

THE COMPETITION

An Overview for Entrants

Introduction

Sydney Royal AgShows NSW Young Woman Competition aims to find a young woman to act as an ambassador for rural, regional and remote NSW with her role involving many official and informal duties both at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and during her travels throughout NSW and potentially interstate.

Importantly, finalists must have a genuine interest in, and knowledge of, rural, regional and remote NSW. The Competition encourages the participation and subsequent awareness of rural women's contribution and involvement in both local communities and rural, regional and remote NSW.

In 1962, 20 young ladies entered the first 'Showgirl' Competition. The Winner, Miss Margaret McKay, the late Mrs. Margaret Pennefather, RAS Councillor, was awarded a sash, a silver tray and 250 pounds as first prize.

The competition has come a long way in the last 62 years and now, in 2026, the competition has further evolved to become known as Sydney Royal AgShows NSW Young Woman Competition attracting approximately 250 young women annually to enter the competition throughout NSW with competitions being held across 100 Show Societies.

Entrants continue to be young rural women with purpose and ambition with the Competition playing a significant role in the overall development of rural youth within this country. The competition also boasts incredible support from entrants, sponsors and organisers.

Each year the achievement level is heightened and broadened. The entrants meet other young women from rural, regional and remote NSW and gain great insights and personal development through this very rare experience.

Judging

The entrants are judged on general and rural knowledge, ambition and life goals, involvement in their local show and community, personality, confidence, presentation, and speech. Finalists are also asked to demonstrate knowledge of their local community and current affairs and apart from their potential ambassadorial qualities, they are also judged on their involvement in and experience of rural affairs.

These prerequisites have not changed since the inception of the 'Showgirl' competition in 1962, as the value of these skills has not diminished.

The winner of each local Show holds the title until next year's Show. She performs various tasks, which could include opening a Show, public speaking throughout the year, presenting prizes for winners at agricultural events etc.

Each local Show Society is a member of one of fifteen groups (Group 15, the ASC Next Generation Group, is a non-geographical Group). Two groups combine to form one of seven Zones that make up the NSW area. In January, February and March of each year, Zone Finals are held in which each of the Zones select from all the winners put forward by each of the individual Societies, a representative for the State Final.

SYDNEY ROYAL AGSHOWS NSW YOUNG WOMAN COMPETITION

The number of representatives a Zone can have is based on the total number of entrants: if 1–10 Zone Finalists then a Zone can have one (1) State Final representative; 11–17 Zone Finalists then two (2) State Final representatives. Zones 6 and 7 can have three (3) State Final representatives when there are more than 17 entrants. The Judges for the Zone Finals are provided by AgShows NSW.

The State Final for the Competition is conducted by the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and can host between 14 and 16 state finalists. Judges are nominated by the RAS with the judging being conducted over a six-day period.

Prizes for 2026

Please note prizes are subject to change without notice

- **1st Place**
\$7,500 courtesy of Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Ltd and The Land newspaper
- **2nd Place**
\$3,500 courtesy of the AgShows NSW and the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW.

All Finalists receive:

- Seven days in Sydney during the Royal Easter Show – expenses paid
(expenses include accommodation in Sydney, meals and travel within State Finalists itinerary)

Timetable

Judging at a local level takes place throughout the year at each of the participating local Show Societies with the judging for Zone Finals being conducted in January/February/March of each year and the State Final during the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Dates for Zone and State Finals are as follows:

Zone 1 Final	Kyogle	Saturday, 14 February 2026
Zone 2 Final	Albion Park	Saturday, 21 February 2026
Zone 3 Final	Gunning	Saturday, 28 February 2026
Zone 4 Final	Warialda	Saturday, 7 February 2026
Zone 5 Final	Mudgee	Saturday 24 January 2026
Zone 6 Final	Eugowra	Saturday, 28 February 2026
Zone 7 Final	Ganmain	Saturday, 31 January 2026
State Final Program	Sydney Royal Easter Show	Thursday 31 March – Sunday 5 April 2026
State Final Presentation	Sydney Royal Easter Show	Sunday 5 April 2026

