

aitd. 2026 Excellence Awards

On Thursday 14 May 2026, we announced the winners of the 2026 AITD Excellence Awards at a glittering gala dinner. Held at the Sofitel in Brisbane, the event was attended by over 200 people.



Coveted by companies across Australia and New Zealand, the AITD Excellence Awards recognise outstanding achievements in learning and development. The Awards set new benchmarks for our members, recognising, rewarding and sharing quality and innovation across the learning and development spectrum.

AITD would like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteer judges for 2026. Your time and dedication to the process is very much appreciated.



After a record number of entries and an exceptional calibre across the board, it was a hard-fought contest this year.

All of our finalists, winners and highly commended entries should be incredibly proud of their achievement.

BEST BLENDED LEARNING SOLUTION



Camp Australia *Aspiring Leaders Program*

Camp Australia is a leading provider of Outside School Hours Care (OSHC), supporting over 4,000 educators who care for 76,000 children annually. Their people are at the heart of their success, and investing in their growth is essential to delivering exceptional experiences for children and families.

The *Aspiring Leaders Program* is a six-month, cohort-based leadership development initiative designed to build capability and confidence among emerging service leaders. Grounded in Camp Australia's core values - Joy, Belonging, Courage, Respect, and Gratitude - the program uses a blended learning approach, combining structured online modules,

live virtual sessions, mentoring, DISC profiling, and practical application to prepare participants for the complexities of modern OSHC services.

The program fosters technical, managerial, and people leadership skills to create a strong internal leadership pipeline. Graduates consistently report increased readiness for leadership roles, improving retention and service quality. By shaping confident, values-driven leaders through blended learning, the *Aspiring Leaders Program* strengthens both Camp Australia and the broader OSHC sector, uplifting leadership capability across the industry.

BEST CAPABILITY BUILDING PROGRAM



Grant Thornton
AI Capability Uplift Program

Grant Thornton Australia's AI capability uplift program is a pioneering initiative designed to equip their workforce with the skills and confidence to thrive in an AI-driven future. Responding to the rapid evolution of AI and the growing demand for digital expertise, the program addresses gaps in AI literacy and readiness across all service lines and career stages.

Through a multi-modal, learner-centred approach, Grant Thornton offers adaptive, role-based pathways, including live training, on-demand resources, and innovative gamification via their AI Badges Program. Over 535 badges have been issued, with widespread sharing on LinkedIn, reflecting strong engagement and peer recognition.

The program's design ensures accessibility for all staff, including those with disabilities and remote workers, and features tailored content for both firm-wide and department-specific needs. Highlights include AI hackathons, prompt libraries, and a vibrant internal AI community of over 1,200 members.

Measurable impact is demonstrated by an exceptional adoption rate, significant productivity gains, and improved work-life balance, with Copilot users recording more recharge time and fewer administrative hours. The initiative has received external recognition, including coverage in the *Australian Financial Review* and invitations to present at major industry events.

BEST DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PROGRAM



Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Understanding Indigenous Australia (UIA) Program

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) launched the online Understanding Indigenous Australia (UIA) Program to strengthen cultural capability across its global workforce. Recognising that cultural competence is a core diplomatic skill, DFAT identified a need to deepen understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and perspectives—not only within Australia but across its international network.

Historically, cultural learning was limited to face-to-face programs, creating inequities in access. The UIA course addresses this gap through a scalable, interactive online experience hosted on DFAT's Lumi platform. Co-designed with First Nations partners and supported

by the National Indigenous Australians Agency and Supply Nation providers, the program offers three modules: Culture, History, and First Nations Perspectives in Foreign Policy. Each combines multimedia storytelling, reflective practice, and real-world diplomatic scenarios to foster awareness, empathy, and behavioural change.

Since its introduction, UIA has become mandatory pre-posting training and strongly encouraged for all staff. Its innovative design and measurable impact position DFAT as a leader in inclusive learning, ensuring that every act of diplomacy reflects Australia's commitment to reconciliation and the world's oldest continuing cultures.

BEST LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



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BEST LEARNING CULTURE IN AN ORGANISATION



HR Consulting
Australia and New Zealand Recycling Platform (ANZRP)

At Australia and New Zealand Recycling Platform (ANZRP), learning is the heartbeat of transformation. Faced with regulatory shifts, digital disruption, and organisational change, ANZRP turned challenge into opportunity by creating a values-driven learning ecosystem that empowers people and accelerates innovation.

The program blends formal compliance and technical training, social learning through recognition and collaboration, and experiential learning in the flow of work, guided by the 70:20:10 framework. Initiatives like Cloud Champs and the WOW Program champion digital capability and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, while curated eLearning and LinkedIn

Learning ensure flexibility and inclusivity.

