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40 YEARS  
1977-2017



## WA Young Australian of the Year 2017

**Abdullahi Alim**

*Director of MYHACK and Digital Innovator*



He graduated from his honours degree in finance last year, but Abdullahi Alim has already co-founded an innovation lab to solve issues of contemporary concern. Abdullahi came to Australia as a Somali refugee at the age of five. At 23, he is pursuing studies through Stanford University. Now, through the Lighthouse Strategy, Abdullahi runs 'hackathons' – fast-paced and intense exercises that bring bright young innovators together to develop solutions to global challenges.

Abdullahi's approach has attracted partners from the Australian Government to Google and the US Department of State. For example, MYHACK, an anti-extremism hackathon he coordinates, has seen young Australians create cutting-edge digital solutions to undermine the influence and pervasive appeal of violent extremist propaganda.

Abdullahi's goal is to create hubs or 'lighthouses' around the world to promote social impact and youth entrepreneurship. He's set his sights on innovation challenges to empower more young Australians to solve international issues including the global refugee crisis and Indigenous disadvantage in the West.

## WA Young Australian of the Year 2016

**Catherine Hughes**

*Immunisation Champion*



After her youngest child Riley died from whooping cough, Catherine Hughes became an ardent campaigner for vaccination. One month old Riley was too young to be immunised against the deadly respiratory bacteria, also known as pertussis.

Rather than allow her grief to overwhelm her, Catherine has channelled her energy into immunisation awareness. Within days of Riley's death, she established the "Light for

Riley" Facebook page which now reaches more than 100,000 people.

As a direct result of Riley's death, every State and Territory in Australia has implemented free booster shots for pregnant women to provide the best defence against whooping cough in newborn babies. With no thought of reward, Catherine has met with politicians, attended parenting expos, raised over \$75,000 for whooping cough research, instigated a viral campaign for the donation of over 100,000 vaccines and shared her story to ensure no other family has to live without their child due to a preventable disease.

## NT Young Australian of the Year 2017

**Bridie Duggan**

*Life Coach and Healthy Living Champion*



Shocked by the suicide of a close friend in her hometown of Katherine, Bridie Duggan decided to take action. Setting herself an extreme challenge, Bridie travelled around Darwin each day for a month, and raised \$27,000 for the Livin Foundation in the process. Determined to raise awareness and funds to support the one in four Australians who will suffer from mental illness during their lives, Bridie wants others to know that speaking up and out is not weak.

A qualified life coach and personal trainer, with a degree in exercise and sports science, Bridie inspires people to strive for healthy mind, body and spirit. She devotes countless volunteer hours to her community – helping people to lose weight and gain self-esteem, volunteering as a strapper for football clubs of all codes, and instructing fitness classes for children with autism. With a reputation as superwoman within her community, Bridie draws on an endless supply of energy to encourage others.