

2026 TENNIS SA AWARDS CRITERIA AND PROCESS

The Award Period for the 2026 Tennis SA Awards is April 2025 - March 2026.

AWARD CATEGORIES

Open awards:

- Most Outstanding 30+ Tennis Senior
- Most Outstanding Inclusion Initiative
- Most Outstanding Athlete with a Disability
- Excellence in Officiating
- Serving the Game
- Most Outstanding Club-based Competition
- Most Outstanding Tournament
- Most Outstanding School
- Most Outstanding Coach - Club
- Most Outstanding Coach - Rural
- Volunteer Achievement Award - City/Hills
- Volunteer Achievement Award - Rural
- Most Outstanding Tennis Club - City/Hills
- Most Outstanding Tennis Club - Rural

Closed awards:

- Boyce Medal (best and fairest female tennis player)
- Burr Medal (best and fairest male tennis player)
- Gwen Thiele Memorial Trophy (best 18/u male tennis player)
- Don Turnbull Memorial Trophy (best 18/u female tennis player)
- Most Outstanding Council or Government Department
- Most Outstanding Coach - Development

Tennis SA State League and Metro League premiership winners and award winners will also be presented on the night.

NOMINATION PROCESS

- To make a nomination, please [click here](#)
- Nominations will only be accepted through the online portal
- You will require the following to submit a nomination:
 - Nominee contact details
 - Nominator contact details
 - Completed nomination form (available on the Tennis SA website)
 - Supporting documentation
 - Minimum of two high-resolution images of nominee

SELECTION PROCESS

All nominations will be assessed by the Tennis SA Awards panel, with the Tennis SA Board endorsing the panel's recommendations.

A maximum of three finalists will be selected in each open award category.

Only information provided by the nominee with their nomination form will be considered by the selection panel. Nominees should attach any relevant supporting documentation with their nomination.

All decisions in relation to the award (including any questions in relation to eligibility) will be determined by the selection panel in its absolute discretion. All decisions are final, awards nomination feedback will be provided to individual nominees upon request.

Any matters that are not covered in this document will be determined by the selection panel in consultation with Tennis Australia/Tennis SA management.

TIMELINE

Monday 18 May 2026

All nominations due to Tennis SA by midnight

- Nominations will only be accepted through the online portal
- No nominations will be accepted without a minimum of two high-resolution images of the nominee

Week commencing Monday 8 June 2026

Selection panel to meet and confirm finalists

Week commencing Monday 8 June 2026

- Successful and unsuccessful finalists to be notified via email
- Finalists of open awards to be publicly announced via Tennis SA website and social media

Saturday 4 July 2026

Tennis SA Awards Night

REQUIREMENTS OF AWARD RECIPIENTS

The successful recipients will be required to fulfill the following items upon reasonable request:

- Photos and interviews on the Tennis SA Awards Night
- Participate in marketing and promotional activities in the 12 months following the award
- Participate in tennis pilot programs and initiatives (where applicable).

NEWCOMBE MEDAL, AUSTRALIAN TENNIS AWARDS

- Where applicable and eligible, the winners of the State Award category will become the nominee for the National Award category
- Eligibility and selection criteria for the National Awards will be released later in 2026.

MOST OUTSTANDING 30+ TENNIS SENIOR

The mission of 30+ seniors tennis* is to increase the playing opportunities and social interaction for tennis players of all standards over the age of 30. This award recognises involvement in 30+ seniors tennis as a player, administrator or both. The recipient of this award has been involved in raising the public profile of 30+ seniors tennis through demonstrated excellence in playing performance or administration, and demonstrated behaviours that exhibit a high level of integrity.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Be registered (player or administrator) with Tennis Australia
- Open to all players and administrators who are current members of Tennis Seniors South Australia

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Outstanding achievements in relation to 30+ Seniors Tennis during the award period
- Assistance in raising the public profile of 30+ Seniors Tennis through demonstrated excellence in playing performance or administration
- Demonstration of a high level of integrity in all circumstances, on and off the court
- Role model for Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence.

*30+ seniors tennis is run under the overarching banner of Tennis Seniors Australia and in South Australia, Tennis Seniors South Australia. Tennis Seniors Australia run tournaments and competitions for players aged 30 and over, broken up into six-year age groups.

