

THE PROFESSION

For the Australian Legal Profession

Legal Awards & Directories Guide

A comprehensive, neutral reference for Australian legal professionals covering the major rankings, directories and awards programs — with key submission deadlines.

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

We Are The Profession

The Profession is an independent platform built for the Australian legal profession. Part editorial publication, part professional network in the making, it exists to bring together the people, ideas, opportunities and conversations shaping legal careers across the country.

We cover the realities of practice, the future of the profession, business development, leadership, advocacy, career growth, wellbeing, innovation and the forces changing legal work in Australia. Our aim is simple: publish work worth reading, sharing and acting on.

The Profession is designed for how people build careers now: fast-moving, digital and national. Practical rather than ceremonial. Career-focused rather than passive. Community-led rather than top-down. High-standard without being stuffy.

A founding membership waitlist is open now. Those who register before the official launch in late May 2026 will be eligible for a lifetime reduced Founding Member rate.

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About This Guide

The Australian legal profession is served by a diverse ecosystem of rankings, directories and awards programs. Understanding how each one works — and when deadlines fall — matters increasingly for firms and practitioners who want to build and leverage their profile.

This guide provides a neutral, factual overview of the major awards and directories relevant to Australian lawyers. It is organised into three sections:

- Part 1: Legal Directories & Rankings — peer-review and research-based guides that evaluate professional quality.
- Part 2: Industry Awards Programs — nomination or submission-based awards recognising achievement and excellence.
- Part 3: Quick-Reference Deadlines Calendar — a consolidated table of approximate key dates.

Where deadlines are noted, these reflect the most recently available information as at May 2026 and should be verified directly with the relevant publisher, as schedules shift from year to year.

PART ONE

Legal Directories & Rankings

Legal directories are independently researched guides that evaluate and rank lawyers and law firms. Unlike awards programs, most directories do not charge for rankings — though paid profile upgrades are often offered separately. Rankings are expressed in tiers or bands and renewed annually.

The three broad methodological models are: (1) pure peer review, where practitioners evaluate colleagues confidentially; (2) editorial research, where an analyst team interviews clients and referees; and (3) hybrid models combining both. Understanding which model applies to each directory is important context when interpreting any listing.

1.1 DOYLE'S GUIDE

Doyle's Guide

Doyle's Guide is an Australian-founded legal directory covering every state and territory, with expanding international coverage across New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States. It is among the most widely referenced rankings within the domestic market, particularly for smaller and mid-size practices.

How It Operates

Doyle's Guide positions itself as an independent, peer-review-based rating service. Its process involves outreach to practitioners across relevant practice areas — including lawyers, barristers and in-house counsel — who are asked to nominate peers they regard as leaders in specific fields. The Guide states that rankings are not influenced by submissions or sponsorship, and that firms cannot pay to appear or improve their ranking.

Rankings use a tiered structure. For individual lawyers: Pre-eminent, Leading, Recommended, and Rising Star. For law firms, comparable tiers apply. Rankings are practice-area and jurisdiction-specific, meaning a practitioner may hold different rankings across different states or areas of law.

Results are published on a rolling basis throughout the year, with different practice areas released at different times. There is no formal submission window — research is researcher-initiated, based on outreach to the legal community.

Doyle's Guide	Quick Reference
Publisher	Doyle's Guide (independent, Australian-owned)
Geography	All Australian states and territories; NZ, Hong Kong, Singapore, UK, Canada, USA
Methodology	Peer review — researchers contact practitioners to nominate peers. No firm submissions; no pay-to-rank.
Ranking Tiers	Pre-eminent / Leading / Recommended / Rising Star (individuals); Leading / Recommended (firms)
Key Dates	Ongoing — no single annual deadline. Results published by practice area throughout the year.
Notes	Firms and lawyers cannot apply directly. Being nominated by peers or contacted by researchers is the pathway.