SYDNEY ROYAL AGSHOWS NSW YOUNG WOMAN COMPETITION

Entry Requirements

1. The Competition is open to those who are permanent residents of Australia.
2. Entrants must be women aged from **18 years to less than 26 years as at 1 May in the year of the State Final.**
3. Entrants must reside, be educated, or work within New South Wales for at least three months prior to their local competition to qualify to compete within the State.
4. Only candidates nominated by an Agricultural Show Society are eligible for Zone and State Final judging.
5. Previous entrants in the competition are eligible to enter however they are not to have been one of the 1st, 2nd or 3rd placegetters in a previous State Final.
6. The following people are not eligible to enter the competition:
 - a. Staff, Directors and Councillors of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW ("RAS").
 - b. The daughters of the Staff, Directors and Councillors of the RAS.
 - c. Current Rural Achiever applicants for the 2026 Sydney Royal Show
7. Winning entrants who are employed or engaged in full time studies will be required to obtain a leave of absence to attend Zone and State Final Judging.
8. The winner is requested, where possible, to represent the RAS, AgShows NSW and their local Show Society at agricultural shows.
9. The State Final Judging will take place in Sydney during the Sydney Royal Easter Show Thursday 31 March – Sunday 5 April 2026, with specific program dates to be advised. Finalists will be guests of the RAS whilst in Sydney but will be required to pay their own travelling expenses to and from Sydney.
10. The winner of the State Final and the first runner up will be required to remain in Sydney as guests of the RAS following the main program to perform official duties at the Sydney Royal Easter Show unless granted an exemption by the RAS of NSW.
11. All entrants are to abide by the Code of Conduct, as set out by the RAS and AgShows NSW, when acting as an ambassador for RAS, AgShows NSW or their local Show Society.

For further details and entry forms please contact your local Show Society or AgShows NSW on 02 9879 6777 or email nicky.seeto@ascofnsw.org.au

ZONE FINALS

An Overview for Zone Finalists

Introduction

Zone Finals are the next step in Sydney Royal AgShows NSW Young Woman Competition after you have been successful in becoming the representative for your local Show.

The Zone Final is a prestigious occasion and one that each year is patronised by guests from all over NSW. There are seven Zone Finals in total, each Zone consisting of two Groups. The number of Societies in each Zone can be anything from 23–39. Depending on the number of entrants that have been nominated by Show Societies within the Zone, a Zone can put forward 1–3 Finalists into the State Final that is held in Sydney during the Royal Easter Show.

Being chosen as your community's 'Young Woman' and then proceeding to the next level is a very rewarding and fun experience but it can also be a daunting one. The following is a brief run-down on the Zone Finals that will hopefully give you a little insight as to what to expect.

Zone Final Coordinator

As with every phase of the competition, each of the Zone Finals has its own coordinator to organise everything and everybody. He/she will assist you in every aspect of the Zone Final and will be in contact with you as the time draws closer.

Travel and Accommodation

It is suggested the Show Societies provide their entrants with some support towards the necessary costs of attending the Zone Final Judging i.e., travel and accommodation. All incidental costs such as telephone calls, drinks and snacks are to be borne by the entrant.

The coordinator of the Zone Final will have pre-booked accommodation at a suitable hotel/motel and will advise either yourself or your local competition coordinator of where this will be. The Zone coordinator may also have a list of other accommodation around town that you may like to pass on to family and friends who may want to attend.

Please note that depending on how far away you live from the town that is hosting the Zone Final, and the time of your interview on the day, it may be worthwhile staying at the motel the night before to ensure that you are there on time.

Meals

The Show Society who is hosting the Zone Final will pay for the Judging Lunch and Presentation Dinner that each entrant must attend. All other meals are required to be paid for by the individual.

Timetable

The Zone Coordinator will forward to you a copy of the timetable for the day's activities. This will include individual interview times for each entrant, the time of the judging lunch and details of the Presentation Dinner in the evening.

