

Leo of the Year 2026

Because of today, we can expect great things of tomorrow!



MD 201 Convention
Adelaide, South Australia
Saturday, 23 May 2026

lionsaustralia

we serve



Past MD201 Leo of the Year Winners

Lions Year	Name	Leo Club
1985/1986	Leo David Gilbertson	Essendon V1
1986/1987	Leo Jayne Jackson	Cleveland Bay Q4
1987/1988	Leo Andrew Wyllie	Vermont V1
1988/1989	Leo Toni Feighan	Warners Bay N3
1989/1990	Leo Andrew Fyfe	Castle Hill Q4
1990/1991	Leo James Seville	Sydney N5
1991/1992	Leo Andrew Johnson	Gracemere Q4
1992/1993	Leo Paul Bruinewoud	Mooranbah Q4
1993/1994	Leo Kathleen Jenkins	Mooranbah Q4
1994/1995	Leo Danielle Brown	Gracemere Q4
1995/1996	Leo Liz Jones	Melbourne Airport V1
1996/1997	Leo Nathan Bawdon	Mooranbah Q4
1997/1998	Leo Caroline Atkinson	Waverley V5
1998/1999	Leo Rebecca Newey	Waverley V5
1999/2000	Leo Belinda Whelan	Waverley V5
2000/2001	Leo Catherine Fuller	Hampton Park V5
2001/2002	Leo Nadia Pavlovic	Cathedral School Q2
2002/2003	Leo Glen McKenzie	Gold Coast Central Q1
2003/2004	Leo Jane Overington	Kenmore SHS Q3
2004/2005	Leo Renee Lanphier	Twin Cities Q2
2005/2006	Leo Ashley Jade Neilse	Ulladulla Milton N2
2006/2007	Leo Tanis Hilton	Middlemount Q4
2007/2008	Leo Hannah Bellwood	Cathedral School Q2
2008/2009	Leo Reece Colman	Lake Tuggeranong N2
2009/2010	Leo Jessica Thompson	Mandurah W2
2010/2011	Leo Melanie Hannah Loomes	Southern Cross School Q1
2011/2012	Leo Tom Porter	Twin Cities Q2
2012/2013	Leo Ellen Watts	Hornsby N5
2013/2014	Leo Megan Hackwood	Golden Valley Keperra Q3
2014/2015	Leo Joel Pattinson-Cashman	Mackay Tropical North Q2
2015/2016	Leo Katerina Blekic	Sunraysia C2
2016/2017	Leo Grace Walker	Ashgrove/The Gap Q3
2017/2018	Leo Jesse Pascoe	Aspley Q3
2018/2019	Leo Matthew Boggon	Crestwood N5
2019/2020	Leo Ruth Spence	Central Queensland Q4
2020/2021	Cancelled due to Covid-19	
2021/2022	Leo Kai Spence	Central Queensland Q4
2022/2023	Leo Leada Blackie	King Island T1
2023/2024	Leo Georgia Bailey	Cessnock Community N3
2024/2025	Leo Charlize Chow	Melbourne Next Gen V1-4
2025/2026	Leo Cheuk Yui Lam	Melbourne Next Gen V1-4

Welcome

Welcome to the 2026 National Final of Leo of the Year.

Thank you for your support of this year's finalists at the Multiple District 201 Convention. The Leo of the Year program provides an opportunity to recognise the work Leos are doing within their clubs, districts and communities, and to share that more broadly.

All participants in this year's competition should be acknowledged for the effort they have put in to be involved. In particular, congratulations to those who have progressed to this stage as state representatives. Reaching the national final reflects a high level of commitment to service, leadership, and involvement in the Leo program.

The finalists you will hear from today each bring their own experiences to the program. They are being assessed across their service, leadership, and contribution to Leos, along with their communication and presentation. The standard this year has been strong, and each finalist has made a meaningful contribution within their community.

Thank you to this year's judges for the time and care you have put into the process. Your role is not a simple one, and your contribution is valued.

I would also like to acknowledge the support behind the scenes from sponsoring Lions Clubs, Leo Advisors, District and State Coordinators, and members of the Leo Committee. This competition relies on that collective effort to run successfully.

Congratulations again to all participants, and I hope you enjoy this year's National Final.