1.2 BEST LAWYERS

Best Lawyers in Australia

Best Lawyers is a globally recognised legal directory with origins in the United States, now operating across more than 75 countries. The Australian edition is currently in its 19th year (2027 edition, released April 2026). The program also includes Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in Australia for early-career practitioners with approximately 3–8 years of private practice experience.

How It Operates

Best Lawyers uses a "Purely Peer Review" methodology — entirely driven by confidential peer evaluation, with no editorial research team interviewing clients. Steps include: nomination (anyone may nominate, including the lawyer themselves); confidential voting by existing honourees in the same geographic region and practice area; and annual re-evaluation. The "Lawyer of the Year" honour is awarded to the individual receiving the highest overall peer feedback in each practice area and metropolitan region — only one per area/location per edition.

The 2026 edition (published April 2025) recognised more than 4,500 lawyers — approximately the top 5% of the national profession — with a record 60.03% voter participation rate. The 2027 edition was published April 2026.

Best Lawyers	Quick Reference
Publisher	Best Lawyers (US-headquartered, global)
Geography	Australia-wide (by city and practice area); international editions in 75+ countries
Methodology	Purely Peer Review® — confidential peer evaluations. No client interviews. No pay-to-rank.
Ranking Tiers	Recognised / Lawyer of the Year (individuals); Law Firm of the Year (firms); Ones to Watch (early career)
Key Dates	Nominations open and close mid-year. Results published annually in April. Check bestlawyers.com/methodology/timeline .
Notes	Self-nomination is permitted. Nominees placed on voting ballots once they receive sufficient positive reviews.

1.3 CHAMBERS ASIA-PACIFIC

Chambers Asia-Pacific

Chambers and Partners is a UK-headquartered global legal publisher regarded as among the most rigorous in the industry. The Chambers Asia-Pacific guide covers 34 jurisdictions including Australia and provides rankings for law firms, departments and individual lawyers — including dedicated bar coverage. The 2026 guide was built from over 27,700 interactions with the legal market.

How It Operates

Chambers uses an editorial research methodology in which a dedicated analyst team spends approximately seven months (February to August) conducting market research. Firms submit detailed written submissions documenting expertise, key matters, team structure and client referees — capped at 30 referees per practice area for Asia-Pacific. Researchers then interview referees and conduct independent market outreach, cross-checking firm assertions against broader market sentiment. Firms cannot review editorial before publication. Rankings are not influenced by commercial relationships.

Rankings are expressed in numbered bands (Band 1 is highest), with additional designations including Up-and-Coming and Associates to Watch for early-career practitioners. The 2026 guide comprised 3,993 department rankings and 7,173 lawyer rankings.

Chambers Asia-Pacific	Quick Reference
Publisher	Chambers and Partners (UK-headquartered, global)
Geography	Australia, NZ, Japan, 34 Asia-Pacific jurisdictions; dedicated Australian Bar coverage
Methodology	Editorial research — analyst team interviews client referees and conducts independent market research. Submissions via secure portal. Not pay-to-rank.
Ranking Tiers	Band 1–6 (firms and individuals); Up-and-Coming; Associates to Watch; Eminent Practitioner
Key Dates (2027 ed.)	First deadline approx. January 2026 (passed). Research runs Feb–Aug 2026. Guide launch: December 2026. Submissions now open for 2027 edition.
Notes	Referee limit: 30 per practice area. Use current-year portal templates only. Separate submission required per practice area.

1.4 THE LEGAL 500 ASIA PACIFIC

The Legal 500 Asia Pacific

The Legal 500 is a UK-headquartered global directory publishing rankings across more than 100 countries. The Asia-Pacific edition covers Australia (including a dedicated Bar section) and the broader region. It is one of the most widely used directories by in-house legal teams when selecting outside counsel, drawing on a claimed 15 million+ data points globally.

How It Operates

The Legal 500 combines firm submissions with independent client interviews and market research. Firms submit a written submission (using a mandatory pre-formatted Word template) and a client referee list (Excel template). Both are uploaded via The Legal 500 Portal — email submissions are not accepted for security reasons. Researchers contact referees and conduct independent outreach. Firms cannot view or amend editorial before publication. Editorial rankings are free of charge; paid directory listing entries are a separate commercial product.