MOST OUTSTANDING INCLUSION INITIATIVE

This award recognises and rewards the individuals, Clubs and Associations that go above and beyond to create and support inclusive tennis environments. They include the coaches, officials, parents and committee members who work behind the scenes to ensure everyone, regardless of their background or ability, is welcome in tennis.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Clearly represent at least one of the following
 - People with disability
 - People who identify as LGBTQ+
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
 - Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM) backgrounds
 - Low socioeconomic communities
 - Women and girls
- Is affiliated with a Tennis SA Club/Association/body or a registered Sporting School
- Inclusion Initiative examples
 - Participation program
 - Participation/Club event
 - Education program
 - Volunteer program
 - Leadership program

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Measurable benefits to the underrepresented group and to tennis in general.
- Demonstration of Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility, and excellence.
- The initiative has an ongoing participation plan and/or supports a connection to pathway opportunities linked with continued participation.
- If appropriate, media and promotional activities are undertaken prior to, during and following the program.
- Shows evidence of engaging people with lived experience and/or working with partner/community organisations in the development of the program.
- Contribute to making Tennis more accessible, welcoming and inclusive.

MOST OUTSTANDING ATHLETE WITH A DISABILITY

The Most Outstanding Athlete with a Disability is awarded to a player who has performed consistently over the award period, competed at the highest level within their disability event type and has displayed a positive attitude at all times.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Have competed in a minimum of three Tennis SA, Tennis Australia or ITF sanctioned events, tournaments or competitions (applicable to disability)

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Ranking improvement and/or sustained top 20 ranking during the Award Period
- Competed at the highest level within their disability event type
- Playing record representing Australia (if applicable)
- A positive role model to other athletes with disabilities
- Role model for Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence.

EXCELLENCE IN OFFICIATING

Officials play an important role in tennis and set the standards at tournaments of all levels. The recipient of this award has provided an outstanding contribution to tennis officiating in Australia through their dedication, skill, attitude and knowledge. Their performances set them apart from their peers at either a domestic or international level and they have been a positive role model for other tennis officials.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Be a current Tennis Australia Officials member
- Be 18 years or over at the beginning of the award period

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Outstanding contributions to tennis officiating in Australia and/or internationally through their dedication, skill, attitude and knowledge
- Performances that set them apart from their peers domestically and/or internationally
- Being a positive role model for other tennis officials
- Role model for Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence.

SERVING THE GAME

Officials play an important role in tennis and set the standards at tournaments of all levels. The recipient of this award has provided an outstanding contribution to tennis officiating in Australia through their dedication, skill, attitude and knowledge. Their performances set them apart from their peers at either a domestic or international level and they have been a positive role model for other tennis officials.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:
- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Open to any current Tennis Australia officiating member, with no minimum event requirement. Officials at any stage of their journey are eligible.
- The Serve the Game Award cannot be awarded to a Tennis Australia or Member Association staff member.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Consistently embody the core values of tennis officiating through integrity, humility, and respect, upholding fairness, accountability, and empathy
- Positively shape the officiating environment, fostering inclusion and belonging
- Support peers, players, coaches, and event staff in maintaining a harmonious environment, while championing the mental and physical well-being of all through a consistent culture of respect and care
- Actively engage and contributes beyond assigned duties by participating in community initiatives, welcoming, nurturing, and supporting fellow officials to ensure their development and inclusion within the sport
- Role model for Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence

MOST OUTSTANDING CLUB-BASED COMPETITION

The Most Outstanding Club-based Competition recognises a competition that has demonstrated commitment to inclusivity and diversity, ensuring that players of all ages, abilities and backgrounds have access to a variety of competitive playing options. This competition will also show evidence of innovation, growth and retention, along with a willingness to embrace online technology.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Is run at either a club, venue or centre that is affiliated with Tennis SA
- Is an ongoing or season-based competition, not a one-off event

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Growth of the competition season-on-season, and steps taken to measure and monitor retention
- Demonstrated commitment to inclusivity and diversity of competitors
- Innovation and efficiency of administration and operations, and ease of accessibility and engagement of online technology by participants
- Focus on providing level based play opportunities using objective methods (for example: player rating system)
- Appropriate age guidelines for junior competitions
- Overall positive and engaging environment instilling a sense of identity and belonging
- Actively seek feedback from participants to contribute to continual growth and improvement
- Demonstration of Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence.

