



Women *in*  
payments

AUSTRALIA 2026

AWARD  
CATEGORIES &  
CRITERIA

*Kristy Duncan,  
Founder & CEO,  
Women in Payments*



## INNOVATION AWARD

The Women in Payments Innovation Award will be awarded to the woman who has had a positive impact to innovate, create new solution(s) to address challenges, and/or support and protect the industry, including clients and other stakeholders. Nominations are encouraged from across the payments industry, including but not limited to back office, tech, operations, client-facing, fintech and more.

### CRITERION 1: INNOVATION

Has promoted payments innovation through creativity, vision, and perseverance in her organization or the wider payments industry. Has been instrumental in promoting innovation, transformation, or creative process re-engineering, which is original, has significant impact, can be easily and effectively adopted, and has results that are measurable. They should be able to be applied elsewhere, and support and inspire others in the organization or industry to innovate.

### CRITERION 2: PROBLEM SOLVING

Creative use of new knowledge, technology, or approaches to address ongoing challenges in the organization or industry. The solution should enhance customer experience, address pressing industry issues such as fraud and scams or other challenges, and/or create innovative systems, technology, products, programs, practices, and/or policies to address such challenges.

### CRITERION 3: PRODUCTIVITY

Has created a solution that reduces time, resources, risks, and/or costs associated with delivering a service, system or product. Has successfully implemented such solutions resulting in a positive impact to the product or customer experience beyond the nominee's own team or department.

### CRITERION 4: MENTORSHIP

Is widely recognized for her expertise and actively works to empower others. Leads by example and motivates members of her team, organization, or industry. Acts as a mentor, advisor, and teacher, to make a positive impact on members of her organization or the payments industry.

### CRITERION 5: INTEGRITY & DIVERSITY

Has high integrity and sets high professional standards for ethics and



quality of work. Has contributed to a positive and supportive learning environment by encouraging diversity of people and opinions

## INSPIRATIONAL LEADER AWARD

The Women in Payments Inspirational Leader Award recognizes a woman whose vision, leadership, and positive influence inspire others to achieve their full potential. She motivates teams, mobilizes people around a shared purpose, and helps modernize the payments industry through thought leadership, mentorship, and authentic leadership. Nominations are encouraged from across the payments industry, including but not limited to back office, tech, operations, client-facing, fintech and more.

### CRITERION 1: INSPIRES A SHARED VISION

Creates and communicates a compelling vision that inspires others to embrace change and pursue ambitious goals. Demonstrates thought leadership and contributes meaningfully to the evolution of the payments industry.

### CRITERION 2: MOBILIZES PEOPLE & ACTION

Brings people together around a common purpose and motivates teams, colleagues, or industry peers to take action. Creates an environment where individuals feel empowered, engaged, and inspired to contribute their best work.

### CRITERION 3: MOTIVATES THROUGH RESILIENCE & POSITIVITY

Leads with optimism, resilience, and authenticity, particularly during periods of challenge or uncertainty. Encourages others to persevere, learn, and grow while maintaining a positive outlook and commitment to success.

### CRITERION 4: DEVELOPS & EMPOWERS OTHERS

Actively invests in the growth of others through mentorship, coaching, sponsorship, or knowledge sharing. Creates opportunities for individuals to develop their skills, advance their careers, and realize their potential.

### CRITERION 5: LEADS WITH INTEGRITY & INFLUENCE

Builds trust through ethical leadership, transparency, and strong communication. Establishes meaningful relationships across teams, organizations, and the broader industry, inspiring confidence and lasting positive impact.



## RISING STAR

The Women in Payments Rising Star Award will be awarded to a woman under the age of 30 (as of 31 January, 2026), who is currently employed in Australia or New Zealand and who best meets the criteria below. Nominations are encouraged from across the payments industry, including but not limited to back office, tech, operations, client-facing, fintech and more.

### CRITERION 1: DRIVE

Is always willing to go the extra mile to achieve excellence for herself, her organization, her clients and/or the industry. She supports and inspires others through promoting innovation and advancement. She is results-oriented, always seeking new ideas with the ability to translate them into action for her organization and customers.

