

2020 is tough. Wine chicks are tougher. The 6th annual Australian Women in Wine Awards open next week.

And stories of 'success' will look a little different this year.

In a year where few things are going ahead as planned, the 2020 Australian Women in Wine Awards (AWIWA) proudly announces that it opens for entries on Tuesday 4th August.

The ravaging impacts of drought, fire, flood and a global pandemic mean that, in 2020, stories of 'success' may not necessarily mean what they have in the past. Staying in business, creatively retaining staff, pivoting to find new markets, navigating times of uncertainty, utilising leadership skills, breaking new ground and holding your space. These are just some of the achievements the AWIWA wants to uncover through the awards in this most unprecedented of times.

"We need stories of celebration and triumph this year more than ever," says Jane Thomson, AWIWA founder and chair. "We've amended our criteria for each award to reflect the situation we're all now living in. We think that 2020 could actually be the most powerful year yet for these awards as they reveal the stories of grit and determination by the women in our industry that may perhaps otherwise go untold."

The 2020 award categories are:

- Winemaker of the Year – sponsored by Tonnellerie Saint Martin
- Viticulturist of the Year – sponsored by Wine Australia
- Marketer of the Year – sponsored by denomination
- Cellar Door Person of the Year – sponsored by Langton's
- Champion of Diversity and Equality – sponsored by Australian Grape & Wine
- Owner / Operator of the Year – sponsored by Bacchus Academy
- Woman of Inspiration - a judges' choice award (no entry required)

Entries close on 29 September, and the winners will be announced in a livestream broadcast on Tuesday 24th November. Once again, cities, towns and wine regions will be encouraged to host their own awards party whilst tuning in. The AWIWA pioneered this style of online wine awards ceremony when the awards launched in 2015, and again in 2016. It was not until 2017 (in London with Wine Australia) that there was a traditional, real-life awards ceremony.

"We're going back to where it all started," continued Ms. Thomson. "This method of announcing the winners actually ensures more people can participate and be part of the excitement of the evening. It will also allow gatherings of people in small numbers - dependent on the COVID restrictions in each state at that time."

The awards are entirely funded by sponsorship. This year the AWIWA is thrilled to announce that the 2020 Platinum Partner is Portavin. While the 2020 Gold Partners are Hydra Consulting, Pernod-Ricard Winemakers, Langton's and Wine Business Magazine.

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About the Australian Women in Wine Awards

Started in 2015, and now in its sixth year, the Australian Women in Wine Awards are the world's first and only awards platform for women in wine. The AWIWA works to celebrate and reward the work of women in the Australian wine community, and community leaders who champion equality and fairness for all sexes in the workplace.

The awards are owned and operated by The Fabulous Ladies' Wine Society and conducted with the assistance of an advisory board of industry leaders. This 2020 board includes Jeni Port, Corrina Wright, Toni Carlino, Sarah Collingwood, Alexia Roberts and Shirley Fraser.

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