The program has delivered significant cultural and operational benefits, strengthening resilience, capability, and engagement across the organisation. It has enabled ANZRP to adapt rapidly to change, embed continuous improvement, and deliver exceptional value to members and communities—all while fostering a workplace where learning is integral to success.

By embedding learning into everyday operations and aligning it with strategic priorities, ANZRP has built a culture where innovation thrives.

BEST ONBOARDING OR INDUCTION PROGRAM



Adbri

Driver Induction and Onboarding Program

Adbri operates one of Australia's largest logistics fleets across concrete, aggregates, and cement operations. With more than 600 heavy-vehicle drivers across 200 sites, the company identified inconsistent regional onboarding as a critical safety and compliance risk.

The new *Driver Induction and Onboarding Program* standardised learning nationally, ensuring every new driver begins their journey with the same training experience, competency standards, and safety expectations. Co-designed by Adbri's Learning and Organisational Development, Transport and Safety teams, the program blends online learning, supervised driving, and third-party assessments within a single digital workflow hosted in My Learning.

Drivers complete structured modules on pre-start inspections, technology-assisted driving, Chain of Responsibility (CoR) compliance, customer service, and hazard prevention before progressing to solo operations. AI-enabled in-cab cameras provide real-time feedback on fatigue, speed, and driver attention, creating a powerful link between learning and performance.

Since its rollout in 2024, the program has delivered measurable improvements: faster onboarding, enhanced compliance documentation, and a significant reduction in speeding and fatigue-related events. Over 500 new drivers have been inducted through the framework, returning more than 1,500 productive hours to logistics teams.

BEST USE OF GAMIFICATION OR SIMULATION FOR LEARNING



Kent Relocation Services and Yarno

Top 5 Campaign

Kent Relocation Services, Australia's largest family-owned removals provider, faced a costly challenge: rising damage claims to high-value household items and a workforce that was tough to reach with traditional training. Paper-based resources weren't cutting through, and inconsistent processes were impacting customer trust, operational costs, and team confidence. Kent partnered with Yarno to address these challenges.

The *Top 5 Campaign* was created – a mobile-first microlearning initiative designed to strengthen procedural knowledge for Kent's dispersed employees. Grounded in Yarno's human-centred five-step design process, the learning approach combined discovery workshops, targeted quiz-based learning, and a tailored communications

rollout that met time-poor road crews where they were: on the job, direct to their phones.

Learners received three daily questions over two weeks. Using proven learning science – microlearning, spaced repetition, gamification, and team-based learning – the campaign transformed essential procedures into memorable, practical habits.

The impact was remarkable. Kent achieved a 41% reduction in damage claims across targeted items, translating into \$30,000 in monthly savings. Engagement soared, with a 95% completion rate and strong performance results that demonstrated deep understanding of the material.

BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING



Kent Relocation Services and Yarno *Top 5 Campaign*

Yarno is a mobile-first learning platform. Its key feature is a gamified quiz-based tool, offering bite-sized learning and short, sharp videos that seamlessly integrate into teams' daily workflows. Yarno helps organisations build content within the tool, then supports them throughout the launch of the microlearning campaign. Yarno is also delivered in a team vs team format, with gamified elements such as leaderboards and badges, which encourage participation and completion as teams compete against their peers.

Kent Relocation Services is Australia's largest family-owned relocation and removals provider, with over 500

employees. Kent approached Yarno with a pressing business problem: increasing rates of damage to high-value items during household relocations. These incidents were not only costly (leading to high-value claims) but also damaging to customer trust and team confidence. Yarno's solution was a targeted microlearning campaign designed to bridge the gap between policy and practice, and reduce costs.

The results for Kent were exceptional, resulting in a 41% reduction in damage claims for targeted items and \$30,000 in monthly cost savings from fewer claims.

DR ALASTAIR RYLATT AWARD FOR L&D PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

Andrew Lawson

Andrew has delivered instructional design and facilitation that reflects best practices in short courses, adult learning, and neuroscience for 20 years. Working with organisations like Under Armour, Dell, Rio Tinto, Lockheed Martin, Telstra, and the Australian Government, Andrew has personally delivered over 4,000 workshops to 300+ clients, impacting more than 100,000 learners.

Andrew developed a brain-friendly 90-minute short course learning format, years before other providers adopted this approach. His approach combines pre-session priming, a neuroscience-based 90-minute workshop, and three to five spaced reinforcements that strengthens retention and behaviour change.

He has personally mentored 27 L&D professionals, strengthening their capability and confidence to design and facilitate programs. Many now lead programs, consult independently, and contribute to organisational capability uplift.

Andrew founded The Learning Zone in 2025, which shares thought leadership on applied neuroscience and learning practices. It explores topics such as priming, spaced repetition, making learning stick, and more. Andrew has been a solid contributor to the AITD community, and is making a real impact in the L&D industry.

