



MEDIA RELEASE

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Blue Mountains local recognised as NZ Geographic Young Photographer of the Year

Blue Mountains local and Scenic World employee Ben Sanford has been recognised as the New Zealand Geographic Young Photographer of the Year, rising above a fiercely competitive field of 3,800 entries from right across the globe.

Going head-to-head with 65 talented finalists, Sanford was commended for his image of a man scaling Sebastopol Ridge in Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park, captured during a month long climbing trip to the NZ Alps in 2016.

To capture the image of climber Brad Cameron at dawn, Sanford perched anchorless on a step cut into the ice, as part of a complex balancing act.

"In scenarios with high risk sports, I choose to work around my subjects rather than asking them to do particular actions," he said. "I find this method safer and more effective to capture authentic shots."

NZ Geographic publisher James Frankham said Sanford's portfolio of images caught the eye of the judges for his clarity of intent, the careful framing of each shot, and the light and drama in each image.

"Ben Sanford is not from around here. He's from across the ditch — remarkable for its flatness and brownness and hotness. So, when Sanford travels to New Zealand he does so with purpose," he said. "Specifically, he's after steepness, whiteness and coldness. Climbing gives him access to locations and perspectives few of his neighbours have witnessed — and few New Zealanders, too," he said.

The award marks the third major milestone for the 20-year-old alpine photographer this year, alongside the New Zealand Alpine Club's 2017 Photography Competition Youth Champion Award, and Capture Magazine's Top Emerging Australian Photographer Award (Sport Category).

It also signals a bright future ahead for the young adventure photographer, alongside a suite of other achievements such as being featured in high profile publications including National Geographic Adventure, Rock and Ice Magazine, Vertical Life, The Climber, ROCK and The Cable Magazine to name a few.

Scenic World's Managing Director Anthea Hammon commended Sanford on his outstanding achievements which are a testament to his tenacity and enthusiasm as a Scenic World employee.

"Ben's talents are clearly displayed in his stunning images, and we're proud to have the opportunity to play a small role in what will be an incredibly bright future ahead," she said.

Keep an eye on Ben's shining talents on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#), and view his website at bensanfordmedia.com.au

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