The Legal 500 Asia Pacific	Quick Reference
Publisher	The Legal 500 (UK-headquartered; Legal Benchmarking Group)
Geography	Australia (law firms + Bar), New Zealand, broader Asia-Pacific
Methodology	Editorial research — researcher-led, combining firm submissions, client referee interviews and independent market research. Free to rank.
Ranking Tiers	Tier 1–4 (firms/sets); Leading Individual; Next Generation Partner/Lawyer; Rising Star
Key Dates (2027 ed.)	Law firm editorial + client referee deadline: 8 June 2026*. Bar deadline: 26 June 2026*. Publication: mid-January 2027.
Notes	Current-year Word + Excel templates mandatory. Secure portal upload required. Separate submission per practice area.

1.5 BENCHMARK LITIGATION ASIA-PACIFIC

Benchmark Litigation Asia-Pacific

Benchmark Litigation focuses exclusively on dispute resolution and litigation — covering Australia across categories including class actions, commercial disputes, government and regulatory, insurance, intellectual property and insolvency. Part of the Legal Benchmarking Group, it was first published in 2008 and expanded to Asia-Pacific in 2018. Its narrow scope means it provides more granular analysis of litigators than broader-coverage directories.

How It Operates

Benchmark describes its process as editorially driven and deliberately non-inclusive — aiming to cover only firms and lawyers of elite status. The annual research cycle begins in August; results are published the following May/June. Submissions are via a secure accreditation portal (separate from other directories). The editorial team conducts peer review interviews, market surveys and analysis of submitted case highlights. Where there is a significant disparity between firm self-assessment and market consensus, market consensus is given greater weight. Benchmark also runs annual Awards, recognising the most complex cases, outstanding litigators and rising talent.

Benchmark Litigation APAC	Quick Reference
Publisher	Benchmark Litigation (Legal Benchmarking Group)
Geography	Australia (class action, commercial, government/regulatory, insurance, IP, insolvency + more)
Methodology	Editorially driven, non-inclusive. Peer review interviews, market surveys, submitted case highlights. Disputes/litigation only. Not pay-to-play.
Ranking Tiers	Firm tiers; individual lawyer ratings; Ones to Watch
Key Dates	Research cycle begins August each year. Results published May/June. Check benchmarklitigation.com for current portal.
Notes	Only cases submitted via the Benchmark research form are eligible for awards consideration.

1.6 FT INNOVATIVE LAWYERS

Financial Times Innovative Lawyers — Asia-Pacific

The FT Innovative Lawyers programme, run by RSGI in partnership with the Financial Times, evaluates legal innovation rather than general practice quality. Now in its 20th year (2026), it covers Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America. It is particularly relevant for firms wanting to demonstrate leadership in legal technology, service delivery innovation and ESG-related legal work — a firm not ranked Tier 1 in traditional directories may rank highly here if it demonstrates genuine innovation.

How It Operates

Firms submit case studies documenting specific innovative legal work. The research team assesses submissions against five metrics — innovation, people management, social responsibility, digital maturity and financial growth — and conducts in-depth interviews with submitting firms and independent stakeholders. Results are published as an index ranking firms by overall score, alongside profiles of each shortlisted innovation. The Asia-Pacific report is typically published in May each year.

FT Innovative Lawyers	Quick Reference
Publisher	RSGI / Financial Times
Geography	Asia-Pacific (including Australia); also Europe and North America editions

Methodology	Submission-based: firms submit innovation case studies. Research team scores against 5 metrics. Not a peer-review or client-feedback model.
Ranking Tiers	Index score ranking; shortlisted innovations; Most Innovative Firm (overall and by category)
Key Dates	Submissions typically open late in the preceding year. Asia-Pacific report published approximately May each year. Check rsgi.co.
Notes	Focus is on specific deals or innovations, not overall firm quality. 2026 Asia-Pacific report published May 2026.