**MD 201 Leo Committee Chairperson
Siobhan Elliott**

The Contestants

Avinash Mohta -

New South Wales

Leo Club of Parramatta High School

Zachery Tung -

Victoria

Leo Club of Melbourne Next Gen

Hugh J. Goodwin -

Queensland

Swannie's Leo club—Maroochydore

Calvin Nguyen -

Western Australia

Leo Club of Morley

Charlie Byrne -

Tasmania

Leo Club of King Island
Remote Member

National Coordinator Youth & Community Projects

The Lions LEO of the Year has become an integral part of our Multiple District Conventions with struggles in the early years trying to get Lions to remain in the convention hall, to now see our fellow Lions eager to see and hear what our LEOs have to say.

Today we will see our Lions of the future deliver a strong and heartfelt speech. Although the speeches may be similar to what we hear with the Youth of the Year, the similarities stop there with a greater emphasis on their community service and LEO leadership.

I extend my congratulations and best wishes to all state winners for today and hope that you will all have a bright future as our Lions' leaders in years to come.

I know that you will remember today with fond memories, the friendships that you will make this weekend should last a lifetime.

To Cheuk Yui Lam, our current LOTY, thank you for your great work as our LEO ambassador for the past twelve months. Your dedication and commitment to the role has been greatly appreciated and well received by those Lions that you had the opportunity to meet and inspire. You will now step into the role of the Leo Advisory Panel of Australia Chairperson for 12 months and will no doubt inspire your committee

to continue the tremendous work that Leos are doing throughout our Multiple District.

Congratulations must also go to Leo Charlize Chow for her time leading this committee over the past 12 months. She has been inspirational and a great role model for all Leos.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank the LEO National Chairperson, Siobhan Elliot and her committee of state coordinators, who has done a terrific job along with her team of State coordinators, for continuing to build the LEO program. Without you and your committees ongoing commitment LEOs would not be where they are today.



**MD201 Youth & Community Projects
National Coordinator
PDG Dale "Toby" Crawford**



Judging Criteria

All LEO State Finalists are assessed during an interview with the judging panel and also in their public speaking presentation.

Points are awarded as follows:

Community service involvement	25%
Leadership and contribution to Leos	25%
Knowledge of Leos and Lions	10%
Knowledge of local and world affairs	10%
Impact during interview	10%
Public speaking	20%
TOTAL	100%

PRIZES

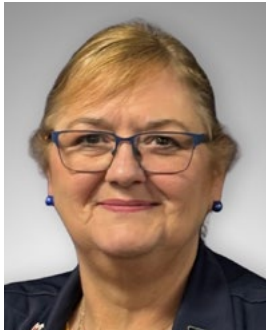
Overall winner-The Multiple District LEO of the Year winner receives \$2000 prize money. He/she is also funded for up to \$1500 to travel within Australia to promote the LEO program. The MD LEO of the Year will be required to promote the LEO program and the LEO of the Year program throughout the Multiple District for 12 months and attend the following MD Convention to assist the MD LEO Committee with the LOTY judging and other LEO activities.

Best Public Speaker- A Public Speaking prize of \$500 will be awarded to the entrant who gains the highest score in the Public Speaking section of the judging.

National Finalists- All State winners who compete in the National Final will receive \$500 prize money. National finalists are also expected to be ambassadors for LEOs within their own state for 12 months.

The LEOs Club Program welcomes your feedback. Please liaise with one of our LEO Coordinators if you would like to provide feedback about the LEO of the Year Program, or the LEOs Program in general.

Meet the Panel



Beccy Field - Head Judge

South Australia

Beccy Field has been a member of Lions for 16 years, serving at Club, District and Multiple District levels. She is Secretary of the Lions Club of Mount Gambier, District Global Leadership Team Leader, and this year joins the Multiple District Training Team as a Multiple District Trainer. Beccy is passionate about youth initiatives and is actively involved in the LEHP Children's Vision Screening program and the Blue Light organisation.



PDG Donna Hedges

Queensland

Donna is a retired school principal with 40 years' experience in Education Queensland who has been a Lion since 1999. A long-serving member of the Brisbane Bunya Lions Club, she has held numerous Club and District roles including District Governor (2019–2020). Donna currently serves as a Director of Lions Camp Duckadang, and is MD201 Child Safe Officer, with a strong and enduring involvement in Lions youth and Leo programs.



