

# **Reflect, Respect, Celebrate – We're all part of the story.**

**The evidence-based case for award  
programs and their positive impact in  
our communities.**



Australia Day  
Council of  
Western Australia

# Acknowledgement of Country

Auspire - Australia Day Council WA acknowledges our First Australians, the traditional custodians of country throughout Western Australia. We recognise their contribution, their continuing culture and connection to land, waters and community; and we pay our respect to their elders past, present and emerging.





# Auspire has been delivering award programs since 1977.

As a purpose-driven, not-for-profit and charitable organisation, Auspire is proud of its work that acknowledges and celebrates Australia's engaged community members, problem solvers and positive change-makers. These are the people who inspire active citizenship.

Whether born in Australia or choosing to become an Australian citizen, active citizenship is about behaviours and values that unify us as a nation. Values such as respect, inclusion, mateship and fair go, which ultimately help to create a sense of belonging and a unified national identity we can all positively contribute to.





# When community awards celebrate the contribution and achievement of active citizens, they also build community resilience.

Studies\* show that celebrating people's achievements improves their health and wellbeing, because our brains are wired to respond to rewards. Celebrating a win stimulates dopamine release, a feel-good chemical that reinforces the experience and connection to those that helped along the way.

When people are recognised and reflect on their successes, they're generally more optimistic, look after themselves better and enjoy a greater sense of belonging.

At Auspire, we always believed our local, state and national award programs have delivered positive social and economic outcomes for both the individuals being recognised and the communities they serve, however we wanted to know for sure.

Through a combination of research inputs, including our own community impact data and a dedicated, commissioned research project with independent research consultancy Data Analysis Australia, we are pleased our hypothesis has been confirmed:

**Awards and recognition programs positively impact social, cultural and economic factors within our communities.**

**\* Celebrate Good Times: How Celebrations Increase Perceived Social Support**

*Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*

Brick, Danielle J.; Wight, Kelley Gullo; Bettman, James R.; Chartrand,

Tanya L.; Fitzsimons, Gavan J.

Vol. 42 Issue 2, pp. 115-132, 2023.

**Celebrate to Win**

*Harvard Business Review*

Johnson, Whitney

Online issue - January 26, 2022

# Impact on the Individual

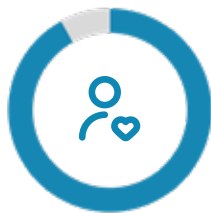
According to award nominees and recipients, they found an increased sense of purpose and encouragement to continue their work. Key findings included:

- Increase in public profile and awareness for their issue or cause
- Improved mental health and sense of wellbeing
- Greater sense of belonging in their community
- Established more connections and expanded their network

## Key Insights

Awards positively impact a sense of purpose for those recognised and motivate them to continue working in and for the community.

Award nominees felt almost as strong as award recipients, showing that being nominated for an award can significantly impact an individual's desire to contribute.



**92%**  
Feel validated



**90%**  
Increased  
motivation



**82%**  
Improved sense of  
purpose



**81%**  
Greater sense of  
belonging



**81%**  
Increased  
confidence



**73%**  
Improved reputation



**70%**  
Improved mental  
health and wellbeing



**67%**  
Improved career  
opportunities



**60%**  
Expanded networks



**58%**  
Developed new or  
stronger relationships









# Sarah Yates

**2023 Community Citizen of the Year,  
City of South Perth**

"It has been phenomenal for both myself personally and for Our Ruby Girl. It's given us a sense of purpose and acknowledgement for the hard work that the whole team does. It's really increased our sense of place and standing within the community. It's opened up opportunities with other organisations including one of the other nominees who works with disadvantaged people."

# Impact on the Organisation

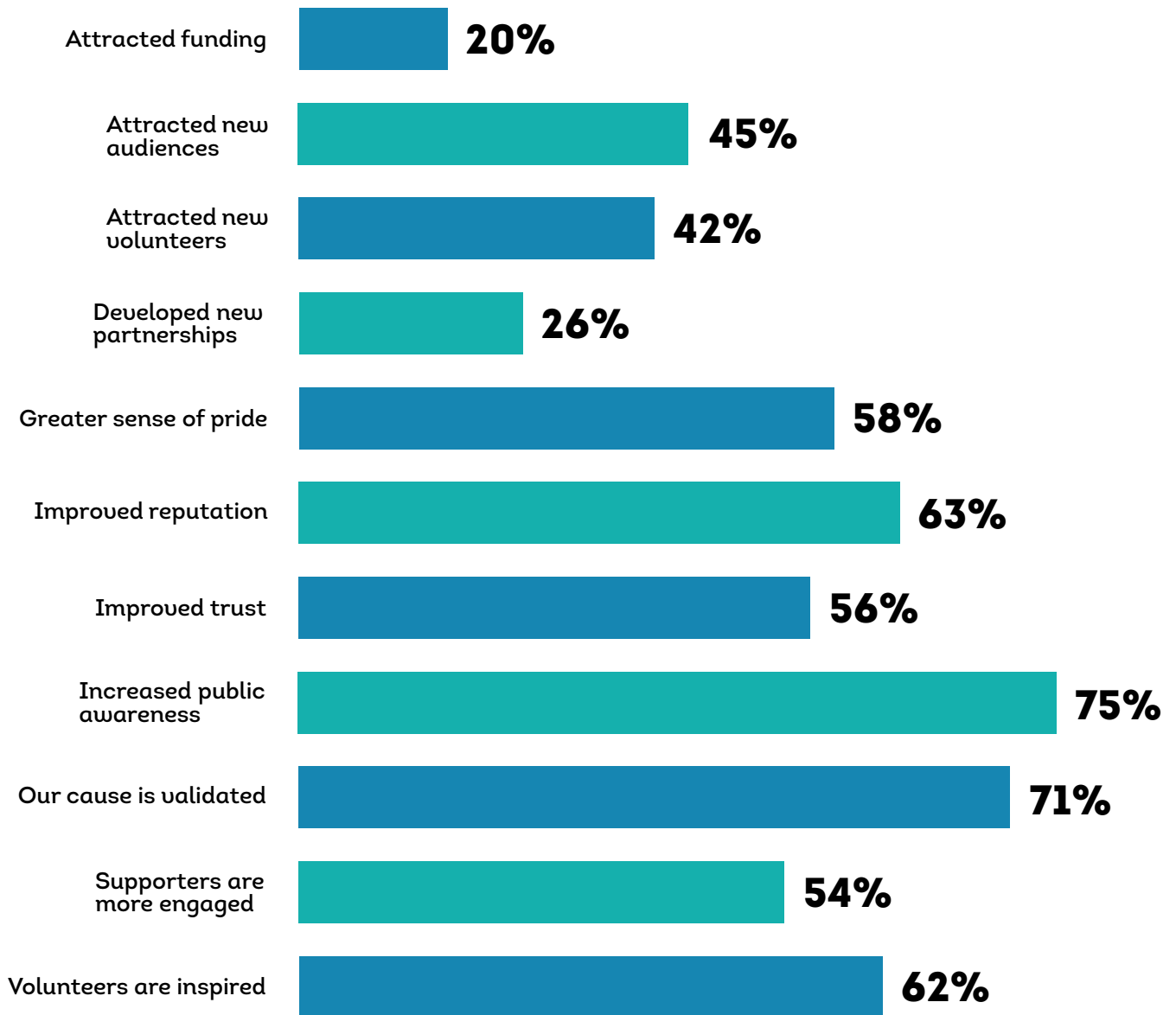
Award nominees and recipients reported that their organisations and causes were taken more seriously, which led to the ability to attract more funding opportunities. Other key findings included:

