



## PRESS RELEASE

# FROM BRIEF TO BIG IMPACT: ENTRIES FOR THE 2026 NGEN AWARD NOW OPEN

**23 June 2026:** Solve a real brief, pitch to industry leaders and put your talent on the radar of the people shaping our industry – that’s the opportunity on offer as entries open for the **2026 NGEN Award**.

Now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year, The NGEN Award is one of the most anticipated categories of the MFA Awards, designed exclusively for media professionals with less than five years’ experience. More than just a competition, it’s a career-building opportunity: entrants develop their strategic thinking, sharpen their ability to respond to a live brief and gain exposure to senior industry leaders.

The Award challenges the next generation of talent to solve a real business problem and present their ideas on a significant industry stage, building the confidence, capability and profile that can help accelerate their careers.

This year’s brief comes from UnLtd charity partner **Down the Track**, which delivers early intervention programs for at-risk young people in the regional NSW. Through mentoring and tailored support, the organisation helps young people build confidence, resilience and the skills they need to make positive choices and pursue their goals.

Shortlisted teams will be invited to **NGEN Award Day** on 19 August, to pitch live to MFA Board directors and senior industry leaders. It’s a high-value opportunity to receive invaluable feedback from industry decision-makers, gain hands-on experience in presenting under pressure, and build the confidence and skills needed to progress as future industry leaders.

To help entrants get started, a free NGEN Award Kick-Off webinar is being held tomorrow Wednesday 24 June, at 10am AEST. The session will unpack the brief, explore strategic approaches and provide practical advice on building a compelling response. A recording will be available on the MFA website for those unable to attend live.

✓ **Register for the NGEN Award Kick-Off Webinar here:**

<https://ngen.org.au/component/eventbooking/workshop/643-ngen-award-kick-off-web>

✓ **Download the brief and get started:**

[https://www.mediafederation.org.au/images/2026/awards/ngenaward/2026\\_NGEN\\_x\\_MFA\\_Bri](https://www.mediafederation.org.au/images/2026/awards/ngenaward/2026_NGEN_x_MFA_Bri)



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The NGEN Award has a proven track record of turning ideas into real impact. Among a slew of ideas turned into campaigns, 2022 winners Ben Breden and Olivia Coxon from Initiative transformed their winning entry into a national fundraising campaign for youth mental health charity batyr – securing support from 19 media partners and generating \$1.3 million in donated media.

Melanie Aslanidis, Head of NGEN & MFA Foundations, said: “The NGEN Award is where emerging media talent get the opportunity to step up, think big and demonstrate our industry purpose of We Are The Changers. It’s not often you get a chance to work on a real brief for a worthy cause, pitch directly to senior industry leaders and create an idea that could genuinely make a difference. Every year we’re blown away by the calibre of thinking, and we can’t wait to see what this year’s entrants bring to the table.”

To be eligible, entrants must be registered NGEN members with less than five years’ experience.

**Key NGEN Award dates:**

- Today, 23 June: NGEN Award Entries Open
- 24 June: NGEN Award Kick-Off Webinar, 10am AEST
- 28 July: Entries Close
- 18 August: Shortlisted teams notified by phone that they’ve made it through to the Live Round
- 19 August: NGEN Award Day – live presentations to judges
- 24 September: Winners announced at the MFA Awards gala event, Randwick Racecourse, Sydney

**The 2026 MFA Awards sponsors are:**

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**About the MFA**

The Media Federation of Australia (MFA) is the peak body representing media communication companies. The MFA is a non-for-profit organisation established in 1997 with a current membership base that represents over 90% of all media billings placed by media agencies in Australia. The MFA's vision is to encourage operational excellence in the field of media communication connections and to define and develop best practice standards to support its members and the role they play in servicing their clients.