PDG Les Cropley

Victoria

Les joined Lions in 1985 and has volunteered with clubs across Australia and New Zealand. With a background in Health and Safety, he brings strong leadership experience and is currently a Trustee of the Australian Lions Children's Mobility Foundation for Victoria and Tasmania.

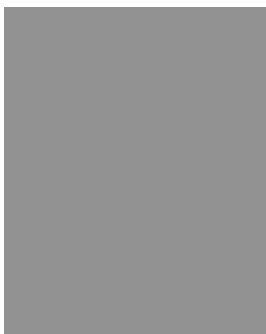
Passionate about encouraging resilience, inclusion and community service, Les enjoys supporting projects that create opportunities for young people and make a practical difference in the lives of others.



Geoff Clow

Tasmania

Geoff Clow joined Lions in 2001 at Nightcliff in the Northern Territory and transferred to Soell Lions Club, Tasmania, in 2002. He has served extensively at cabinet level, including four years as Zone Chair, three years as Health Projects Coordinator, and more than ten years coordinating Hearing and Assistance Dogs. Geoff has also been a dedicated Club Secretary for over 20 years across two terms. He values the strong social connections within Lions and actively supports and visits other clubs.



TBA - Community Judge

TBA

TBA

New South Wales

Avinash Mohta

Age: 19

Joined: August 2023

Club: Leo Club of Parramatta High School

Sponsor Club/District:

Lions Club of Parramatta (N5)

Positions Held:

Project Leader (2023 - 2024)

Vice President (2024)

President (2025)

**Community Service
(within last two years):**

Homelessness Drive

Book Donation Drive

Tree Planting

Clean-up Australia Day

Wellbeing Day

Sydney Marathon

Empowered Minds Festival

Mission Mobility

Currently:

Studying a Bachelor of Applied Finance

Future Goals:

High finance roles in banking, trading, wealth management etc. / Full-time music artist



“The impact we had once only wished to do became a reality as we made a difference to 20 lives in one night. It was a moment of clarity for me - this was an initiative I deeply cared about and one I was going to continue throughout my time as a Leo”

Victoria

Zachery Tung

Age: 16

Joined: May 2022

Club: Leo Club of Melbourne Next Gen

Sponsor Club/District:

Lions Club of Melbourne Next Gen (V1-4)

Positions Held:

President (2024 – 2026)

Secretary (2023 - 2024)

Victorian Leo Committee Member (2025 - 26)

Community Service

(within last two years):

