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Canberra duo claim HIA award as building costs sharpen focus on quality

With building costs placing pressure on household budgets, confidence in the quality of a finished home matters to Canberra homeowners.

For Dimitri Chronopoulos and Tim Heaton, founders of Fine Building Co, that confidence is earned through quality workmanship and attention to detail at every stage of construction.

Less than 18 months after launching, the Canberra company has won Custom Built Home in the \$750,000–\$1 million category at the 2026 HIA ACT/Southern NSW Housing Awards. It was also named a finalist for New Kitchen up to \$75,000.

The recognition comes during a challenging period for the region's residential building industry. The Housing Industry Association has identified ongoing cost pressures across the ACT and Southern NSW, while Master Builders Australia reported in August 2026 that home-building costs nationally were more than 50 per cent above pre-pandemic levels.

The ACT Government has also highlighted stronger oversight, preventing defects and improving consumer confidence as priorities for building certification reform. Against this backdrop, Fine Building Co's founders place particular importance on the care and workmanship behind each home.

For homeowners comparing builders, practical questions include what is included in the price, who will oversee the work and how quality will be checked throughout construction.

Chronopoulos and Heaton established Fine Building Co in May 2025 after a decade spent project managing builds. That experience inspired them to create a business of their own, with a shared ambition to become a leading Canberra builder and help clients realise their dream homes.

"Attention to detail and quality workmanship are central to how we build, and delivering on time is a priority. We want the care we put into every stage of a project to show in the finished home," Dimitri says.

"When someone trusts us to build their home, they're investing in something they'll live with for years. We take that responsibility seriously. The materials, the workmanship and the care taken throughout construction all contribute to the finished home, and we want our clients to feel proud of that investment."

That commitment extends to the work clients may never see. For the founders, maintaining standards throughout construction is part of honouring the trust placed in them, and cutting corners is simply not an option.

Held at Australian Parliament House on Friday 23 October, the awards celebrated the projects, people and businesses behind the region's residential building industry. Fine Building Co described its win against a strong field of homes as "very surreal" and a reflection of the team's hard work and dedication.

"Building a home is a big commitment, and we understand how much trust our clients place in us. We're fortunate to work with a team and subcontractors who care as much about the result as we do.

This award is a credit to everyone who has helped us deliver on that trust," Tim says.

Visit the [HIA website](#) for more information about the award categories and recipients.

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