



IMAA'S PITCH-CHELLA 2026 OPENS ENTRIES FOR AUSTRALIA'S NEXT GENERATION OF MEDIA TALENT

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Independent Media Agencies Australia (IMAA), the national industry body representing independent media agencies, has launched its 2026 'Pitch-Chella' program, as up-and-coming agency talent prepare to participate in the popular industry event.

The 'Pitch-Chella' initiative, now in its third year, is an opportunity for emerging indie agency talent to sharpen their pitching skills, collaborating with fellow indie agency peers to devise a creative, innovative and strategic campaign brief for a chosen charity.

The industry-leading program has attracted nearly 170 participants since its inception, representing independent media agencies from across the country.

Applications are now open for this year's Pitch-Chella program, which is proudly supported by gold sponsor Audience360 and supporting sponsors Are Media, Channel Factory, News Australia, Meta, Microsoft Advertising, Snapchat and Taboola, with participants set to prepare a written brief for Australian anti-bullying charity, [You Can Sit With Me](#).

The pro-inclusion charity and campaign fosters kindness and belonging in schools, empowering children to combat loneliness by offering friendship to their peers. It has been recognised by the Australian Government as a tier-one prevention program, through its public advocacy efforts, education programs and literacy support to close the reading gap, and its "safe spaces" initiatives for outside school, in the playground and in the classroom.

Sophie Sparks, Founder and CEO of You Can Sit With Me said: "We are incredibly grateful to be part of this year's Pitch-Chella program and excited to see the passion, creativity and fresh thinking the program's emerging industry talent will bring to our mission.

"At You Can Sit With Me, we believe kindness and inclusion can genuinely change lives, and having the support of the IMAA community helps us continue creating safe spaces where every child feels seen, valued and connected. We can't wait to see the inspiring ideas that come from this collaboration."

This year's Pitch-Chella teams must prepare a written brief for You Can Sit With Me, with submissions assessed on several criteria, including industry relevance, ability to address the objective and problem, insight and strategy, and idea and execution.

The top eight teams will then be selected to deliver a live pitch before a panel of industry judges, including sponsor and Audience 360 Managing Director, Jenny Parkes, TrinityP3 Business Director and Global Media Lead, Stephen Wright, Orand Founder, Adam Hickey, and Sophie Sparks, Founder and CEO of You Can Sit With Me.

Winners will be announced at an award ceremony at Sydney's Beresford Hotel on Thursday, July 30.

The 2026 Pitch-Chella initiative is spearheaded by a steering committee of independent agency leaders, including Lisa Blackshaw (Co.geney) and Taylor Fielding (TFM Digital), along with the IMAA team.

IMAA Pitch-Chella Steering Committee member and TFM Digital CEO, Taylor Fielding, said: "Pitch-Chella is all about showcasing the incredible talent we have within Australia's indie agency sector. It offers a dynamic platform for budding professionals to team up, enhance their pitching skills and share knowledge, as well as providing support to our nominated charity.

"Every year, we continue to be impressed by the calibre of submissions and ideas from our emerging industry talent. They have demonstrated fresh perspectives and bold ideas well beyond their experience; it just shows that the future of the industry is in good hands."



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IMAA Pitch-Chella Steering Committee member, Leadership Team member and Co.gency Senior Account Manager, Lisa Blackshaw, added: "This year, we're looking for participants to wow us with their submissions – to create work that challenges us, that excites us, and that inspires us. We want teams to be innovative with their cross-channel thinking, from traditional and digital media to unexpected activations and social-led storytelling. We can't wait to see what they come up with."

Pitch-Chella is specifically designed for IMAA agency members who have been in the industry for five years or less.

Applications for the 2026 program close on Wednesday, May 20. Finalists will be announced on Friday, June 26, while virtual pitches will take place on Tuesday, July 14.

For more information or to apply, [click here](#).

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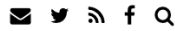
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