

2027

AA
AUSTRALIAN
HAIR FASHION
AWARDS



PRODUCT CATEGORY

BEST NEW COLOUR INNOVATION

RULES AND CRITERIA

AHFA Best New Colour Innovation

AT A GLANCE	Quick reference for entrants - full detail below.
Category type	Product Category
Key Dates	www.australianhairfashionawards.com
Who it's for	Australian or New Zealand colour brands that launched a new professional colour innovation during the Awards Period.
What you submit	A 5-minute step-by-step Judging Video (smartphone is acceptable), a Written Submission, product imagery, and a Statutory Declaration. NO physical product is required to be sent.
Judging weights	Step-by-step Judging Video 70% / Written Submission 30%
Entry fee	\$AUD 400 (ex GST) per entry
Awards Period	Product Categories: 18 September 2025 - 2 November 2026
Submit via	www.ahfa.awardsplatform.com
Question	Contact ahfa@mdivision.com.au

This category is awarded to the company with the best new innovation in or for professional colour launched in Australia or New Zealand during the Awards Period.

It's not limited to colour products only - it also encompasses any colour focused system or service which adds to or complements the colour experience and service in the salon by professionals not available for sale to clients. Eligible products are focused on and supportive of the discipline of colour, including (but not limited to) products, pre- or post-technical colour care, or tools related to the colour process.

It cannot include shampoos or conditioners unless there is innovative technology specifically designed to support a colour service in the salon.

Entered products are judged by a panel of local industry experts against a strict set of criteria including technical innovation, performance compared to product promise, ease of use, value proposition, and ingredient/process understanding.

Each entrant may submit more than one entry in this category, provided all entries meet the Category Rules & Criteria.

Entry into this category does not require you to submit any physical products. To successfully complete your submission, please follow the Submission Checklist below in detail.

Submission Checklist

Everything required to successfully submit your entry on the online AHFA Awards Platform. Your entry is judged on two components, weighted as follows:

- **Step-by-step Judging Video - 70% of the total score.**
- **Written Submission - 30% of the total score (split evenly across the five questions)**
 - Items 3, 4, and 5 below (product images and Statutory Declaration) are mandatory administrative requirements but do not carry a separate scoring weight.

A note for product entries vs tool entries.

This category accepts both colour PRODUCTS (including lighteners, bond technologies, toning systems, colour

treatments, pre- or post-technical colour care) and colour TOOLS (applicators, mixing/measuring systems, processing aids, or any other tool whose innovation specifically serves the colour process). The video structure and judging criteria below have been designed so that both types of entry can be evaluated fairly.

The most common pitfall in this category is product entrants under-investing in Section B (the Technology Deep-Dive) because the innovation is invisible - it is in the chemistry. Tool entrants benefit naturally from Section D (Application) because the engineering is visible. To compete fairly, product entrants must use Section B to explain the chemistry with the same clarity that a tool entrant would use to demonstrate engineering - voiceover, on-screen labels, simple diagrams, references to clinical or independent testing where available.

Throughout this document, where the brief refers to "technology" or "the chemistry / engineering," read this as your own innovation's relevant equivalent.

1. Step-by-step Judging Video (70% of total score)

One video, maximum 5 minutes, max 30MB, with clear voiceover. Filmed on a real model with real hair (not swatches alone).

This can be filmed on a smartphone, and the video must follow the structure below.

IMPORTANT - READ THIS BEFORE YOU FILM

Best New Colour Innovation is the only product category where judges do not physically receive your product. Your video IS the judging test - it is the only way our judging panel can evaluate your innovation, application process, and result.

A standard promotional / launch / brand reel cannot be scored, no matter how well-produced or how strong the underlying product is. Submitting a promo video is the single most common reason genuinely innovative products may not receive an appropriate or expected scoring result. Please read the structure below carefully and, when in doubt, film a purpose-built judging video for AHFA.

Smartphone videos are encouraged and welcomed.

Required video structure

#	Section	Length	What judges expect to see
A	Set-up - brand & problem	~20 seconds	Brand intro, product/tool name, and the colour problem this innovation solves. Keep this short and clear - the chemistry / engineering story goes in Section B, not here.

