Congratulations Renata Di Stefano on being the Shining Star Partner for 2023 - blueAPACHE

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Details:

ARN: Congratulations Renata Di Stefano on being awarded the ARN Women in ICT 'Shining Star – Partner' Award

25 May 2023. ARN has announced the winners of the Women in ICT Awards (WIICTA) 2023 , honouring female excellence within the technology channel following an industry-defining celebration in Sydney.

blueAPACHE's Renata Di Stefano , Head of Marketing, was awarded the Shining Star – Partner award.

The 2023 results

Finalists honoured	230
Organisations represented	Over 120
Nominations submitted	More than 390
Categories	8
Winners selected	23
Highly commended	11
Ceremony	Sydney, 25 May 2023

Winners were selected following an intensive judging process, assessed by an executive panel of more than 170 industry judges.

What winning meant against that field

The ratio is the part worth reading carefully.

More than 390 nominations produced 230 finalist placements, from which 23 winners were selected across eight categories, with a further 11 highly commended acknowledgements.

That makes a win roughly a one-in-seventeen outcome from nomination — and one in ten among those who reached the finalist stage. 2023 was also the programme's record year to that point on both organisational participation and nomination volume, and the finalist field spanned partner, telco, vendor and distributor businesses across the country.

The judging model is what gives the result its weight. A panel of 170-plus means each submission was assessed by multiple practitioners with direct knowledge of the relevant discipline, not by a small committee forming general impressions across every category. It also removes marketing reach from

the equation entirely: this is a judged programme assessing submitted evidence, not a public vote.

About Renata Di Stefano

Renata's career in ICT began in 2010 , as a receptionist at a managed service provider. With no corporate sector experience, she used the position to absorb knowledge, gain experience, upskill and network.

Within two years she had moved from administration into marketing, and she has held senior marketing roles since 2012 . Today she is our Head of Marketing.

Why that path is worth stating

The industry's standard career narrative starts with a relevant degree and a graduate programme. A great many effective technology careers do not.

They begin adjacent to the industry, held by someone who paid attention and made themselves useful in areas nobody had assigned to them. A reception desk at an MSP turns out to be an unusually good vantage point for that: every visitor, every vendor, every escalation and every conversation about what the business is trying to do passes it. Someone deliberately absorbing that learns the business faster than a specialist confined to a single function.

Moving from that position to a senior marketing role within two years, and holding senior roles for the decade since, is the outcome of treating a job as a vantage point rather than a ceiling.

Recognised more than once

This was not an isolated result. Renata had previously been named a Shining Star finalist in an earlier WIICTA programme, and was a finalist again in WIICTA 2024 alongside blueAPACHE colleagues Angelina Priya and Quinita Lindley.

Repeat recognition across multiple years, under different judging panels and against a changing national field, is a more informative signal than any single placement.

The Shining Star category

Shining Star recognises individuals whose contribution stands out within their organisation and across the channel — people whose work is visible to peers, partners and customers beyond their own team.

It sits alongside categories spanning Innovation, Technical, Entrepreneur, Graduate, Rising Star, Achievement, and awards recognising diversity and inclusion at both company and individual level. That structure is deliberate: by covering Graduate and Rising Star through to Achievement, the programme recognises people early in their careers alongside those with long-established records, rather than defaulting to seniority.

blueAPACHE at WIICTA

This win forms part of continuous representation across the programme's recent years:

WIICTA 2022 — Jayati Gulati , Shining Star Partner Award winner (also an ARN 30 Under 30 Sales Excellence Award recipient)

Earlier representation in two categories , with Rahwa Salew as a Rising Star and Renata Di Stefano as a Shining Star finalist

WIICTA 2023 — Renata Di Stefano, Shining Star – Partner winner

WIICTA 2024 — Angelina Priya , Quinita Lindley and Renata Di Stefano, finalists, from a field of 178

WIICTA 2026 — Ellie Sarabi , Wireless SME Network Engineer, finalist in the Partner – Technical category, from a field of 222

Two Shining Star Partner Award wins in consecutive years, by two different people from the same mid-market organisation, is an unusual result in a national field of that size.