Clothing

All Zone Finalists are required to wear smart daywear during their day interview and judging lunch. The evening function is a reasonably formal occasion, and it is therefore required for all finalists to be in evening wear. The minimum dress requirement for all other guests at the Presentation Dinner is lounge suit for men and after-5-wear for women. On some occasions the Zone Host may also make the Presentation Dinner black-tie; however, this will be advised closer to the date.

Judges

The sponsors of the Competition put all judges for each of the Zone Finals forward. On most occasions, the panel will consist of three judges, with at least one female and one male judge.

Judging

The judging criteria for the Zone Final are very similar to those which you would have been judged on at your local competition. This will include:

- General Knowledge (local, Australian and international)
- Rural Knowledge (general, local, Show)
- Ambitions & Goals
- Volunteer/Community Participation
- Personality
- Confidence
- Personal Presentation (style, grooming, deportment)
- Presentation Ceremony Interview

Please note that you will need to attend an interview during the day, the judging lunch, and the evening presentation at which you will be required to address the audience. You will be judged on all the latter and therefore it is essential that you attend each of these segments of the Zone Final.

Presentation Dinner

As mentioned above, the Presentation Dinner is quite a formal affair and can vary greatly across the different Zones. Some have buffets whilst others have 3-course sit down meals; some have entertainment, but some don't; venues can vary from the pavilion at the Showground to the local RSL club or even a marquee. Whatever each Zone decides to do, the Presentation Dinner is a lot of fun for everyone and one that many hours of hard work have gone into coordinating by the organising Zone Host.

An MC/Compere will have been engaged for the evening. This person may be a local personality or a guest celebrity such as a TV or radio announcer. Their role is to keep the evening flowing and running on schedule and they will also introduce special guests to speak at various times during the night. However, one of their most important roles is to introduce each finalist to the assembled guests. They will invite each entrant up to the microphone, sometimes in the same order as they were interviewed or sometimes at random, at which time the MC/Compere will ask pertinent questions pertaining to the entrant's background. Each interview will be for approximately 2-3 minutes and Judges will be looking at several things including your ability to address an audience, speech/diction, personality and presentation.

SYDNEY ROYAL AGSHOWS NSW YOUNG WOMAN COMPETITION

As each entrant finishes her on-stage interview, she will be required to stay up on the stage with all the other Zone Finalists whilst the Judges make their final decision. The winner/s will then be announced and subsequently sashed – this is quite often done by the out-going State Finalist/s who had won in that Zone the year prior. The State Finalist/s selected will be asked to make a short speech after which photographs will be taken by The Land and various other photographers.

Post-Zone Finals

Should you have been successful at the Zone Final, the RAS Coordinator will then send you a copy of the Sydney Itinerary that includes a detailed run-down of your time in Sydney, accommodation information and what clothing will be required.

Immediately following the Zone Final, the nominated State Finalist is to email to the RAS Coordinator a **full resume** together with a **digital portrait photograph**. This material will be necessary to put together an information pack for the State Final Judges and for promotional purposes. **Early receipt of this material is essential.**

RAS & AgShows NSW Coordinators

Should you have any queries relating to the Competition at local or zone levels, please do not hesitate to contact the AgShows NSW Coordinator who will be very happy to assist you. All queries relating to the Competition at State level should be directed to the RAS Coordinator.

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AgShows NSW Coordinator
AgShows NSW
PO Box 1047
Hunters Hill NSW 2110

Ph: 02 9879 6777
Email: nicky.seeto@ascofnsw.org.au

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Royal Agricultural Society of NSW
Locked Bag 4317
Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127

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STATE FINAL COMPETITION

An Overview for State Finalists

The State Final of Sydney Royal AgShows NSW Young Woman Competition is conducted in Sydney during the Sydney Royal Easter Show. The announcement of the 2026 winner will be held during the 2026 Sydney Royal Easter Show with specific dates to be advised.

Finalists arrive at the nominated hotel where they will be greeted and taken to the RAS Administration to meet RAS Staff and Councilors, who will brief them on what will be happening over the seven days in Sydney.