MOST OUTSTANDING TOURNAMENT

The Most Outstanding Tournament is selected from an event on the Australian Competitive Play Calendar. These events are the stepping stones for players to develop their games. The recipient of this award will have offered a complete package of on- and off-court activities and player amenities to a high standard, allowing for a positive tournament atmosphere, and implemented strategies to engage local sponsors, media attention and community involvement.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Be run and controlled by either a tennis club/association staff and/or volunteers (i.e limited direct involvement by the Member Association and Tennis Australia staff)
- Be delivered and completed during the Award Period (including any finals)
- Is a Tennis Australia endorsed event and is affiliated with their Member Association

SELECTION CRITERIA

- The overall quality of the event delivered, ensuring an outstanding experience for athletes, coaches, parents and officials
- Has complied with all rules and regulations as set by Tennis Australia and its relevant Member Association
- Fulfilled all officiating requirements or gone above to provide their own accredited officials
- Use a tournament software program and integrated online registration system in coordinating their event to ensure efficient administration
- The type, volume and level of success of media and promotional activities undertaken
- The type of social activities and the standard of player amenities provided, and how this contributed to a positive event atmosphere
- The standard of the event sponsorship program and the level of service provided to the sponsors
- The level of pro-activity shown by the event committee and the success of the pro-active actions
- Implementation of initiatives during the event that has the potential to positively impact the local tennis community year-round (e.g. recruitment of local officials, awards based on player values, behaviour and culture, not just performance)
- Demonstrated commitment to quality customer service throughout the event, as well as leadership, innovation and creativity
- Comments from the event referee reports
- Supporting comments from participating players/parents/coaches to support the above implementation is preferred

MOST OUTSTANDING SCHOOL

Schools play an important role in the tennis community by introducing primary and secondary students to tennis and providing links to their local club and coach. This award recognises schools that have aligned with a Tennis Australia qualified coach, have a dedicated staff member assigned to tennis, have strong links with the local club and coach and have incorporated tennis as part of the curriculum.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Incorporate tennis into the health and physical education curriculum, via the School Partnership Program (or equivalent)
- Engage a Tennis Australia qualified coach member, Sporting Schools endorsed deliverer or local affiliated tennis club
- Demonstrate tennis is supported by the principal and driven by a dedicated staff member assigned to tennis in the school.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- How committed and active the school has been in demonstrating the integration of tennis into the school environment including teachers (professional development, implementation and relationship building with external partners including coach and club) and students (leadership, values, registration and enthusiasm for the sport)
- How the principal demonstrates the importance of health and physical education and school sport within the school and how active the school has been with initiatives set up to enhance the sport at a local community level
- The overall experience of students involved in the program
- Demonstration of student retention within the school environment and an increase in the number of students converting from school participation to community participation
- How the school promotes and communicates messages to the school community around their participation in tennis and how to continue ongoing participation in the local community
- Where applicable, demonstration of program modification to allow the inclusion of children with disabilities and other underrepresented groups to participate
- Consideration given to the involvement of the school in school competition, including intra school, gala days and performance of the school in respective team tennis competition
- Consideration given to the overall tennis pathway through the school from R-12 (if applicable)
- Demonstration of Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence.

MOST OUTSTANDING COACH - CLUB

This award recognises coaches who work within their local communities. The coach provides quality coaching programs, is actively involved in growing the game and provides competition opportunities for players to progress their game.

This category is open to all coaches, regardless of location.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Be a current Tennis Australia qualified coach member
- Have a valid Working with Children Check and police check

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Overview of coaching program provided (including Hot Shots Tennis, Cardio Tennis, inclusive programs and adult coaching programs, if applicable)
- Roles and responsibilities at club/centre
- Contribution to club/community including involvement in events and activities which drive greater participation and membership
- Total number of registered coaching participants in award period (broken into categories of program type, by age and gender)
- Overview of the transition pathway for coaching participants to social and competitive play including specific metrics/outcomes
- Schools link to the Schools Partnership Program and overview of transition pathway from schools to club, coaching programs and play activities
- Qualifications of coaching team and ongoing professional development opportunities provided
- Coaching business website, marketing and communication materials
- Overview of programs and initiatives delivered to engage underrepresented groups in tennis
- Role model for Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- Written endorsement to be provided by the club/venue/association management President and committee verifying and confirming the information provided in the nomination
- Other documented evidence to substantiate meeting the selection criteria (as applicable), such as letters of thanks, supporting evidence from current administrators of the club/venue/association, publications depicting the nominee's involvement within the club/venue/association etc.

MOST OUTSTANDING COACH - RURAL

This award recognises coaches who work within their local communities. The coach provides quality coaching programs, is actively involved in growing the game and provides competition opportunities for players to progress their game.

