

# Lift-off for 2020 Minerals Sector Awards

Bernie Napp - Mon, 6 Jul 2020

Now in its third year, the Minerals Sector Awards which recognise and celebrate outstanding achievements in the extractives sector, are seeking awards entries.

New Zealand Minerals Forum organiser Irwin Munro says of the Minerals Sector Awards: “The entries for this year are coming in, and it’s always good to have more to round out the awards.”



Winners will be announced at the forum gala dinner on 13 October at Claudelands in Hamilton in the following areas: Health and Safety Initiative Award sponsored by MinEx; Innovation Award; Environmental Management Award sponsored by Lane Neave; and Community Initiative Award.

“The Award categories represent business priorities to care for people and the environment, and deliver efficiency and positive social and commercial outcomes,” Munro says.

“It’s an opportunity to benchmark and share best-practice and innovations.”

## Reasons to enter the Awards

Munro spells out three key reasons for minerals sector companies to enter the Awards:

- Build profile – finalists and winners receive widespread coverage about their achievements and get noticed by customers and decision-makers
- Protect social licence – demonstrating leadership in environmental management and community engagement strengthens firms’ social responsibility position and highlights a commitment to a low-emissions future
- Attract and retain staff – companies that show they care for their greatest asset, people, and are open to improving outcomes through innovation are a powerful magnet to attract and retain top talent

## Last year’s winners

At the 2019 New Zealand Minerals Forum in Dunedin, the Minerals Sector Awards winners were:

Health and Safety Initiative – McConnell Dowell for improving the prediction of rockfall during the rebuild of Sumner Road above Lyttelton harbour, leading to no health and safety incidents.

Community Initiative – OceanaGold for its community outreach programme in Waihi, including an education centre, bus tours of mining operations, and community sponsorships and donations.

Innovation – Bathurst Resources transformed the Canterbury Coal mine from a 30,000 tonnes a year operation to 136,000 tonnes a year by increasing the number of productive seams from three to more than 30. This included a new method to produce a clean coal with no washing required.

Environmental Management – OceanaGold studied sulphate leaching into water at the Macraes mine, and discovered the Taieri flathead galaxiid fish is tolerant to mining drainages. The company also changed the way it builds waste rock stacks to reduce sulphate leaching.

## Trending topics for Awards entries

Munro says he is noticing increasing public concern around extractives projects and more efforts among developers and operators to engage with communities and iwi.

“There is fertile ground in this space for Award entries,” he says. “Companies are holding open days for the community that could also make a good Community Initiative entry.”

He also notes increasing emphasis within WorkSafe on workers’ occupational health and wellness, and diversity and inclusion among workforces, going beyond the traditional focus on slips, trips and falls.

Staying with workplace health and safety, Munro notes constant advances in technology, standards and initiatives being undertaken by MinEx to improve the sector’s performance.