

Media Release

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UTAS PhD researcher Michelle Balasso nominated for prestigious global Blue Sky award

University of Tasmania PhD researcher Michelle Balasso has been nominated for the [*Blue Sky Young Researchers Innovation Award*](#).

The awards are held every two years and recognise excellence in forest industry research from around the world. Entries are judged by an international panel of researchers, with the three best entrants given the opportunity to present their research to industry leaders at the International Council of Forests and Paper Association's (ICFPA) CEO Global Roundtable scheduled to be held virtually later this year.

Michelle is a PhD researcher in the ARC Training Centre for Forest Value at the University of Tasmania and her *Blue Sky Award* nomination is for research into how plantation wood can be utilised to develop new or higher value product streams.

The Chief Executive of AFPA Ross Hampton said, "Michelle's work is a clear example of the value of research and development to Australia's forest products industry and the many jobs it supports."

"Her research shows us the growing role that Australia's renewable wood-fibre resources will play in almost all aspects of our lives. It's important work and I congratulate her on her *Blue Sky Award* nomination."

"I'd like to say thank you for my nomination, and thanks also to the ARC Training Centre for Forest Value for supporting my research," Michelle said.

"We can be far more productive with Australia's forests, and my research brings us one step closer to unlock this vast potential."

The Director of the ARC Training Centre for Forest Value, Assoc. Prof. Julianne O'Reilly-Wapstra said "Michelle's research explores options for diversifying the products from plantations and is an excellent example of high-quality, industry-focused research. I congratulate her on her nomination."

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