



North Coast News & Views No. 172

\$7.5 Million To Encourage Workers To Choose Tourism

The Federal Government is helping to rebuild Australia's tourism workforce by offering State and Territory governments and tourism bodies a share of \$7.5 million for programs to attract workers to the visitor economy. The Choose Tourism program is among a number of measures, working in partnership with industry, aimed at helping to address workforce shortages across the tourism sector.

Grants under the program will enable the states and territories to develop new programs and campaigns, extend existing activities to attract new workers, and ensure they have the skills to deliver quality tourism experiences for our visitors. Minister for Trade and Tourism Don Farrell said Tourism Ministers around the country are united in their commitment to return Australia's visitor economy to pre-COVID expenditure levels of \$166 billion by 2024, and grow it to \$230 billion by 2030.

[Read media release.](#)

Reflections Launches Reconciliation Action Plan

Reflections Holiday Parks recently launched its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to serve as a powerful tool in building meaningful cultural connections on Country toward Reconciliation.

Reflections, a Crown Land Manager which cares for 43 nature reserves and operates 36 holiday parks on 12 Aboriginal nations in NSW, has developed the RAP.

Under the RAP, Reflections will develop opportunities for cultural expression and celebration while delivering social, cultural, and economic outcomes for Aboriginal communities.

RAP outcomes will include partnerships with Aboriginal communities and Native Title Holders to create commercial and entrepreneurial opportunities.

[Read media release.](#)



Bonza Announces New Gold Coast Base

Bonza has just announced that Gold Coast Airport will be its third base, with flights to go on sale shortly to Albury, Bundaberg, Cairns, Gladstone, Mackay, Mildura, Rockhampton, Townsville, the Whitsunday Coast, Melbourne Avalon and Melbourne Tullamarine.

This next phase of Bonza's growth will add 70 weekly flights and almost 700,000 additional seats annually into and out of Gold Coast Airport. The new routes will open up new markets for the Northern Rivers and add capacity to the important Melbourne market.

[Find more information here.](#)

Industry Insights

Strong Growth In Tourism Jobs

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has recently released the Quarterly Tourism Labour Force Statistics.

The ABS report showed that growth in tourism-filled jobs was consistent with solid domestic tourism demand and the progressive recovery in international travel to Australia in the March quarter 2023.

In the March quarter 2023:

- there were 727,200 filled tourism jobs
- tourism job numbers increased by 43,700 filled jobs (6%) from the December quarter 2022 - a sixth consecutive quarterly increase
- 177,200 (32%) more filled jobs than a year ago (at March 2022), the highest number since March 2020 (the start of the pandemic)
- tourism jobs represented 1 in 21 filled jobs in the economy (or 4.8%).

Domestic tourism demand appears to be softening, challenged by inflation-related price increases and lower household savings rates. International tourism continues to recover. The rebound in international education is likely to see a further increase in filled jobs supporting the education and training sector.

The rising number of international students and working holiday makers is also likely to see an increase in workforce availability for the hospitality and retail segments of the visitor economy. [Find more information here.](#)

Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts

The [Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts 2021-22](#) highlight how Australia's 76 tourism regions began their recovery from the severe disruption caused by COVID-19.

The national visitor economy recovery was largely led by domestic tourism. The Regional Tourism Satellite Accounts 2021-22 show that 49 of the 76 tourism regions had recovered to pre-pandemic levels by the end of the reference period.

Workforce And Skills Action Plan Available

The 'Visitor Economy Workforce and Skills Interim Action Plan 2023-24' has been developed to help build workforce capability in the visitor economy, a priority under the THRIVE 2030 strategy.

The plan reflects activities of the Australian Government, State and Territory Governments, as well as industry associations. It was also informed by the Tourism Jobs Summit, led by Minister for Trade and Tourism, Senator the Hon Don Farrell. [Find more information here.](#)

Around The Region

Port Macquarie-Hastings Destination Website Wins GOLD In Melbourne Design Awards

After a major redevelopment last year in line with new destination branding, the Port Macquarie-Hastings team are excited to share that their [destination website](#) has won GOLD in the [Better Futures Melbourne Design Awards 2023](#) in the 'Traveltech' category. The team worked closely with web developers, Roam, and Destination Marketing Store to create this interactive and vibrant site.