#	Section	Length	What judges expect to see
B	Technology Deep-Dive	~75 seconds	The heart of your entry - what is genuinely new about how this works. For a PRODUCT: walk us through the chemistry, the key ingredients or actives, the molecular mechanism, and what is novel about how the formulation behaves on hair. For a TOOL: walk us through the engineering, the mechanism of action, and how the tool changes the colour chemistry process. Use voiceover, on-screen labels, simple diagrams or animations as needed. This is where products demonstrate their innovation on equal footing to tools.
C	Before	~15 seconds	Clear shot of the model's starting hair: level, condition, and any prior colour history relevant to what your product/tool is about to do.
D	Application - end to end	~2 minutes	Show every meaningful step in order: mixing / measuring, application technique, processing time, rinsing, and any product-specific steps. Voiceover what you are doing AND why. Skip this and your entry will miss valuable points.
E	Result & The Wow	~30 seconds	The finished result on the model. Comment on tone, condition, longevity claims, and anything visibly different to a comparable existing product on the market.
F	Salon Impact	~40 seconds	How this product/tool changes the colourist's workflow, service time, retail story, or revenue opportunity. Judges score "value proposition" here.

How judges score your video

Each judging criterion is mapped directly to the section of your video where judges expect to find evidence:

Judging criterion	Where judges look for it in your video
Technical innovation	Section B (the Technology Deep-Dive) - what is genuinely new about the chemistry, delivery system, engineering or process.

Judging criterion	Where judges look for it in your video
Chemistry / Engineering integrity	Section B - clarity, depth and accuracy of the technical explanation. Substantiated claims (clinical data, before/after testing, third-party verification, peer-reviewed research) score higher than marketing assertions.
Performance vs product promise	Section C (before) compared to Section E (result), supported by what was claimed in Sections A and B.
Application clarity	Section D - does the application look workable in a real salon, do timings/steps match the claim, is the process demonstrable end-to-end?
Value proposition / salon impact	Section F - how it changes service time, revenue, retail story, or workflow.

NOT acceptable - your video will lose points if it is:

- A consumer or trade promotional reel.
- A montage of beauty shots / model walking / b-roll set to music with no application footage.
- Voiceover-only with no application footage.
- Edited so the actual application (Section D) is shown for less than 90 seconds total, or so the Technology Deep-Dive (Section B) is skipped or replaced with marketing copy.
- A founder / educator interview without the product being applied on a model.
- Filmed on swatches / mannequin only, with no model.

If your existing brand video happens to satisfy every section above end-to-end, you may submit it - but in our experience this is almost never the case. When in doubt, film a purpose-built judging video for AHFA. Does not have to be a professional video – a well thought out smartphone video that covers all the criteria is more than adequate as long as judges get a clear understanding of your product/tool.

2. Written Submission (30% of total score)

Answer all five questions in 500 words or less each. You will respond directly on the online Awards Platform under the "Submission Requirements" tab. Substantive, evidence-led answers score better than marketing copy.

a) Introduce your brand and this colour innovation.

Tell us who you or your brand is, the story behind this product/system, and why it was developed.

b) What is the chemistry or engineering behind this innovation that makes it different?

Be specific. For PRODUCT entries: explain the formulation, key actives, molecular mechanism, and what is genuinely new about how the chemistry behaves on hair. For TOOL entries: explain the engineering, mechanism of action, and how the tool interacts with the colour chemistry. Where relevant, cite clinical or independent test data, before/after testing results, third-party laboratory verification, peer-reviewed research, or comparative testing. Marketing claims without supporting evidence will score lower than substantiated claims.

c) How is it used, and what does it promise?

Detail the application process, expected results, and the target professional user or client concern it addresses.

d) What makes this innovation stand out in the colour category?

Compare it to comparable products or tools already on the market - be honest and specific about the comparison. Highlight standout performance, technical depth, or added value. Naming the comparable products/tools strengthens your answer.

e) How does this innovation improve or enhance the salon business?

Discuss how it supports revenue, efficiency, client satisfaction, service quality, or the overall colour experience. Quantify where you can.

3. High-res Product Image

1 x High Res JPEG image of the product/s (max file size 20MB per image). You may upload up to 3 photos.

4. Low-res Product Image

The same 1 x Low Res JPEG image of the product/s (max file size 5MB per image). You may upload up to 3 photos.

5. Statutory Declaration

Online form on the Awards Platform to confirm:

- All work is original, accurate, and meets category criteria.
- Permissions from models, photographers, and contributors are secured where relevant.