PART TWO

Industry Awards Programs

Industry awards programs differ from legal directories. They are typically open-submission or nomination-based, judged by a panel, and presented at gala events. Unlike directories, most actively solicit entrants rather than conducting independent researcher-initiated studies.

Entering awards programs involves a submission describing achievements against defined criteria. This creates a different dynamic: strong performers who do not actively engage with the submissions process may not be recognised, while proactive entrants can secure recognition that increases their profile. It is worth understanding each program's judging methodology and independence before investing significant time in submissions.

2.1 AUSTRALIAN LAW AWARDS

Lawyers Weekly — Australian Law Awards

The Australian Law Awards, published by Lawyers Weekly (Momentum Media), is the longest-running national legal awards program in Australia with over 26 years of history. It is widely regarded as the premier domestic industry awards event. The black-tie gala is held annually in Sydney, typically in July.

How It Operates

Entries are self-submitted or nominated. Any individual or organisation operating in Australia and supporting the business of law is eligible. Entry is free. A panel of respected industry professionals scores submissions against quantitative and qualitative criteria covering growth, business development, diversity, leadership, innovation and contribution to the sector. Multiple judges are assigned per category. Finalists are announced approximately six weeks before the event.

Key categories include (among others): Law Firm of the Year, Managing Partner of the Year, Partner of the Year (by practice area), General Counsel of the Year, Barrister of the Year, Dealmaker of the Year, Mentor of the Year, Academic of the Year, and specialist team awards.

Australian Law Awards	Quick Reference
Publisher	Lawyers Weekly / Momentum Media
Geography	Australia-wide (national)
Methodology	Submission/nomination-based. Panel of judges scores quantitative and qualitative criteria. Free to enter.
Key Dates 2026	Submissions closed: 8 May 2026 (5:30pm AEST)*. Finalists announced: June 2026. Gala: 30 July 2026, The Star, Sydney (black tie).
Self-Nominate?	Yes — self-nomination permitted. Nominations by colleagues also accepted.

2.2 PARTNER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Lawyers Weekly — Partner of the Year Awards

The Partner of the Year Awards is a dedicated Lawyers Weekly program recognising excellence at partner level across individual practice areas. It operates separately from the broader Australian Law Awards, with its own gala event, and is restricted to partners or partner equivalents.

Partner of the Year Awards	Quick Reference
Publisher	Lawyers Weekly / Momentum Media
Geography	Australia-wide
Methodology	Submission/nomination-based. Panel judging. Free to enter. Eligibility: partners or partner equivalents.
Key Dates 2026	Gala: 4 June 2026, The Star, Sydney (black tie, 6:30pm AEST). Submission deadline: check lawyersweekly.com.au.
Self-Nominate?	Yes — free to enter.

2.3 30 UNDER 30 AWARDS

Lawyers Weekly — 30 Under 30 Awards

Now in its 14th year, the 30 Under 30 Awards celebrates outstanding legal professionals aged 30 or under. It provides early-career practitioners with national recognition and a significant profile boost. Open to all legal professionals (not restricted to admitted practitioners) aged 30 or under in the relevant calendar year.

30 Under 30 Awards	Quick Reference
Publisher	Lawyers Weekly / Momentum Media
Geography	Australia-wide
Methodology	Submission/nomination-based. Panel judging. Free to enter. Eligibility: age 30 or under in the relevant calendar year.
Key Dates (2027 ed.)	Submissions expected to open mid-2026; close approx. November 2026. Finalists announced December 2026. Gala approx. March 2027.
Note on 2026 ed.	2026 edition concluded. Submissions closed 21 Nov 2025; gala was 12 March 2026, The Star, Sydney.

2.4 WOMEN IN LAW AWARDS

Lawyers Weekly — Women in Law Awards

The Women in Law Awards is a national program recognising the achievements of women across the Australian legal profession. It covers individuals at all career stages, from emerging talent to senior leadership, as well as firm-level diversity initiatives.