This award is open to a coach who operates primarily out of clubs and associations eligible for Foundation Cup.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Be a current Tennis Australia qualified coach member or Community Play deliverer
- Have a valid Working with Children Check and police check

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Overview of coaching program provided (including Hot Shots Tennis, Cardio Tennis, inclusive programs and adult coaching programs, if applicable)
- Roles and responsibilities at club/centre
- Contribution to club/community including involvement in events and activities which drive greater participation and membership
- Total number of registered coaching participants in award period (broken into categories of program type, by age and gender)
- Overview of the transition pathway for coaching participants to social and competitive play including specific metrics/outcomes
- Schools link to the Schools Partnership Program and overview of transition pathway from schools to club, coaching programs and play activities
- Qualifications of coaching team and ongoing professional development opportunities provided
- Coaching business website, marketing and communication materials
- Overview of programs and initiatives delivered to engage underrepresented groups in tennis
- Role model for Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- Written endorsement to be provided by the club/venue/association management President and committee verifying and confirming the information provided in the nomination
- Other documented evidence to substantiate meeting the selection criteria (as applicable), such as letters of thanks, supporting evidence from current administrators of the club/venue/association, publications depicting the nominee's involvement within the club/venue/association etc.

VOLUNTEER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The volunteer often goes unrewarded for the many hours of work they contribute to tennis. This award honours the volunteers within tennis who foster relationships within and between their club and the community, and recognises the contribution they make to the sport, specifically in the area of delivering more active players.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Work entirely on a voluntary basis and have done so during the full award period
- Are supported by at least one member of the current management committee
- Have a valid Working with Children Check

SELECTION CRITERIA

- The leadership qualities displayed in continuing to grow the club/venue/association and/or facilitate successful change
- The leadership qualities demonstrated to foster and drive a positive culture within the club/venue/association which is welcoming, safe and inclusive
- The leadership qualities shown in building and/or maintaining facilities and/or operating procedures
- The impact of time spent both short term and long term and how that benefits the club/venue/association, community and the sport
- Evidence of fostered relationships within and between the club/venue/association and the community
- The contribution to making tennis inclusive for diverse communities (for example: people with a disability, multicultural communities, Indigenous Australians, people who identify as LGBTQ+, low socioeconomic communities)
- Have made a considerable contribution to the sport, specifically in the area of delivering more active players through creating a Thriving Tennis Community
- Have demonstrated significant achievement while in the roles held within the club/venue/association
- Role model for Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- Written endorsement to be provided by the club/venue/association management President and committee verifying and confirming the information provided in the nomination
- Other documented evidence to substantiate meeting the selection criteria (as applicable), such as letters of thanks, supporting evidence from current administrators of the club/venue/association, publications depicting the nominee's involvement within the club/venue/association etc.

MOST OUTSTANDING TENNIS CLUB

Tennis clubs and centres provide facilities and programs to the community that get people playing tennis. This award recognises clubs that have an inviting culture, are accessible to the public, have implemented Tennis Australia programs and have increased competitive opportunities for players.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the nominee must:

- Comply with all rules, policies and conduct standards set by Tennis Australia
- Be affiliated with Tennis SA
- Employ or engage qualified Tennis Australia coach members or be a Community Play venue.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Has completed the Health Indicator of Tennis (HIT) tool and created an action plan with their local tennis representative
- Has an active strategic plan, with a particular focus on driving increased activity, financial health and quality facilities of the club or venue
- Creates a positive culture of inclusiveness and care including opportunities for participation by all, good governance, committee/management training, child safety and succession planning
- The range and quality of programming opportunities for all players including pathways for junior and adult tennis players, Hot Shots Tennis, Cardio Tennis, Open Court Sessions, other social opportunities, tournaments and competitions
- Has completed the tennis Customer survey from Potentiate
- The level of stakeholder engagement and strength of relationships the club or venue holds to assist in continuing to grow and develop (for example: the club and coach relationship, local government, community partnerships, Tennis SA)
- Demonstration of retention and participation growth (unique number of participants)
- Evidence of how digitally enabled the club or venue is and the access that this provides to the local community (for example: has adopted ClubSpark (or equivalent), offers online court hire, ability to purchase memberships online, website functionality)
- The direct customer feedback the club has received via independent responses from customers and members
- Has a partnership or pathway with a local primary and/or secondary school through the School Partnership Program, School Play Program (or equivalent)
- Demonstration of Tennis Australia values including imagination, collaboration, humility and excellence.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Supporting documentation could include the following:

- Club/venue strategic/action plan
- Promotional/marketing material
- Direct customer feedback, references and support letters
- Any other documentation that supports the nomination.