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**MEDIA RELEASE**

17 November 2025

## **New trophy on tap for national beer awards**

The search is on for Australia's best brews, with entries now open for the 2026 Royal Queensland Awards (RQA) Beer Competition supported by King Street and The Star Brisbane.

New in 2026 is a trophy category for Low / Non-Alcoholic Beer, featuring classes for both lager and ale - reflecting the growing demand for these drinking options.

The category celebrates innovation in flavour, technique and balance, whether the beer is alcohol-free or brewed with reduced strength.

Co-Chief Judge Steve Henderson said it was a chance to honour the skill behind crafting exceptional beers that deliver full character with less alcohol.

"Low and non-alcoholic beer is growing very rapidly as consumers steer toward moderation, particularly Gen Z," he said.

"There are so many outstanding ales and lagers in this category and we'll be crowning the best of the best."

The 2026 competition also introduces several new styles across existing trophy categories, mirroring Australia's evolving beer culture.

Mexican-style and Czech-style Lagers have been added in response to their growing popularity, while Dessert Stout / Pastry Stout joins the lineup to reflect the cutting edge of beer creativity.

"These new style additions reflect changes in consumer trends and the incredible innovation we're seeing from brewers across the country," Mr Henderson said.

The winner of the Grand Champion Beer Trophy will receive a \$5,000 Lion Bursary, designed to further the winner's knowledge and advance the Australian beer industry.

An emerging Queensland brewer will also be crowned The Star Brisbane Emerging Brewer of the Year, with their beers sold at The Star Brisbane.

Mr Henderson said entering the RQA Beer Competition was an ideal way for brewers to raise their profile.



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“Beers are assessed by a panel of exceptionally talented judges and a win gives breweries an achievement to shout from the rooftops to their consumers,” he said.

Judging will take place from Tuesday 24 February 2026 at the Brisbane Showgrounds, with the Awards Presentation to follow on Thursday 26 February 2026 - now a special evening event held alongside the Royal Queensland Distilled Spirits Awards.

Entries close Friday 30 January 2026. To enter please [click here](#).

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