Grafton Waterfront Precinct Opens

The revitalised [Grafton Waterfront Precinct](#) is now open to the public. Thanks to a \$6.5 million Federal Government grant, a meandering three-metre -wide shared user path now stretches for 700 metres along the north bank of the Clarence River at Grafton, with four fully accessible entry points, beautification throughout, and plenty of shade, seating and lighting to encourage people to use the riverside landscape.

NSW Accommodation Awards for Excellence

At the 2023 NSW Accommodation Awards for Excellence held in Sydney last week [Oaks Casuarina Santai Resort](#) was Highly Commended in The Award of Excellence - Redeveloped/Refurbished Hotel of the Year 2023 and was also a finalist in the Award of Excellence for the Regional Superior Property. In the People's Award for Rooms Division Talent of the Year 2023, team member Monique Brown was also a finalist.

[Crystalbrook Byron](#) was Highly Commended in the Regional Deluxe Hotel of the Year Category also Highly Commended for Best Environmental/Sustainability Practices with Crystalbrook's Pascale Rocher winning the Marketing Talent of the Year Award. Human Resources Talent of the Year went to Vanessa Thompson of Crystalbrook Byron. Congratulations to Pascale and Vanessa.



As the North Coast continues to punch above its weight, [Elements of Byron](#) was Highly Commended in the Regional Superior Hotel of the year category.

Well done to all. [Find all winners here.](#)

Sourdough Business Women Presents Sunset Sips

Sunset Sips is an event to welcome in Spring, celebrate incredible local businesses and come together as a business community. This Flagship Event is a community-wide occasion, open to all genders.

Ticket includes:

- Two drinks (alcoholic or non-alcoholic)
- Delicious nourish bowl, oysters and a special dessert
- Live entertainment
- Creative activity
- Gift bag

And the important opportunity to make business connections and new networks. [Book your ticket here.](#)

Industry Development And Other Opportunities

Business With Nature - Regen 101 Workshop Series

This introductory 'Business with Nature' workshop is part of the Spring Regen 101 series and will give professionals working in different sectors the opportunity to learn from successful nature-based investment projects. It's about putting Nature at the heart of decision-making and supporting those frontline workers to do their amazing work, from the field to policy forum. [Register to attend here.](#)

FREE Innovative Digital Marketing Strategy Training

If you are struggling to keep up with the must-knows in digital trends? And are keen to know what works and doesn't in the tourism digital marketing landscape? [Tourism Tribe](#) may have the answers in this FREE interactive online training session.

Where? Online on Zoom

When? 11am, Wednesday 23rd of August

What? 30min learning + 30min Q&A

How: [Save your seat now](#)

In this interactive session, you'll learn about:

- influencer marketing
- maximising customer engagements
- leveraging your analytics to make better decisions

Become An Aussie Tour Guide

The Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) is calling on travel enthusiasts to help drive the supply of tour guides. Individuals are being encouraged to complete a short survey to gain a quiz 'score'. Once the survey is complete, information on different training options including how to become a tour guide will be emailed. [Find more information here.](#)

Tourism Australia Industry Webinar

Tourism Australia's next industry webinar will be held at 11am, Friday 25 August when the Trade and Tourism Minister, Senator the Hon Don Farrell will join the session. [Register to attend the August webinar here.](#)

Update To TA's Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Reference Guide

Tourism Australia has updated its [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Guide](#). The guide aims to provide easily accessible and informative resources for learning and writing about Australia's Indigenous cultures and tourism experiences.

Free Tools And Templates For Businesses

The new Tools and Templates finder on business.gov.au makes it easier than ever to access free and practical resources for businesses at all stages. Whether you're trying to put together a business plan, check in on your financial health, or create an emergency management plan, there is a tool to help! [Find more information here.](#)

Funding And Other Opportunities

NSW Funds Events For Old And Young

The NSW State Government has opened up two new event funding grants - one aimed at seniors and the other at the state's youth.

