

# Women in AI Awards ANZ: Winners 2021

## *Celebrating Women in AI*

A landmark event on Friday March 26th, saw the celebration of the inaugural [Australian and New Zealand Women in AI Awards](#).

The awards, held at the MCA in Sydney, are the brainchild of the global [Women in AI](#) movement, and are facilitated and produced locally by C-level networking specialist Jewelrock. With multi award-winning STEM journalist [Rae Johnston](#) acting as MC, the evening acknowledged the incredibly valuable contributions made by women in the booming field of Artificial Intelligence.

"The global organization Women in AI was founded in 2017, with the mission to close the gender gap in the field of artificial Intelligence. Tonight, I am very glad that our amazing team in Australia is honouring our vision with these awards." said [Moojan Asghari](#), co-founder of WAI.

Opening addresses from Moojan Asghari, [Angela Kim, WAI Education Ambassador](#), and [Minister for Industry, Science and Technology the Hon Karen Andrews](#), all spoke to the value and importance of women in STEM and AI across the region.

"These Awards shine a light on the inspiring work of talented women in AI", said Minister Andrews in a video address.

"Like other areas of STEM, it's incredibly important we nurture an AI culture that's gender inclusive. The minister went on to outline several important projects contributing to positive outcomes in the advancement of women in AI; including the Superstars of Stem Project.

Minister Andrews: "The Superstars of STEM project is also helping raise the role of women in diverse STEM fields, including AI.

As you know, the challenge is not a lack of talented and inspiring women in STEM. Ensuring women are supported to thrive in AI, and celebrating them to inspire our next generation of women, is where more action is needed . . . I thank the Women in AI network for this fantastic initiative, and Jewelrock for organising the Gala Dinner. I look forward to seeing these awards promote women's visibility in STEM, and contribute to an industry culture that spurs more women on to pursue careers in AI"

Other live speakers included [Australia's Chief Scientist Dr Cathy Foley, AO PSM](#); [Director of Monash Data Futures Institute Professor Joanna Batstone](#), WAI Awards 2021 Advisory Group Patron the [Hon Julie Bishop](#); NSW Minister for Customer Service [Victor Dominello](#) and many more.

"I have been the first woman to take on a lot of roles in my career . . . you have a responsibility to make it easier for those following you . . . it is quite different to be a room where the majority is women. And it is quite comfortable." said WAI Awards 2021 Advisory Patron the Hon Julie Bishop. "I congratulate the Finalists, the winners, the sponsors, and the organisers of this awards night."

Presenter [Catriona Jackson, Chief Executive, Universities Australia](#), agreed: "This room is just the start."

Covering 11 categories, with a Grand Award for Australia- New Zealand WAI Innovator of the Year, the awards brought together the best and brightest women across the Australian & New Zealand AI community.

[Australia's Chief Scientist Dr Cathy Foley, AO PSM](#): “It is important to raise the profile of amazing women in future technologies, to have a truly diverse workforce. A diverse workforce equals diverse solutions.”

This diversity was reflected throughout the evening, with women from many backgrounds in fields from the Military, Academia, and the Private sector all enjoying success on the night.

### **Category Winners**

AI in Finance Award - [Wen Chen, CSIRO Data61](#)

AI in Health Award - [Dr Michelle Perugini, CEO and Co-Founder Presagen](#)

AI in Defence Award - [Squadron Leader Kate Yaxley, Royal Australian Air Force](#)

AI in Education Award - [Dr Beena Ahmed, Senior Lecturer, School of Electrical Engineering & Telecommunications UNSW](#)

AI in Infrastructure - [Distinguished Professor Fang Chen, Executive Director, Data Science, UTS](#)

AI in Mining - [Juliette Murphy Co-Founder & CEO FloodMapp](#)

AI in Manufacturing - Jamila Gordon, [CEO & Founder, Lumachain](#)

AI in Innovation - [Yolande Strengers, Associate Professor of Digital Technology and Society, Monash University](#)

AI in Agribusiness - [Fiona Turner, Co-Founder and CEO, Bitwise Agronomy](#)

AI in Law - [Aurelie Jacquet, Chair, IT-043 Standards Committee on AI](#)

AI in Cyber Security - [Dr Lina Yao, Scientia Associate Professor, UNSW](#)

### **Grand Award- Australia - New Zealand WAI Innovator of the Year**

The final award for the evening; the Grand Award for WAI Innovator of the Year, went to AI in Manufacturing Winner Jamila Gordon, who predicted a bright future for women in AI:

“For this decade, for AI . . . everything can have AI applied to it, will have AI applied to it, and the amazing thing is, that it's early stages for AI. And women can have a real advantage, with a level playing field. This (event) that Julie is doing, that everyone here is doing, will encourage every woman, every young girl, to get in and drive that AI. . . . I want to thank you. Let's get more women into AI”.

Second Runner Up - [Fiona Turner, Co-Founder and CEO, Bitwise Agronomy](#)

First Runner up - [Dr Michelle Perugini, CEO and Co-Founder Presagen](#)

Winner WAI Innovator of the Year - Jamila Gordon, [CEO & Founder, Lumachain](#)



**Left to Right:** Professor Joanna Batstone, Director Monash Data Futures Institute; Grand Award Second runner up, Fiona Turner; Grand Award First runner up Dr Michelle Perugini; Grand Award Winner Jamila Gordon; WAI Awards 2021 Advisory Group Awards Patron The Hon Julie Bishop.

Awards Patron Julie Bishop: "The public discourse will now recognise that no nation can reach its full potential without engaging the 50% of its population that is female."

The evening concluded after the presentation of the overall winner of the Grand Award & the two runners up, and a screening of "Beautiful World", an AI-generated musical video which won the Eurovision AI Song contest, created by Uncanny Valley of Australia.

Congratulations to all our amazing winners.

We would also like to thank our many Partners without whom an event of this calibre would not have been possible. Companies like these recognise and reward the extraordinary efforts of Women in AI, they understand that diversity and inclusion, and addressing the gender bias in AI, are helping to pave the way for opportunities for women in STEM across Australia and New Zealand and for ensuring that AI is used for social good and for the benefit of communities and the world. To them we say: thank you.

[Monash Data Futures Institute](#), [Salesforce](#), [Microsoft](#), [ServiceNow](#), [Lockheed Martin Australia](#), [Minerals Council of Australia](#), [Gilbert+Tobin](#), the [NSW Government](#), [Intel](#), [IBM](#), [Deakin University](#), [CBA](#), [Telstra](#), the [University of Sydney](#), [DISER](#), [Publicis Sapiant](#), [AIML](#), [Western Sydney University](#), [CSIRO](#), [NEC](#), [KPMG](#), [Auckland University of Technology](#), [Victoria State Government](#), [Griffith University](#), [University of Newcastle](#), [BOAB AI](#), [Airtree](#), [BlueChilli](#), [Ethical AI Advisory](#), [Data Science and AI Association of Australia](#), and [Women in STEMM Australia](#).

ENDS.

VIDEO AVAILABLE

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS AVAILABLE

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