Women in Law Awards	Quick Reference
Publisher	Lawyers Weekly / Momentum Media
Geography	Australia-wide
Methodology	Submission/nomination-based. Panel judging. Individual and organisational categories.
Key Dates	2025 event concluded. Register interest for 2026 at lawyersweekly.com.au/women-in-law-awards. Typically held H2 each year.
Self-Nominate?	Yes — free to enter.

2.5 ACC CORPORATE LAWYER AWARDS

ACC Australia — Australian Corporate Lawyer Awards

Administered by the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) Australia, these awards recognise excellence in in-house legal practice. One of the few programs specifically designed for in-house counsel rather than private practice, making it particularly relevant for general counsel and corporate legal teams.

Key Categories

- General Counsel of the Year
- In-house Lawyer of the Year
- Government Lawyer of the Year
- Large / Small Legal Team of the Year
- Sole Legal Officer of the Year
- Legal Innovator of the Year
- Not-for-Profit Lawyer of the Year
- New-to-In-house Lawyer of the Year
- Environmental, Social and Governance Excellence
- Mentor of the Year / Mentee of the Year

ACC Corporate Lawyer Awards	Quick Reference
Publisher	Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) Australia
Geography	Australia-wide (in-house / corporate focus)
Methodology	Submission-based. Independent judging panel. ACC member and non-member eligibility varies by category.
Key Dates	2025 edition concluded. Check acc.com/chapters-networks/chapters/australia for 2026 dates.
Self-Nominate?	Yes — focused on in-house lawyers and legal teams only.

2.6 WOMEN IN BUSINESS LAW AWARDS

Women in Business Law Awards — Asia-Pacific

The Women in Business Law Awards (WiBL), published by the Legal Benchmarking Group in partnership with The Lawyer, recognises women lawyers in commercial and business law practice across Asia-Pacific, EMEA and the Americas. Particularly relevant for Australian practitioners in commercial practice areas. A dedicated research team conducts peer review interviews and incorporates data from across the Legal Benchmarking Group's sister publications.

WiBL Awards — Asia-Pacific	Quick Reference
Publisher	Legal Benchmarking Group / The Lawyer
Geography	Asia-Pacific (including Australia)
Methodology	Peer review interviews combined with research from LBG publications. Submission-based with independent research overlay.
Key Dates	Asia-Pacific edition: check awards.womeninbusinesslaw.com . EMEA 2026 edition deadline was February 2026 (for reference).
Notes	Separate from Lawyers Weekly Women in Law Awards. Focuses specifically on commercial/business law practice areas.

2.7 LAW COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Law Council of Australia — Awards

The Law Council presents several awards recognising excellence and service within the Australian legal profession. These carry significant prestige as they come from the peak national body. They differ from commercial awards programs — emphasis is on professional service, pro bono contribution, community impact and advancing the profession, rather than commercial excellence.

Key Awards

- President's Award — an individual making an outstanding contribution to the legal profession.
- Australian Young Lawyer of the Year — excellence in young/early-career lawyers. Administered by the Young Lawyers' Committee. (2025 winner: Alexandra Einfeld, NSW, international arbitration.)
- Eminent Environmental Lawyer Award for Excellence — sustained contribution to environmental and planning law.
- Mahla Pearlman Award — Australian Young Environmental Lawyer of the Year.
- Annual Migration Manager John Gibson AM Young Australian Migration Lawyer of the Year Award.
- Young Federal Litigation Lawyer of the Year.

Law Council Awards	Quick Reference
Publisher	Law Council of Australia
Geography	National (Australia-wide)
Methodology	Nomination-based. Assessed by Law Council committees. Peer nominations required; no self-nomination for most categories.
Key Dates	Young Lawyer Award: 2025 nominations closed. 2026 nominations expected to open Q2 2026. Check lawcouncil.au/about-us/awards .
Notes	Professional service and contribution awards. Strong emphasis on pro bono work, community contribution and advancing the profession.

