



2026 Valerie Taylor Ocean Prizes Guidelines

Inspiring wonder, support and positive action for our ocean

BLUE WORLD invites you to enter the 2026 Valerie Taylor Ocean Prizes.

We hope to catalyse positive change across NSW for our ocean and coast. We welcome your ideas on ocean stewardship, using science, direct action, education and creativity. The project must be based in NSW.

Introducing our Patron: Valerie Taylor is a renowned diver, photographer, and trailblazing conservationist, dedicated to protecting and inspiring support for marine life. These annual prizes have been established to honour her achievements and to inspire wonder and positive action for the ocean.

2026 Valerie Taylor Ocean Prizes

\$40,000 cash prizes to be shared across NSW

Up to \$10,000 may be awarded for a marine science project, though a smaller amount may be awarded. Prizes of up to \$7000 will be awarded for all other projects, though smaller amounts are commonly awarded. One over-all winner will be announced at the BLUE WORLD presentation night and presented with a trophy.

50 WILDERLAB DNA analysis kits

WILDERLAB have kindly offered these kits for marine conservation action, marine science and ocean literacy/ education projects. This donation is valued around \$14,500 and includes both kits and processing.

The kits will be awarded to groups for conservation work, science and marine education projects. We can release 4- 12 kits per group, depending on the project. There will be special public school award for a science club/ or advanced science class.

Cash prizes and WILDERLAB e-dna kits may be awarded together.

Who can enter?

The project must be based in NSW. Organisations, unincorporated groups, and individuals working on NSW coast, harbours and tidal rivers. We encourage applications from First Nations people, young people, regional communities. Previous winners are welcome to apply, provided they have acquitted their previous projects with BLUEWORLD.

Key Dates

Open date: 31 March 2026

Closing date: Submissions must be received by 11.59 pm, 30 June 2026

Prize Announcement: The recipients will be announced during Science Week, August 2026

Project Completion: The project must be completed and a short report returned to BLUE WORLD by April 2027

Areas of focus

Marine science and citizen science

For materials, equipment or resources for a project with a marine conservation or restoration focus.

Community engagement and direct action:

For campaigns or projects focused on local ocean issues and education: eg sanctuary campaigning, ocean pollution, rescue and protection of marine birds and animals; connecting climate change and the ocean.



Artivism: Employ an artist/ musician/ digital storyteller & use creativity to catalyse support for your piece of the coast. *On theme: Props for conservation action; a reel for a campaign, paint a mural, hire an amp.*

Youth engagement and leadership:

We welcome projects designed by young people, including marine science PHD students with a conservation focus and public-school environmental clubs.

Please reach out, if you have questions.

Aims and Criteria

The aims of the Valerie Taylor Ocean Prizes

- To make a direct impact on ocean health, protection and restoration.
- To excite and educate and activate our communities to protect and care for our ocean.
This includes NSW marine and harbour eco-systems, marine species, coastal habitats and seabirds.

The prizes will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- The focus and potential impact of the project, with reference to the above aims.
- The feasibility and cost effectiveness of the project.
- Innovation and creativity of the project.
- Entrants' potential to manage and evaluate an effective project.
- Partnerships, community engagement, collaboration, interdisciplinary approaches.

Note: BLUE WORLD

- does not provide prizes for other competitions.
- does not fund wages beyond paying a creative or workshop facilitator as part of a wider project.

Please get in touch if you have questions.

To enter

Complete and email the 2026 Valerie Taylor Ocean Prize entry form, or linked info to info@blueworld.net.au by 11.59 pm, 30 June 2026.

We will acknowledge receipt of the application.

The Valerie Taylor Ocean Prizes are proudly supported by **BLUE WORLD** and our partner **WILDERLAB**

