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Why Geotron is our Small Business of the Year

April 2023

# Why Geotron is our Small Business of the Year



*Two issues – cost and carbon – loom largest for the construction industry in 2023. Consult Australia’s Small Business of the Year, Geotron, has developed a solution to help the industry tackle both.*

Geotron gained several rounds of applause at [Consult Australia Awards](#) in March. The boutique structural engineering company was named Small Firm of the Year. Geotron was also joint winner, alongside Ediom, in the Small Business Excellence category and was highly commended in the Technological Innovation category.

The Geotron team was “blown away” by the accolades, says Founder and Director Peter Geoghegan. “To achieve a highly commended in the technology category, given we were up against such large companies, was a very special achievement.”



## Smart solution to design and construction silos

Peter established Geotron in 2015 from a home office and today leads a 10-strong team working on an impressive portfolio of projects, from school infrastructure to sport facilities, mid-rise residential to industrial facilities.

“Our goals are simple: to serve with excellence, to deliver innovative yet practical solutions, and to collaborate with the industry,” Peter says.

One client, Police Citizens Youth Club, has 66 sites throughout New South Wales and has engaged Geotron to design all its building structures over the past six years, including a [new \\$23 million sports facility in Wagga Wagga](#).

Peter is also the mastermind behind Gmetrik, a digital web-based platform that aims to dismantle “silos” and address the “disconnect” that plagues projects at the early procurement stage. Live data from the supply chain is fed into Gmetrik’s user-friendly collaborative platform so engineers, architects, project managers and clients can make design decisions based on real-time costs.

“As structural engineers, we develop concepts in consultation with architects, but we often don’t have real-time access to the cost of each material. There is nothing worse (for the client) than having to go back to the drawing board because a design is over budget.”

In a volatile market, the consequences for project viability are clear. But Peter was also keen to address another challenge – the embodied carbon of materials.

“I’m no professor in climate change but I do know we’ve got to do something about carbon. Without data about the carbon impact of materials, we can’t make informed decisions about design.”

## **Saving time, money and carbon**

Peter is passionate about his profession. “My dad was a carpenter; one brother is a builder, another two brothers are engineers, but my sister is a food techie. I love the game. But I am also frustrated about the waste of time and money, material waste and carbon footprint.”

After Peter workshopped his idea for Gmetrik and produced a ‘wireframe’, he began to work with Software Development Studio from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). He consulted widely with the industry to develop a proof of concept. “The collaborations we’ve established – with universities, other engineers, architects, builders and product manufacturers – have helped us take Gmetrik to the next level.”

With a grant from the NSW Government Geotron could engage [UTS Rapido](#), an advanced technology development unit that helps organisations to deliver software solutions. A first phase minimal viable product (MVP) has since been developed.

“Phase two is to get the product to market. That’s the goal for the year. It’s a big process and we are looking for venture capital and other funding opportunities to help. We want to collaborate to create new business opportunities for our industry.”

It’s an audacious ambition – one which Peter nurtures alongside his growing business. “I don’t get a lot of sleep,” he laughs.

“Geotron started humbly, and we have a long way to go. But my goal was always to build a dedicated team and to work on high-quality projects. We’re doing that. And each of us is only on the planet once, so we might as well make the most of it and look after future generations.”

*This is the first in a series of profile stories about the Consult Australia Awards winners. Next up? Consult Australia’s Medium Business of the Year, Umwelt.*

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**Consult Australia National Office**

Level 6, 50 Clarence Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Postal Address

GPO Box

56 Sydney NSW 2001

**P. 02 8252 6700**

**E. [info@consultaaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@consultaaustralia.com.au)**

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