- Improved reputation
- Increased public awareness
- Increase in volunteering
- Greater service outputs

## Key Insights

Organisations that are recognised for their work or cause see greater brand awareness and positioning, improved trust and customer loyalty.

Furthermore, the impact on volunteers is significant, as the recognition both inspired existing volunteer cohorts and attracted new volunteers.



# Pedus Eweama

**2023 Community Citizen of the Year,  
City of Swan**

“The benefits are enormous – I’ve had media attention and met a number of prominent people within the City of Swan. It’s validating in terms of my career because my employer has recognised me, it has helped my CV and makes my leadership more credible.

“The recognition has projected the Nigerian Association of Western Australia into the limelight. Moving forward, I think a lot of young people will aspire to strive, succeed and lead.”





# Impact on the Community

Recipients and nominees report that their recognition empowers them to get involved in community issues, inspires more people in the community, and shines a light on issues that need more attention. Key findings included:

- Highlighted community role models
- Highlighted community issues to impact change
- Increased active citizenship
- Increased community connection
- Built robust communities

## Key Insights

Community role models play a crucial role in shaping individuals' values, beliefs, and behaviours within a community. Their impact on the community is often immeasurable, as they inspire so many others to strive for their full potential and work together to create a stronger, more vibrant community for all.



**93%**

Promote community  
role models



**93%**

Recognise leaders



**92%**

Inspire others



**88%**

Shine a light on  
community issues



**87%**

Encourage active  
citizenship



**86%**

Better community  
connections



**85%**

A sense of  
belonging for all



**82%**

More inclusive  
communities



**81%**

More innovative  
communities



**75%**

Create social  
cohesion







# Kendall Whyte

## **WA 2022 Young Australian of the Year, Australian of the Year Awards**

“It’s so special to be put forward for an award and be among so many incredible people. The media potential and exposure that you can get from such a platform, means you can really get your cause and message out there and help it grow.

“It has definitely helped Blue Tree Project to grow and take us to a more national level. It’s a life-changing moment.”

# What we've learnt

This research is the start of a longitudinal study of how awards and recognition programs have a positive social and economic impact on our communities.

## Social Impact

- Build community connection and participation
- Highlight community role models, inspiring others to contribute
- Celebrate diversity
- Create social cohesion
- Improve sense of belonging

## Economic Impact

- Increase motivation, leading to improved performance and productivity
- Increase volunteer engagement that helps build robust communities
- Enhance organisational reputation and brand recognition, which attracts volunteers and increases customer loyalty and services
- Better public relations and improved relationships to connect with more customers, clients and investors
- Increase financial returns for the organisation or cause, which improves performance and outcomes for community

Each year, we will continue to engage with nominees and recipients to understand the longer-term impacts of their work, and highlight case studies that demonstrate the value of recognising those that go above and beyond to make our communities stronger.

# About Auspire

Auspire is the Australia Day Council of Western Australia, a member-based association and registered charity. We are an independent, non-government organisation operating as part of the national network of eight State and Territory Australia Day Councils in partnership with the National Australia Day Council.

We believe that no matter where each of our personal stories began, Australian Citizenship is a shared identity that can unite us and inspire a stronger, shared future. Our vision is that Australia will be recognised as a socially and culturally inclusive society, where people feel a sense of belonging and a desire to contribute, to make our communities stronger, more resilient and more cohesive.

To achieve this, we deliver a range of programs and initiatives that promote active citizenship; celebrate people who are delivering community-strengthening outcomes; and grow our communities' capacity for social and cultural inclusion.

To find out more, visit [\*\*auspire.org.au\*\*](https://auspire.org.au)



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Council of  
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and Mrs Darrilyn Dawson

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