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Media Release

For immediate release

Great Vibes as 2022 Audi Foundation – CEF Alumni Award Winners Announced

Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEF) announced the winners of the 2022 Audi Foundation – CEF Alumni Awards during an in person cocktail event at Vibe Hotel Canberra on Saturday 22nd October. After two years of online events due to the pandemic, the excitement to celebrate the achievements of regional youth was clear with 55 nominations and more than 140 people in attendance.

CEF Alumni Program Manager Emma Burns says the response to this year's event was overwhelming. *"We are humbled that the opportunity we provide to recognise our past and present recipients has been so well received. Volunteers, nominees, family and friends were so excited to attend, we had to close RSVPs to the event. This response shows just how valued our rural and regional youth are by our communities."*

Audi Foundation – CEF Alumnus of the Year

Elise Prior, Kapunda High School Centenary Foundation

Audi Foundation – CEF Community Alumni Champion

Katie Jayne O'Brien, Braidwood & District Education Foundation

Audi Foundation – CEF Young Achiever

James Anderson, Country Education Foundation of Grenfell

Audi Foundation – CEF Launching Stars

*Corrin Paepke, Kangaroo Island Education Fund AND
Jayden Reid, Country Education Foundation of Central Australia*

Audi Foundation – CEF Rising Star

Ayisha Fearnside, Kangaroo Island Education Fund

This year's recipients have been supported by CEF Local Foundations from across the country, and represent the best of our regional youth pursuing education and careers across a range of industries, from trades to teaching and psychological science. This highlights the breadth of post-school educational endeavours and the contributions our young people make to our communities.

Elise Prior follows in the footsteps of fellow Kapunda High School Centenary Foundation recipient Kim Becker as the Alumnus of the Year. She says: *"The calibre of winners and nominees, both past and present, is a testament to what an Australia that has fully achieved educational equity for rural youth would look like. It is a tangible demonstration of how important the Country Education Foundation's work to achieve that equity is."*

Elise was supported from 2016 to 2020 to undertake a Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) at the University of Adelaide. She graduated with a 7.0/7.0 Grade Point Average, is the published co-author of two peer-reviewed journal articles, a recipient of the 2019 Adelaide Graduate Award and was selected to deliver the Valedictorian address for her graduating cohort. Having completed her Honours, she is now working as a Data Analyst at the Australian Bureau of Statistics, within the Graduate Development Program.

CEF have partnered with the Audi Foundation since their establishment in 2017, supporting rural and regional youth to access post-school education and are thrilled to have the foundation sponsoring the Alumni Awards as they celebrate five years of operations.

Chairman of Audi Foundation, Paul Sansom is a true advocate for the work of CEF: *"The real, tangible results we see through our work with CEF, made it an easy decision to support the wonderful work of Country Education Foundation. Having seen the incredible achievements of tonight's winners and the passion they inspire in their communities. We are proud to support CEF and the alumni awards."*

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- 2022 Alumni Award winners and CEF Alumni Program Manager Emma Burns are available for interview opportunities.