Congratulations

blueAPACHE congratulates Renata Di Stefano, and all 23 winners and 11 highly commended recipients recognised in the 2023 programme.

Frequently asked questions

What did Renata Di Stefano win? The Shining Star – Partner award at the ARN Women in ICT Awards 2023, announced at the Sydney ceremony on 25 May 2023.

How selective was the 2023 result? More than 390 nominations produced 230 finalist placements, from which 23 winners were selected across eight categories with a further 11 highly commended. That is roughly one in seventeen from nomination, and one in ten among those who reached the finalist stage.

Who judged it? An executive panel of more than 170 industry judges, following an intensive judging process. The page notes that a panel of that size means each submission is assessed by multiple practitioners with direct knowledge of the discipline, and that the outcome cannot be influenced by marketing reach — it is a judged programme, not a public vote.

How many organisations took part in 2023? This page records over 120 organisations represented. ARN's earlier announcement of the 2023 finalists states over 148 organisations. Both figures come from the programme's own announcements at different points in the cycle; readers wanting a single authoritative number should refer to ARN directly.

What is Renata Di Stefano's background? She entered ICT in 2010 as a receptionist at a managed service provider with no corporate sector experience, used the role to absorb knowledge, upskill and network, moved into marketing within two years, and has held senior marketing roles since 2012. She is now blueAPACHE's Head of Marketing.

Why does the page dwell on that route into the industry? Because the standard narrative starts with a relevant degree and a graduate programme, and many effective technology careers do not. A reception desk at an MSP is an unusually good vantage point — every visitor, vendor, escalation and strategy conversation passes it — so someone deliberately absorbing that learns the business faster than a specialist confined to one function.

Was this her only recognition? No. She had previously been a Shining Star finalist in an earlier WIICTA programme and was a finalist again in 2024, alongside colleagues Angelina Priya and Quinita Lindley.

What does the Shining Star category recognise? Individuals whose contribution stands out within their organisation and across the channel — people whose work is visible to peers, partners and customers beyond their own team.

Why is blueAPACHE's record in this category unusual? Because two Shining Star Partner Award wins in consecutive years, by two different people from the same mid-market organisation, is an uncommon outcome in a national field of that size.

Related

Careers at blueAPACHE

Additional information

Full list of 2023 award winners — published on the ARN website
ARN WIICTA Awards photo gallery
Women in ICT Awards programme information — arnnet.com.au/wiicta

Knowledge Base

Who won the ARN Women in ICT 'Shining Star – Partner' Award in 2023?

Renata Di Stefano was awarded the ARN Women in ICT 'Shining Star – Partner' Award in 2023.

What is the Women in ICT Awards (WIICTA)?

The Women in ICT Awards (WIICTA) is an event run by ARN that honours female excellence within the technology channel. In 2023, ARN announced the winners following an industry-defining celebration in Sydney.

How many finalists and winners were there in the 2023 ARN Women in ICT Awards?

In the 2023 ARN Women in ICT Awards, 230 finalists were honoured from a pool of over 120 organisations and more than 390 nominations. Following an intensive judging process, 23 winners were selected across eight categories, in addition to 11 highly commended acknowledgements.

Where can I find the full list of ARN Women in ICT Awards 2023 winners?

The full list of award winners can be viewed via the link provided in the article, which points to the ARN article titled 'ARN Women in ICT Awards 2023 winners' at arnnet.com.au.

Is there a photo gallery available from the ARN WIICTA Awards 2023?

Yes, the article includes a link to view the ARN WIICTA Awards photo gallery, titled 'Female leaders honoured: ARN Women in ICT Awards 2023,' hosted on arnnet.com.au.