### CRITERION 2: PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Consistently delivers, collaborates and leads in a variety of settings and circumstances. Performs with distinction and delivers strong results by building trust and confidence among her colleagues, peers and/or clients.

### CRITERION 3: POTENTIAL

Exhibits behaviors that reflect her organization's culture and values in an exemplary manner. Shows a strong capacity to grow and succeed throughout her career.

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### CRITERION 4: MENTORSHIP

Is widely recognized for her expertise and actively works to empower others. Leads by example and motivates members of her team, organization or industry. Actively supports others to make a positive impact on members of her organization, clients or the payments industry.

### CRITERION 5: INTEGRITY & DIVERSITY

Has high integrity and sets high professional standards for ethics and quality of work. Has contributed to a positive and supportive learning environment by encouraging diversity of people and opinions.



## ADVOCATE FOR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AWARD

The Women in Payments Advocate for Diversity & Inclusion Award recognizes an individual who champions equity, opportunity, and belonging within the payments industry and the broader community. Nominations are encouraged from across the payments industry, including but not limited to back office, tech, operations, client-facing, fintech and more.

### CRITERION 1: ADVANCES FEMALE LEADERSHIP

Actively contributes to the advancement and development of women within or beyond their organization and publicly celebrates the achievements of female leaders. Leads by example by promoting the importance of diverse leadership and creating opportunities for women to thrive and advance.

### CRITERION 2: CHAMPIONS EQUITY & INCLUSION

Advocates for gender equity and equal opportunities for career growth, participation, and leadership. Encourages engagement and creates forums, networks, or initiatives that support women and underrepresented groups both within the organization and across the industry.

### CRITERION 3: SUPPORTS, EDUCATES & DEVELOPS

Promotes education, professional development, sponsorship, and mentorship opportunities for women and diverse talent. Actively shares knowledge, creates pathways for growth, and supports initiatives that help individuals achieve their full potential.

### CRITERION 4: MENTORSHIP & COMMUNITY IMPACT

Uses their expertise and influence to empower others through coaching, mentoring, and advocacy. Demonstrates meaningful impact beyond their immediate role by supporting community initiatives, educational programs, industry organizations, or outreach efforts that advance diversity, inclusion, and opportunity.

### CRITERION 5: INTEGRITY, INCLUSION & LASTING IMPACT

Demonstrates high ethical standards, authenticity, and respect for diverse perspectives. Creates inclusive environments where individuals feel valued, supported, and heard. Has made a measurable and lasting contribution to advancing diversity, inclusion, and belonging within their organization, industry, or community.



## PAYMENTS CHAMPION AWARD

The Women in Payments Payments Champion Award recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to advancing the payments industry through operational excellence, customer impact, thought leadership, process improvement, infrastructure development, or business transformation. Nominations are encouraged from across the payments industry, including but not limited to back office, tech, operations, client-facing, fintech and more.

### CRITERION 1: INDUSTRY ADVANCEMENT

Demonstrates a meaningful contribution to the evolution and advancement of the payments industry. Through their work, ideas, or leadership, they help improve how payments are delivered, managed, secured, or experienced.

### CRITERION 2: OPERATIONAL OR BUSINESS IMPACT

Has delivered measurable improvements to processes, infrastructure, customer experience, operational efficiency, risk management, or business performance. Consistently drives positive outcomes that create value for their organization, clients, or the wider industry.

### CRITERION 3: COLLABORATION & INFLUENCE

Works effectively across teams, functions, organizations, or industry groups to solve challenges and advance shared goals. Is recognized as a trusted partner, advisor, or subject matter expert by colleagues and stakeholders.

### CRITERION 4: THOUGHT LEADERSHIP & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Actively contributes ideas, insights, or best practices that improve the payments ecosystem. Demonstrates a commitment to learning, innovation, and continuous improvement while helping others navigate industry change.

### CRITERION 5: PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE & INTEGRITY

Demonstrates the highest standards of professionalism, ethics, and accountability. Leads by example, earns the trust of colleagues and stakeholders, and consistently delivers high-quality work that positively impacts the organization and industry.