2.8 STATE LAW SOCIETY AWARDS

State Law Society Awards

Each state and territory Law Society administers its own awards program recognising local lawyers. These tend to carry particular weight within each jurisdiction and are often presented during Law Week in May each year. Key examples:

Law Society of NSW — Annual Member Awards

- President's Medal
- Wellbeing Champion or Project of the Year
- Annual Members' Dinner (typically November, Four Seasons Sydney). Free for current Law Society of NSW members to nominate.

Law Society of South Australia

- Law Society Medal for Meritorious Service (formerly the Brian Withers Award)
- Law Society Justice Award — outstanding contribution to improving access to justice
- Regional Practitioner Award — excellence in regional SA practice
- Bulletin Awards — recognising contributors to the Society's publication

ACT Law Society — Service Awards

- Service Awards and Emerging Lawyer of the Year Award
- Typically presented during Law Week events in May
- Awards Judging Panel is a sub-group of the Society's Council

Other state law societies (Law Institute of Victoria, Queensland Law Society, Law Society of Western Australia, Law Society of Tasmania) operate comparable programs. Nomination periods typically open in Q1 each year ahead of Law Week in May. Practitioners should check their relevant state body's website for current dates.

2.9 CHAMBERS AWARDS

Chambers Asia-Pacific & Greater China Region Awards

Separate from their research rankings, Chambers presents annual Awards based on work researched for the guide. These recognise firms and individuals in jurisdiction-specific categories (e.g. Australia Firm of the Year) as well as cross-regional categories. Recognition flows from the guide research — there is no separate awards submission process.

Chambers Asia-Pacific Awards	Quick Reference
Publisher	Chambers and Partners
Geography	Asia-Pacific and Greater China Region
Methodology	Based on Chambers Asia-Pacific guide research. No separate award submission — participation in guide research is the pathway.
Key Dates	Awards presented annually, around the guide launch ceremony (December). No separate submission deadline.
Notes	Winners are drawn from ranked firms and individuals already in the guide.

2.10 BENCHMARK LITIGATION AWARDS

Benchmark Litigation Asia-Pacific Awards

Companion to the Benchmark Litigation directory, these awards recognise the most complex and innovative cases, leading litigators and firms of the year across Asia-Pacific. Specific categories include Top 100 Women in Litigation, Top 40 Under 40, Hall of Fame and jurisdiction Firm of the Year. Awards consideration is built into the standard research submission — judged on innovation, complexity and impact.

Benchmark Litigation Awards	Quick Reference
Publisher	Benchmark Litigation (Legal Benchmarking Group)
Geography	Asia-Pacific (including Australia)
Methodology	Based on Benchmark research submissions. Cases submitted through the main research form are considered. Judged on innovation, complexity and impact.
Key Dates	Research cycle starts August; awards announced May/June with the guide. No separate awards-only submission.
Categories	Firm of the Year, Litigator of the Year, Rising Star, Female Lawyer of the Year, Hall of Fame, Top 40 Under 40, Case of the Year

2.11 AUSTRALASIAN LAWYER

Australasian Lawyer – Rankings & Recognition

Australasian Lawyer (Key Media group) publishes various recognition programs including 5-Star Employer of Choice, Elite Women, Most Influential Lawyers, Top Boutique Firms and the Australasian Law Awards. The 5-Star Employer of Choice has become a benchmark for law firms competing for talent, based on research and employee survey data. Elite Women and Most Influential Lawyers are editorially curated recognitions profiling outstanding practitioners.

Australasian Lawyer Programs	Quick Reference
Publisher	Australasian Lawyer / Key Media
Geography	Australia and New Zealand
Methodology	Mix of editorial research, survey/data-based (Employer of Choice) and submission-based programs depending on the specific recognition.
Key Dates	Annual programs with rolling deadlines. Employer of Choice surveys typically open Q1. Check australasianlawyer.com.au .
Notes	5-Star Employer of Choice is particularly valued for talent attraction and retention signalling.

