

April 2026 LIAWA Awards Program: Residential Landscape Design, Construction and Maintenance

Categories 1-3: Residential Design & Construction Judging Criteria

1. Residential Design & Construction (under \$10,000)
2. Residential Design & Construction (between \$10,000 and \$30,000)
3. Residential Design & Construction (over \$30,000)

These categories recognise excellence in the design and construction of residential landscapes across three project value tiers. Judges are looking for landscapes that demonstrate strong design creativity, functionality, and visual appeal, supported by high-quality workmanship and professional project delivery.

Assessment considers how effectively the design responds to the site and client brief, the quality and sustainability of materials and construction methods, appropriate plant selection and establishment, and the long-term durability and maintainability of the landscape. Projects should clearly demonstrate value to the client and reflect a high level of professionalism in planning, coordination, and execution.

Successful entries will integrate thoughtful design with skilled construction, sustainable practices, and attention to detail, resulting in cohesive landscapes that enhance residential spaces and stand the test of time.

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Good (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Design Excellence: Creativity, functionality, and overall look of the landscape.	Beautiful, innovative, considering site and context and perfectly designed for the space, addresses all site issues	Well-designed with good creativity and flow. Addresses some site issues	Looks good but could be more creative or better planned.	Basic design, lacks impact or clear planning.	Poorly designed, unappealing, or doesn't suit the space.
Sustainability: Eco-friendly practices, material use, water use, and overall environmental impact.	Prioritises sustainable materials, saves water, and supports the environment, uses local materials to reduce carbon footprint.	Mostly eco-friendly with some sustainable choices.	Some effort to be sustainable but could do more.	Little focus on sustainability or efficiency.	No sustainability efforts, environmentally harmful.
Quality of Workmanship: How well the landscape is built and finished.	Impeccable craftsmanship, high-quality work, and excellent detail.	Well-built with minor imperfections.	Solid construction but some details could be improved.	Work is uneven or lacks precision.	Poorly built, sloppy work, or unfinished.
Plant Selection & Health: Choice of plants and how well they are maintained.	Perfect plant choices for specific context and site location. Plants are	Good plant selection, well-maintained.	Plants are decent but some may not suit the area.	Poor plant selection or struggling plants in sub-optimal location or through	Plants are unhealthy, dying, or completely unsuitable.

	healthy and thriving.			inadequate maintenance.	
Maintenance & Longevity: Durability and ease of upkeep over time.	Built to last with minimal or well-coordinated maintenance needed.	Well-made and should hold up well over time.	Will need some ongoing maintenance or minor supplemental planting as the landscape grows but should last.	High maintenance requirements (ongoing plant replacements required) or may not last long.	Poorly planned, will not stand the test of time.
Value to Client: Does it benefit the client and meet the client brief within budget requirements?	Exceeds expectations, adds great value to the area and meets client budget	Very beneficial and improves the space significantly within or slightly over client budget	Adds some value but not outstanding.	Limited impact or value to the client/community.	No real benefit or even a negative impact.
Professionalism: How well the project was managed and executed	Extremely well-managed, smooth execution, and professional.	Well-handled with few minor issues.	Generally, well done but had some noticeable flaws.	Disorganized or had significant management issues.	Poorly managed, problems throughout.

Category 4: Residential Garden Maintenance (up to \$30,000) Judging Criteria

Within this category, the judges are looking for a garden that is not just beautiful but also demonstrably well-managed, healthy, and sustainable, reflecting expert horticultural skill and attention to detail.

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Good (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Maintenance Excellence: Overall appearance & presentation of the maintained landscape. The immediate visual appeal, cleanliness, and professional finish of the entire landscape site.	Immaculate presentation across the entire site. Garden is visually outstanding, consistently neat, and finished to an exceptional professional standard.	Very well presented and attractive, with only minor imperfections that do not detract from the overall appearance.	Generally tidy and presentable but lacks refinement or consistency in some areas.	Noticeably untidy or inconsistent presentation, reducing overall visual appeal.	Poor presentation; garden appears neglected or unprofessionally maintained.
Plant Health & Vitality: Vigorous, disease-free plants, lawns, and groundcovers, with excellent colour and growth.	Plants are thriving, healthy, and vigorous with excellent colour and form throughout the site.	Plants are healthy and well-maintained with only minor issues present.	Most plants are healthy, though some show stress, poor form, or minor pest/disease issues.	Plant health is inconsistent, with visible stress, poor growth, or maintenance issues.	Widespread poor plant health, disease, decline, or plant failure evident.

Hardscape Maintenance: Cleanliness and condition of paths, decks, ponds, water features, and other built elements.	All hardscape elements are exceptionally clean, safe, and well-maintained, enhancing the overall landscape.	Hardscape elements are well maintained with only minor wear or cleanliness issues.	Generally functional but showing signs of wear, staining, or inconsistent maintenance.	Hardscape maintenance is below standard, with noticeable deterioration or cleanliness issues.	Hardscape elements are poorly maintained, unsafe, damaged, or detract from the garden.
Site Management & Sustainability: Water efficiency (use of sustainable methods to reduce watering needs). Maintenance innovation (creative solutions for challenging sites or maintenance issues). Future proofing (any new planting or replacement plant selections are appropriate for site conditions and climate).	Demonstrates exemplary sustainable practices, efficient water use, innovative solutions, and climate-appropriate plant management.	Strong sustainability practices evident, with good water efficiency and thoughtful plant management.	Some sustainable practices in place, though opportunities for improvement are evident.	Limited consideration of sustainability, water efficiency, or long-term suitability.	No evident sustainability practices; site management is inefficient or inappropriate.
Maintenance Plan Management: Adherence to agreed scope, monitoring, reporting, and demonstrated value over time (12+ months service).	Maintenance plan is expertly managed, clearly documented, consistently delivered, and demonstrates strong long-term value to the client.	Maintenance plan is well followed with good communication and demonstrated value over time.	Maintenance plan is generally adhered to, though monitoring or reporting could be improved.	Inconsistent delivery of the maintenance plan, with limited evidence of monitoring or value.	No clear maintenance plan, poor adherence to scope, or lack of demonstrated value.