Holy Spirit Community School & Parish

Christmas Carols Volunteer

Push Up Challenge

International Ironman Triathlon Event Volunteer

Level Up Your Future: VCE, Uni & Career

Sharing Workshop

Tree Planting Day Manningham Council

Pinchapoo Volunteer

Next Gen for Clean Up Australia

Chinese Cancer and Chronic Illness Society of

Victoria Volunteer

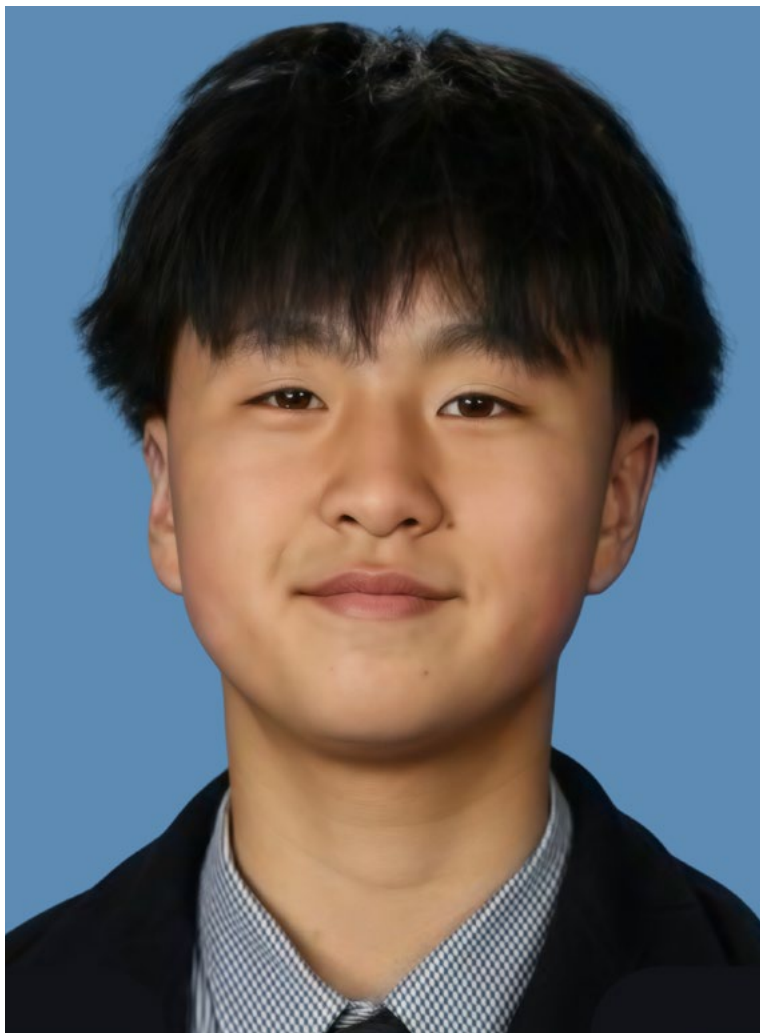
Eat Up Australia Volunteer

Currently:

Student at Melbourne Grammar School

Future Goals:

Becoming a Lawyer



“Everyone shared a common goal, which made the process feel purposeful and motivating. Being immersed in the activity showed me how simple actions, when done collectively, can create a powerful impact.”

Queensland

Hugh J. Goodwin

Age: 16

Joined: June 2024

Club: Swannie's Leo club—Maroochydore

Sponsor Club/District:

Mooloolaba Lions Club—Q4

Positions Held:

Club Member 2024—25

Club President 2025—26

Community Service

(within last two years):

The Ripple Project 2024

Eco Vase Project 2024

Recycling Project 2025

Sleep on a Cardboard Box Night 2024 & 2025

Q4 District Convention MC 2025

Trivia Night 2025

LAZER Zone Night 2026

Currently:

Year 11, Maroochydore State High School

Future Goals:

To study at UNSW and achieve both a Bachelor of Advanced Science (Honours) and a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours).



“Leos has given me a unique opportunity to work with my school community, in ways few other school leaders do, through this service I have expanded my understanding of leadership, made many new friends, and gained experiences that I will take with me to any future endeavours.”

Western Australia

Calvin Nguyen

Age: 17

Joined: February 2022

Club: Morley Leo Club
Sponsor Club/District:
Noranda Lions Club - WA

Positions Held:
Events Coordinator 2024 - 2026
Social and Events Coordinator 2025 - 2026

**Community Service
(within last two years):**
World Vision 40H Famine
Project Christmas Child
Angkor Project Sausage Sizzle - Termly at school.
Sleeping Rough Initiative
Community Dinner and Quiz Night
Clean up Australia Day
School Breakfast Club Program
Laps for Life

Currently:
Year 12 student. Hospitality staff and Lifeguard.

Future Goals:

Build a balanced lifestyle, enjoy travelling and explore different paths in life. And somehow, end up in a classroom as a teacher in the end.



“I joined Leos for fun. I left with an experience like no other. Leos has built my character and developed my personal qualities and values, but also changed my perspective on social challenges and allowed me to contribute to a supportive community united by the common goal of lending a hand to those who need it.”

Tasmania

Charlie Byrne

Age: 17

Joined: November 2023

Club: King Island Leo Club – a REMOTE member

Sponsor Club/District:

Lions Club of King Island, serving through the
Lions Club of George Town, Tas

Positions Held:

Lion Tamer with Lions Club George Town
Incoming President of West Tamar Leos club

Community Service

(within last two years):

Don Marios Car Show – food service
Exeter Market – Gate and parking duties
Ride For Ben RUOK – BBQ duties
Raffle ticket sales
Community Bus trips – helping Lions host social
outings
Ainslee Nursing Home – visiting the elderly
residents

Currently:

Year 11 student, Navy Cadet, community
volunteer and casual hospitality employment

Future Goals:

To join the Australian Navy continuing my
family's service record.



“Being a REMOTE Leo hasn’t stopped me contributing to the Lions organisation. I see it as a great connection between the age groups and I have developed a closer bond with my father as we serve together in Lionism. I hope to make great connections with other Leos throughout Australia.”



Leadership
Experience
Oppportunity

lions australia
we serve

