



THE LIMESTONE COAST
GRAPE & WINE COUNCIL INC.



Appointment Policy for Judges

Version 1 (current).

Adopted by the Limestone Coast Wine Show Committee on July 3rd, 2026.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines for:

- The appointment of judges
- Terms of appointment
- Judge diversity, experience, and succession planning

This policy aligns with the current ASVO Wine Show Best Practice Recommendations.

2. Diversity and Representation

The Limestone Coast Wine Show (LCWS) aims to maintain a diverse judging panel to ensure representation across:

- Gender
- Professional background
- Expertise
- Skills and experience

Across all judging tiers, LCWS seeks balanced gender representation over the long term.

3. Judges Register

LCWS will maintain an internal Judges Register. This register will include:

- Judges identified by Committee as desirable candidates
- Individuals who have expressed interest in judging at LCWS
- Judging background (technical or stylistic)
- Feedback from previous participation at LCWS

This register will inform future appointments and succession planning.

4. Judge Classifications

Technical Judge

A Technical Judge is typically someone with formal wine education who works in wine production or related technical areas, such as:

- Winemaking
- Viticulture

Stylistic Judge

A Stylistic Judge works in wine-facing or communication roles, such as:

- Wine education
- Wine writing
- Retail
- Sommelier or hospitality

They may or may not hold formal wine qualifications.

5. Structure of the Judging Panel

LCWS has the following tiers of judges:

1. Chair of Judges (COJ)
2. Panel Chair (PC) – Three positions
3. Judge (J) – Three positions
4. Local Judge (LJ) – Three positions
5. Local Associate Judge (LAJ) – Three positions
6. Associate Judge (AJ) – Three positions

7. *(optional)* International Judge (IJ) – One position (replacing one of three judge positions)

Invitations to judge should be issued no earlier than six months prior to the show. Where possible, invitations should be issued in late January or early February to secure preferred candidates.

6. Appointment Criteria by Role

6.1 Chair of Judges (COJ)

Term: Three-year appointment

Eligibility and Criteria:

- Must have served as a Panel Chair at LCWS for at least one year prior to appointment
- Should have experience as a Panel Chair at National-level wine shows, and/or experience as COJ at other regional wine shows.
- Should have a strong understanding of the Limestone Coast region
- Appointment may alternate between a Technical and Stylistic Judge
- Long-term gender balance is a goal

Responsibilities:

- Provide advice on judging appointments during their term
- May assist with appointments of judges, both during and immediately following their appointment.
- Provide written confidential feedback to the LCWS Judge Liaison to assist future appointments

Feedback is confidential between the COJ, Judge Liaison, and authorised Committee representatives.

6.2 Panel Chair (PC) – Three Positions

Term: One-year appointment, renewed up to a maximum of three consecutive years (May be extended for succession planning toward COJ)

Appointment Principles:

- Ideally one new Panel Chair appointed each year to support rotation
- May be appointed from previous LCWS Judges
- Should include a mix of Technical and Stylistic Judges
- Long-term gender balance is a goal
- Provides guidance and mentorship to Associate Judges

Eligibility and Criteria:

- Must be an experienced panel chair at other regional wine shows and/or national wine shows, or have considerable experience as a judge and deemed as sufficiently experienced by COJ and Judge Liason to progress to panel chair level.
 - Reasonable understanding of major Limestone Coast regions
 - Willingness to further develop regional knowledge
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6.3 Judge (J) – Three Positions

Term: One-year appointment, renewed up to a maximum of three consecutive years (May be reviewed for promotion to Panel Chair)

Appointment Principles:

- Ideally one new Judge appointed each year
- Mix of Technical and Stylistic Judges
- Long-term gender balance is a goal

Eligibility and Criteria:

- Experience at Regional or National-level shows as a Judge, or considerable experience as an Associate Judge and deemed as sufficiently experienced by COJ and Judge Liason to progress to judge level.
 - Reasonable understanding of the major Limestone Coast regions
 - Willingness to further develop regional knowledge
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6.4 Local Judge (LJ) – Three Positions

Term: One-year appointment, renewed up to a maximum of two consecutive years.
(May be extended or reviewed based on availability and Committee requirements)

Appointment Principles:

- May be Technical or Stylistic Judges
- Long-term gender balance is a goal

Eligibility and Criteria:

- Experience at Regional or National-level shows as a Judge or considerable experience as an Associate Judge and deemed as sufficiently experienced by COJ and Judge Liason to progress to judge level.
 - Excellent knowledge of local wine styles
 - Ability to educate and support fellow panel members on local wine regions and styles
 - Acts as an advocate for the region
 - Preferably has an interest or involvement in wine show judging in other regional and/or national wine shows.
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6.5 Local Associate Judge (LAJ) – Three Positions

Term: One-year appointment, renewed up to a maximum of two consecutive years.
(May be extended or reviewed based on availability and Committee requirements)

Appointment Principles:

- May be Technical or Stylistic Judges
- Technical candidates may be more readily available
- Long-term gender balance is a goal

Eligibility and Criteria:

- Must have previously volunteered at LCWS
- Preference given to individuals who have stewarded or served on Committee
- Prior judging experience not essential, but considered favourably
- AWAC qualification not essential, but considered favourably
- Solid understanding of the Australian Wine Show System desirable
- Solid knowledge of local wine styles

6.6 Associate Judge (AJ) – Three Positions

Term: One-year appointment, renewed up to a maximum of two consecutive years.
(May be extended or reviewed based on availability and Committee requirements)

Appointment Principles:

- May be Technical or Stylistic Judges
- Long-term gender balance is a goal
- May be appointed via reciprocal “swap” arrangements with other regional wine shows

As at February 2026, LCWS maintains reciprocal arrangements with:

- Adelaide Hills Wine Show
- Riverland Wine Show

These shows may assist in identifying suitable Associate Judges from their regions. The arrangement requires that judges from the Limestone Coast are available to judge at these other shows. LCWS Committee is to recommend judges using the same eligibility criteria we use to appoint AJ to our own show. This is not necessarily committee members only, and could include previous local associate judges considered with a desire to continue their judging career.

Eligibility and Criteria:

- Prior judging experience not essential
- AWAC qualification desirable, not essential
- Solid understanding of the Australian Wine Show System desirable
- Demonstrated interest in learning about the Limestone Coast region

6.7 International Judge (IJ) – One Position (optional, replaces a Judge position)

Term: One-year appointment

May be reappointed in the future, with a minimum three-year interval between appointments.

Appointment Principles:

- Long-term gender balance is a goal
- May be Technical or Stylistic

- Acts as an ambassador for the Limestone Coast region

Eligibility and Criteria:

- Experience at International, National, or Regional-level Australian wine shows
- Strong working proficiency in English
- Willingness to engage with the judging panel collaboratively
- May consider International wine professionals who are travelling to the region for other opportunities to share expenses.

Responsibilities:

- Select one wine from the show for a specialist award
- Establish and communicate criteria for that award

For any further details about the wine show, or to submit an expression of interest or application to judge, please write to wineshow@limestonecoastwine.com.au .