## DISTINGUISHED PAYMENTS PROFESSIONAL AWARD

The Women in Payments Distinguished Professional Award is a lifetime achievement honour. It will be presented to a woman who is a recognized role model and positive contributor to the overall image of the industry and who best meets the criteria below. Nominations are encouraged from across the payments industry, including but not limited to back office, tech, operations, client-facing, fintech and more.

### CRITERION 1: ACHIEVEMENT

Has influenced industry trends, acts as a role model and successfully reached and exceeded goals—taking her team, organization and/or industry to the next level.

### CRITERION 2: CONTRIBUTION

Acts as a payments ambassador to promote a positive image of her organization, industry initiative and the payments industry as a whole. Actively contributes to the collective success of the payments industry as a whole. Is viewed as a trusted advisor by peers and colleagues and is often a source of industry expertise.

### CRITERION 3: LEGACY

Is known for her personal and professional authenticity and building her career on strong set of values. Has built strong and positive relationships with co-workers and industry stakeholders. Is seen as a role model within her organization and throughout the industry.

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### CRITERION 4: MENTORSHIP

Is widely recognized for her expertise and actively works to empower others. Leads by example and motivates members of her team, organization, or industry. Acts as a mentor, advisor, and teacher, to make a positive impact on members of her organization or the payments industry.

### CRITERION 5: INTEGRITY & DIVERSITY

Has high integrity and sets high professional standards for ethics and quality of work. Has contributed to a positive and supportive learning environment by encouraging diversity of people and opinions.



# WOMEN IN PAYMENTS AUSTRALIA 2026 AWARDS PROGRAM CATEGORIES & CRITERIA

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Each nominee can only be nominated for one award category, duplicate nominations will not be accepted.
- A maximum of one nominee per category per organization.
- Self-nominations are not allowed.
- Each nominee submitted must reside in Australia or New Zealand.

Please have the following prepared in advance of submitting the application online:

### **Nominator** (may not be the same as nominee)

- Name
- Organization
- Email
- Phone

### **Nominee**

- Name
- Organization
- Job title
- Biography
- Email
- LinkedIn Profile (URL)
- Phone
- Address
- Headshot

### **Award**

- Category
- Describe how the nominee meets the criteria for this award. (min 500 – 1000 max characters)
- Outline of the nominee’s experience in the organization or within the payments industry in the areas of leadership, mentorship, integrity and diversity. (min 500 – 1000 max characters)
- Describe the nominee’s most significant achievements in the organization or the payments industry in the areas of leadership, mentorship, integrity and diversity. Provide concise examples of initiatives, efforts, programs and or policies that have contributed to success. (min 500 – 1000 max characters)
- List any recognition or awards received by the nominee, the organization that awarded them and date awarded.
- Biography (min 500 – 1000 max characters)
- Profile picture of the nominee (max 1000 x 1000 pixels)

### **References**

- Min of one (1) mandatory reference letter from colleagues and peers who can support the nomination. However, we encourage you to provide additional two supplementary references for a strong nomination. This is optional.
- Name, Organization, Email, Phone
- Capacity in which they know the nominee (min 100 – 300 max characters)
- Reasons why they support the nomination (min 100 – 300 max characters)



## INNOVATION AWARD

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Innovation	Problem Solving	Productivity	Mentorship	Integrity & Diversity	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

## INSPIRATIONAL LEADER AWARD

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Inspires a Shared Vision	Mobilizes People & Action	Motivates Through Resilience & Positivity	Develops & Empowers Others	Leads with Integrity & Influence	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

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## RISING STAR AWARD

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Drive	Professional Excellence	Potential	Mentorship	Integrity & Diversity	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50



## ADVOCATE FOR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AWARD

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Advances Female Leadership	Champions Equity & Inclusion	Supports, Educates & Develops	Mentorship & Community Impact	Integrity, Inclusion & Lasting Impact	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

## PAYMENTS CHAMPION AWARD

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Industry Advancement	Operational or Business Impact	Collaboration & Influence	Thought Leadership & Continuous Improvement	Professional Excellence & Integrity	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

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## DISTINGUISHED PAYMENTS PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Achievement	Contribution	Legacy	Mentorship	Integrity & Diversity	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

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