Set out below is a guideline as to what finalists should expect during their time in Sydney. Please note that as the timetable is changed each year, the activities below are meant as a general indication only:

- Judging interviews
- Presentation of ribbons and awards at the Sydney Royal Easter Show
- Behind the scenes tours of Sydney Royal Easter Show competitions, animal sections and educational activations
- Professional Development Workshop
- Interviews and a photo shoot with The Land newspaper
- Reception at Government House
- AgShows NSW Welcome Dinner
- Participation in other RAS activities

The Presentation is a highlight of the Sydney Royal Easter Show and will start at approximately 2.00pm on the nominated Sunday and will be held in the Amphitheatre, Sydney Showground.

For those who are lucky enough to be the winner or first runner-up, they will be asked to remain in Sydney as guests of the RAS to perform official duties at the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

Over the coming year, Sydney Royal AgShows NSW Young Woman will be invited to attend several events throughout rural, regional and remote NSW where she will act as ambassador for the RAS and AgShows NSW in addition to her own Show Society.

SYDNEY ROYAL AGSHOWS NSW YOUNG WOMAN COMPETITION

Wardrobe

All Finalists will be sent an itinerary prior to their time in Sydney. The itinerary will set out each day's schedule in addition to the recommended dress for each of these functions.

As a rule, however, smart day wear is required in most cases. Should there be any queries regarding dress prior to a Finalist receiving the above itinerary, they should be referred to the RAS Coordinator.

Accommodation

All Finalists will stay at a hotel located close to the Sydney Showground. All rooms are shared. If there are an odd number of Finalists, one Finalist may either be by themselves in a room or may share with the past winner. All meals and accommodation costs at the hotel will be paid for by the RAS; however, incidental costs such as phone calls, laundry, snacks and other incidental costs/sundry items will be at the finalist's expense.

Travel

Whilst in Sydney, Finalists will be transported between locations by coach as per their itinerary. Should any of the finalists wish to go out on any of their free evenings, the cost of taxis etc. shall be at the finalists' own expense. The cost of finalists getting to and from Sydney to participate in the itinerary will also be at their personal expense.

Meals

Most meals are included (breakfast, lunch and dinner – as per itinerary). Please note that some evening functions are cocktail, and any additional food will be at finalists' expense. All meal arrangements will be organised and confirmed as per itinerary. It is important that if any finalists have specific dietary requirements, the RAS Coordinator is advised as early as possible.

Should any Finalist have any queries regarding their time in Sydney prior to receiving information from the RAS, please do not hesitate to contact the RAS Coordinator who will be more than happy to assist.

PRIZE LIST

(Please note prizes are subject to change without notice)

2026 Sydney Royal AgShows NSW Young Woman (first place)

- \$7,500 courtesy of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW and The Land newspaper

First Runner-Up (second place)

- \$3,500 courtesy of the AgShows NSW and the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW

All State Finalists

- Seven-day Program in Sydney during the Sydney Royal Easter Show – expenses paid
- One-year complimentary RAS Membership

SYDNEY ROYAL AGSHOWS NSW YOUNG WOMAN COMPETITION

CONTACT LIST

NAME	COMMENTS	COMPANY	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Mr Jill Chapman	President	AgShows NSW	PO Box 1047 Hunters Hill NSW 2110	0429 930 691
Mrs Jody Nelson-Gleeson	Vice President	AgShows NSW	PO Box 1047 Hunters Hill NSW 2110	0430 284 455
Mr Kelso Looker	Vice President	AgShows NSW	PO Box 1047 Hunters Hill NSW 2110	0429 359 320
Mrs Nicky Seeto	Young Woman Coordinator	AgShows NSW	PO Box 1047 Hunters Hill NSW 2110	0418 202 680
Ms Susan Wakeford	RAS Councillor in Charge, Young Woman	Royal Agricultural Society of NSW	Locked Bag 4317 Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127	
Mr Kane Gerrets	Agricultural Youth Initiatives Manager	Royal Agricultural Society of NSW	Locked Bag 4317 Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127	02 9704 1160

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