PART THREE

Key Dates Quick Reference

The table below consolidates submission and publication dates for the major awards and directories covered in this guide. Dates marked * are confirmed for the current cycle; all others are approximate based on historical patterns and should be verified with the relevant publisher.

Award / Directory	Submission Deadline	Results / Event	Self-Submit?
Doyle's Guide	No fixed deadline (ongoing)	Rolling throughout year	No (researcher-initiated)
Best Lawyers (2027 ed.)	Mid-year nominations (check site)	Published April 2026	Yes (self-nomination ok)
Chambers Asia-Pacific (2027 ed.)	Jan 2026 passed; research to Aug 2026	December 2026 launch	Yes (firm submissions)
Legal 500 Asia Pacific (2027 ed.)	8 June 2026 (firms)*; 26 June 2026 (Bar)*	Mid-January 2027	Yes (firm submissions)
Benchmark Litigation APAC (2026)	Aug–Dec 2025 (research ended)	May/June 2026 (published)	Yes (via portal)
FT Innovative Lawyers APAC	Late prior year (check rsgi.co)	~May each year	Yes (firm case studies)
Australian Law Awards 2026	8 May 2026 (5:30pm AEST)*	30 July 2026 gala	Yes (free)
Partner of the Year Awards 2026	Check lawyersweekly.com.au	4 June 2026 gala	Yes (free)
30 Under 30 Awards 2027	~November 2026 (check site)	~March 2027 gala	Yes (free)
Women in Law Awards 2026	Register interest now on site	H2 2026	Yes (free)
ACC Corporate Lawyer Awards 2026	TBC — check acc.com	TBC 2026	Yes (submissions)
WiBL Awards Asia-Pacific	Check womeninbusinesslaw.com	Annual	Yes (submissions)
Law Council Young Lawyer Award	~Q2 each year	Annual	Yes (nominations)
State Law Society Awards	Typically Q1–Q2 each year	May (Law Week)	Yes (nominations)
Chambers Asia-Pacific Awards	No separate submission	~December (guide launch)	No (from guide research)
Benchmark Litigation APAC Awards	Via main research form	May/June (with guide)	Partial (via research form)

APPENDIX

Glossary of Common Terms

Peer Review	Rankings determined by confidential evaluations from other practitioners in the same practice area and geography. The quality and breadth of the voter pool varies significantly between publications.
Editorial Research	Rankings determined by a dedicated research team interviewing clients and market commentators, independently of firm submissions. Generally considered the most rigorous model.
Submission-Based	Firms or individuals actively provide information to be considered. The quality of submissions directly influences outcomes. Most industry awards programs operate this way.
Band / Tier	A ranking level used by directories to categorise quality. Band 1 / Tier 1 is typically the highest. The number of bands varies by directory and practice area.
Pre-eminent	Doyle's Guide's highest individual ranking tier, above Leading and Recommended.
Lawyer of the Year	Best Lawyers designation for the individual receiving the highest overall peer feedback in a specific practice area and geographic region. Only one awarded per area/location.
Ones to Watch	Best Lawyers designation for early-career practitioners (approx. 3–8 years' experience) demonstrating excellence.
Up-and-Coming	Chambers designation for early-career individuals showing strong potential.
Pay-to-Play	Industry shorthand for a model where rankings can be influenced by financial support of the publication. Doyle's Guide, Chambers, Legal 500 and Benchmark explicitly disclaim this.
Referee	A client, peer or market commentator nominated by a firm or individual to provide feedback to a research team. Quality and candour of referees significantly influences editorial research outcomes.
Research Cycle	The annual period during which a directory conducts its research, from opening of submissions through to publication of results.

DISCLAIMER

This document is provided for general informational purposes only. While reasonable care has been taken to verify dates and methodologies as at May 2026, submission deadlines, research schedules and program structures are subject to change at the discretion of each publisher. Readers should verify current deadlines and requirements directly with the relevant directory or awards program before committing resources to a submission. This guide is published by The Profession (theprofession.au) and is not affiliated with, endorsed by, or sponsored by any of the programs described.

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