

# Media Release

**Ingrid Stitt MP**

Minister for Early Childhood & Pre-Prep  
Minister for Environment



Wednesday, 6 September 2023

## CELEBRATING OUR VICTORIAN EARLY YEARS AWARDS FINALISTS

On Early Childhood Educators' Day, the Andrews Labor Government is saying thank you to the sector for their critical role in shaping the lives of our littlest learners – and revealing the shortlist of some of the state's most talented early learning professionals and programs for the 2023 Victorian Early Years Awards.

Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt today announced 26 finalists across nine categories, which recognise the amazing impact of early childhood professionals and services in supporting our children's education, health and engagement.

There are two new categories this year that shine a light on the important benefits that thoughtful, tailored and innovative people and initiatives can have on our youngest Victorians and their families.

The first new award category is for early childhood services that improve engagement and outcomes for Aboriginal children and families, the Auntie Rose Bamblett Koorie Early Years Legacy Award.

The second new category is the Early Childhood Educator of the Year Award to recognise outstanding individual educators – who go the extra mile for our youngest Victorians to make their early learning a highly rewarding experience.

The nominees have been chosen by an expert panel, with the other categories focussing on improving access and participation in kinder, promoting children's health and wellbeing, supporting parents and the community, and quality of teaching and leadership in Early Childhood education.

Each winner will receive \$15,000 to further develop their skills or program, with one finalist also receiving the Minister's Award for dedication and achievement in transforming young children's learning.

Now in their 18th year, these awards celebrate the ongoing contribution of our Early Childhood sector in delivering reliable, world class services for children to learn and thrive and for families to get key supports they may need.

Winners of the 2023 awards will be announced at a ceremony on 9 November. To find out more about this year's finalists, visit [vic.gov.au/victorian-early-years-awards](https://vic.gov.au/victorian-early-years-awards).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt

*"The Victorian Early Years Awards recognises the incredible commitment shown by Victoria's Early Childhood sector – giving children the very best start in life and supporting families with expert guidance."*

*"A huge congratulations to every finalist in this year's awards for their outstanding contributions to our children's learning and development. The professionalism and skill of our Early Childhood educators, teachers and leaders are a fundamental part of what makes us the Education State."*

*"Early Childhood Educators' Day is the perfect opportunity to celebrate those whose passion is helping children grow and thrive across the state – and to all of you, an enormous thank you."*