The \$200,000 NSW [Seniors Festival Grants Program](#) will offer grants of up to \$10,000 to help organisations host engaging activities for people aged 60 and over, with the goal of helping them stay active and connected within their communities. **Closes 28 August 2023.**

Additionally, the state government's [Holiday Break Program](#) allows regional councils and eligible not-for-profit organisations to apply for funding to deliver events and activities for young people during the upcoming spring school holidays. **Closes 13 August 2023.**

[Community Infrastructure Grants](#)

Community organisations across the state are encouraged to apply for funding under the NSW Government's Infrastructure Grants program to enhance local services and improve residents' quality of life. The \$12.5 million program will welcome applications for arts, sports, community infrastructure and disaster preparedness projects to build or upgrade facilities. **Closes 21 August 2023.**

[Wine Tourism And Cellar Door Grants](#)

Applications for the fifth round of the Wine Tourism and Cellar Door Grants program is now open for wine and cider producers. The program provides funding of up to \$100,000 to wineries and cellar door operators who grow and promote agri-tourism, largely in regional Australia. **Closes 30 September 2023.**

[Kerbside Charging Grants For EVs](#)

The NSW Government is making \$3 million available for the installation of at least 500 electric vehicle (EV) chargers at kerbside locations. Councils and charge point operators can apply for co-funding to install EV chargers.

This is the first funding round for chargers at kerbside locations in NSW, focusing on 26 eligible local government areas that have the least access to off-street parking based on population density and housing type. **Closes 17 November 2023.**

North Coast Product & Experience Development

[Contained at Nimbin](#)

Contained in Nimbin Accommodation comprises two private and fully self-contained cottages that are located just a short 3-minute drive to the historic and unique village of Nimbin. The cottages are situated on a 10-acre self-sufficient permaculture farm, on the banks of the pristine Goolmangar Creek.

Contained at Nimbin won gold at last week's North Coast Tourism Awards as Outstanding Tourism Start Up and Outstanding Accommodation Experience that culminated in this new business being named the North Coast's 2023 Tourism Business of the Year. An amazing result!

[Three Blue Ducks @ The Lodge Bellingen](#)

Three Blue Ducks, located at The Lodge in Bellingen, is set on 16 acres of lush, manicured gardens. With uninterrupted mountain views of Dorrigo National Park, it offers a beautiful backdrop for a Ducks feast, wedding, or event.

[Pedals and Picnics - Murwillumbah](#)

New tourism operator offering picnics, grazing boxes and destination picnics with bike hire to enjoy on the Northern Rivers Rail Trail.

[Bronte Belo Diamond Beach](#)

Bronte Belo - the famous Brazilian café at Sydney's Bronte Beach - has a new little sister at Bronte Belo Diamond Beach. Enjoy authentic espresso coffee over brunch or sample Brazilian meals like feijoada, moqueca, parto feito and those signature barbecue plates renowned around the world.

[Bonito Peruvian Eatery - Wollongbar](#)

A modern take on traditional Peruvian cuisine, using locally sourced produce in a relaxed atmosphere.

[The Fairy Room - Toormina](#)

The Fairy Room has moved its magical wonderland to Toormina Gardens. Offering luxury high tea parties for all types of occasions. Book for a special occasion or children's birthday party and browse the amazing Fairy gift shop.

North Coast Events

To aid your planning and to support local events, please note these upcoming events on the North Coast or find [all events on DNSW's website](#).

[The Coffs Coast Food & Wine Festival](#)

A true foodie festival. The Coffs Coast Food and Wine Festival is an award-winning celebration of local food. With 10 days of absolute decadence from Bellingen to Woolgoolga, visitors get to indulge in the best of the Coffs Coast. Dining Experiences hosted at the best restaurants, farms, and even some unorthodox venues; experience one-of-a-kind menus and collaborations with the region's best chefs. Live music and art will completely immerse visitors in the experience. Foodie Workshops include hands-on workshops; from campfire cooking to handmade gnocchi, all complete with a glass of vino in hand. **1-10 September 2023.**

[Bellingen Muse](#)

This event replaces the Bellingen Fine Music Festival of years gone by and is a popular 2-day fine music festival for arts and culture lovers featuring domestic and international virtuoso performers. Events are held in a variety of locations around town. **14-17 September 2023.**

[Rainbow Gold Enduro](#) - Port Macquarie

A Surf Lifesaving Ironperson endurance event, the Rainbow Gold Enduro is open to members of the surf lifesaving organisation. It consists of a 10.5 kilometre ski paddle, a 2 kilometre ocean swim, 3 kilometre board paddle and 5.5 kilometre soft sand run. **16-17 September 2023.**