Category 5: Residential Turf Maintenance Judging Criteria

This category recognises excellence in the professional maintenance of residential turf areas. Judges are looking for turf that is healthy, dense, visually appealing, and consistently well-managed over time. High-scoring entries will demonstrate a clear understanding of turf species requirements, seasonal care, and sustainable maintenance practices.

Assessment focuses on overall presentation, turf health and density, colour consistency appropriate to the turf species, crisp edging, and effective weed and pest control. Entrants should provide evidence of a structured turf maintenance plan, including appropriate mowing practices, nutrition programs, and soil management such as aeration or compaction control.

Successful entries will show minimal weed, pest, or disease presence, strong visual impact, and professional attention to detail, reflecting best-practice turf management that enhances the overall residential landscape.

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Good (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Overall Appearance: Visual impact, cleanliness, and overall presentation.	Turf presents exceptionally well, creating a strong visual impact with a clean, professional finish.	Turf is very attractive and well-presented, with only minor visual inconsistencies.	Acceptable appearance but lacks uniformity or refinement.	Turf appearance is inconsistent or visually untidy.	Poor presentation; turf detracts from the overall landscape.
Turf Health & Density: Thick, lush, even coverage.	Dense, healthy turf with even coverage and no bare or thin areas.	Turf is healthy and dense with only minor variations in coverage.	Moderate density with some thinning or uneven growth.	Noticeable thinning, bare patches, or weak turf growth.	Sparse, unhealthy turf with extensive bare areas.
Colour: Vibrant, consistent green, colour consistent with health of specific turf species/cultivar.	Colour is vibrant, uniform, and ideal for the turf species and season.	Colour is generally consistent with minor variations.	Acceptable colour but uneven or slightly dull in places.	Poor colour indicating stress, nutrient deficiency, or poor management.	Very poor or inconsistent colour showing significant turf stress or decline.
Edges: Crisp, defined borders with hardscape and garden beds.	Edges are exceptionally sharp, clean, and consistently defined throughout.	Edges are neat and well-defined with minimal irregularities.	Edges are generally defined but inconsistent or soft in places.	Poorly defined or irregular edges evident.	No clear edging; borders are untidy or overgrown.
Weed/Pest Control: Minimal to no weeds, insects, or diseases. Evidence of integrated pest management strategies that include both cultural and (if required) chemical solutions.	Virtually weed- and pest-free, with clear evidence of effective integrated management practices.	Minimal weed or pest presence, well controlled through appropriate methods.	Some weeds or pests present but generally under control.	Ongoing weed or pest issues indicating inconsistent control.	Significant weed, pest, or disease problems due to poor management.
Turf Maintenance Plan: Evidence of a good care routine including a species appropriate mowing height/schedule, fertiliser/nutrition	Clear, well-executed maintenance plan demonstrating expert turf knowledge and best practice care.	Maintenance plan is appropriate and consistently followed with good results.	Basic maintenance plan in place but lacking optimisation or refinement.	Maintenance practices are inconsistent or poorly timed.	No evident maintenance plan; turf care is reactive or inadequate.

program, and regular aeration or compaction management.					
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Category 6: Green life Supplier of the Year Judging Criteria

This category recognises excellence in the supply of high-quality green life, including trees, shrubs, groundcovers, turf, and other plant material. Judges are looking for consistent plant quality, professional service, reliability, sustainability practices, and value to the landscape industry.

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Good (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Plant Quality & Health: Overall condition, vigour, and presentation of supplied green life.	Plants are of exceptional quality: healthy, vigorous, well-formed, pest- and disease-free, and professionally presented.	Plants are very high quality with only minor, isolated imperfections.	Plants are generally healthy and acceptable but may lack consistency or refinement.	Variable plant quality with signs of stress, poor form, or minor pest/disease issues.	Poor-quality plants; unhealthy, poorly presented, or unsuitable for professional use.
Consistency & Reliability of Supply: Ability to consistently meet orders, specifications, and timeframes.	Consistently reliable supply, meeting specifications, quantities, and timeframes without issue.	Reliable supply with rare, minor supply or timing issues.	Generally reliable, though occasional substitutions or delays occur.	Inconsistent supply, frequent substitutions, or missed delivery timeframes.	Unreliable supply causing significant project delays or issues.
Range & Suitability of Green Life: Appropriateness of plant range for WA conditions and industry needs.	Excellent, well-curated range ideally suited to WA climates, soils, and landscape applications.	Strong range with good suitability for most WA landscape uses.	Adequate range, though limited choice or adaptability in some areas.	Limited or poorly suited plant range for WA conditions.	Inappropriate or unsuitable plant offerings for WA landscapes.
Sustainability Practices: Environmental responsibility in growing, sourcing, and operations.	Demonstrates outstanding sustainable practices, including water efficiency, responsible sourcing, and environmentally sound growing methods.	Strong sustainability practices evident across operations.	Some sustainability initiatives in place, though limited or inconsistent.	Minimal consideration of sustainability in production or supply.	No evident sustainability practices; environmentally irresponsible operations.
Industry Support & Professional Service: Customer service, technical advice, and industry contribution.	Exceptional professional service, proactive advice, strong industry engagement, and support for landscape professionals.	Very good service with helpful advice and professional communication.	Adequate service meeting basic expectations.	Poor communication, limited support, or inconsistent service.	Unprofessional service, poor communication, or lack of industry support.