heights of achievement.

### Award Criteria

- Consistently exceeded expectations in their professional role within IM or IT, achieving high standards of performance and output.
- The impact and effectiveness – ability to role model and raise the bar.

High Achiever of the Year

## **Bethany Loney**

**Information Management Officer**

*Adelaide Plains Council*

Bethany has excelled in Information Management, particularly over the past 12 months. She has proactively improved systems, business and implemented software, while stepping up as a senior manager and mentor in the records department.

Projects include the introduction of IM training, development material i.e. IM Newsletters, procedures and staff feedback surveys. Empowering staff to explore processes, improvements, actions and workflows in Content Manager. Utilising project management training from LG professionals to improve skills, managing internal projects and engaging stakeholders. Implementation of Social Media records management software, 'Brolly'; and digitising cemetery records, DA records, personnel container review project, EDRMS upgrade, system improvements and staff training.



High Achiever of the Year

**Karen Sajn**

**Manager Technology & Transformation**

*City of Victor Harbour*

Karen Sajn revolutionised IT at the City of Victor Harbor through inspirational leadership. She revamped the IT department and spearheaded the OneCouncil project, rolling out an ERP system with 20 modules across two releases. Before her tenure, the department faced numerous challenges: Helpdesk exceeded 300, internet speed was unreliable, laptops were scarce, mobile reception was poor, cybersecurity compliance was minimal and morale was low.

Karen improved efficiency, enhanced team capabilities and restored confidence. Karen is a high achiever known for her incredible people skills that bring the best out of everyone. Known for fairness and loyalty, Karen is an inspirational leader who deserves this award.

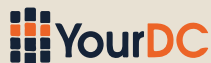
## Platinum Sponsors

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## Gold Sponsors

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## Silver Sponsor

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## Thank You

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Thank you to all nominees for their time and dedication towards the LGITSA State Achievement Awards 2024. We congratulate all nominees and finalists on an outstanding year.

The LGITSA State Achievement Awards are judged by an independent panel of industry experts. Thank you to our 2024 judges for their time, expertise, and commitment to recognising and celebrating the outstanding achievements of IT and IM teams within South Australia's local government sector.