Your entry is not valid until this online form has been completed.

BEFORE YOU CLICK SUBMIT - final checklist

- Video is under 5 minutes and under 30MB.
- Video covers all six sections (A-F) in order, with Section B (Technology Deep-Dive) ≥ 60 seconds and Section D (Application) ≥ 90 seconds.
- Video is filmed on a real model with real hair (not swatches alone, not a mannequin).
- Voiceover is clear and explains both what you are doing AND why.
- All five Written Submission questions are answered, each within its 500-word limit.
- High-Res and Low-Res product images uploaded, named and sized correctly.
- Statutory Declaration completed online.
- Entry fee paid.

Please ensure you read this entire document which covers ALL the Rules and Criteria specific to this category.

Rules

1) Awards Period

The 2027 Australian Hair Fashion Awards (AHFA) Awards Periods are:

Premium, Creative, and Business Categories: 10 November 2025 - 18 January 2027

Product Categories: 18 September 2025 - 2 November 2026.

All images and/or video, and/or content submitted/referenced in your entry **MUST** have been created during the above applicable Awards Period.

2) Launch Requirement

Product Category Entrants must have launched their entered Product/s in Australia or New Zealand respectively during the Awards Period.

The Australian Hair Fashion Awards (AHFA) is honoured to welcome New Zealand brands to compete within the Product Categories.

If you are unsure about whether you meet the criteria above - please enquire with the AHFA Awards team.

3) Submitting Your Entry

Entry into AHFA Best New Colour Innovation is digital only. Entrants are not required to print and submit their physical entry. Entrants are also not required to send in their physical colour samples.



All entries into the 2027 Australian Hair Fashion Awards must be submitted through our AHFA Awards Platform, available via www.australianhairfashionawards.com.

Please reference the Submission Checklist above for a complete list of what is required to successfully complete your entry.

4) Statutory Declaration

You will find this section as a simple online form pre-loaded on the Awards Platform (no printing required). As you go through the process of completing your entry, you will be directed to sign and submit it online. You will be confirming that all work, details, and materials submitted as part of your entry are your original work and are true and accurate, and meet the specific criteria for the category/s you are entering. Where relevant, it also includes your confirmation that you have the appropriate permissions from models, photographers and any other suppliers that have contributed to your entry.

Please note that your entry is not valid until this online form has been completed.

5) Judging

For Best New Colour Innovation specifically: judges do not physically test your product. They watch your Step-by-step Judging Video and read your Written Submission. The quality and clarity of your video and answers is therefore decisive - see the Submission Checklist for the required structure.

Final scoring is calculated as: Step-by-step Judging Video 70% + Written Submission 30%.

This category is judged by a select panel of local respected professionals who are best suited to Judge the Product Categories. Judges score independently in their own time, with all scores entered directly through Award Force, a globally recognised, third-party awards software platform used by competitions across many industries internationally. A judge's score cannot be overridden by anyone once they have entered it into the platform.

6) Finalists Announcement

For details on the Finalist Announcement, please see information at: www.australianhairfashionawards.com

7) Requirements for Finalists and Winners

Across all internal and external communications, publicity, marketing, and PR, AHFA finalists and winners must include the year of their award alongside their title.

E.g. Winner name - 2027 AHFA Best New Colour Innovation.

This rule is set to respect all winners and finalists.

8) Copy of Your Work

Please note that all assets, content, and information submitted become property of The Australian Hair Fashion Awards / MDivision Pty Ltd. Entrants are advised to keep personal copies of their entries.

9) Entry Fees

Entry into the Best New Colour Innovation Category is \$AUD 400 (ex GST) per entry, payable upon successfully submitting your entry on the AHFA Awards Platform.

10) Entry Deadline

Please refer to www.australianhairfashionawards.com for the entry deadlines.

In rare cases, a deadline extension may be considered - please apply by emailing with your reason for extension



clearly stipulated. Please note that extensions can be difficult to grant due to judging timelines already being confirmed with our busy Judging Panel. If an extension is possible, it is unlikely to be more than a few days extra. Please send your email to: ahfa@mdivision.com.au

The AHFA reserves the right to make adjustments to the above Rules and Criteria if they deem it to be in the best interest of entrants and the integrity that these Awards stand for. We will make all reasonable attempts to inform you of these changes.

For any further general information or questions regarding entry into this category, please email ahfa@mdivision.com.au.