



North Coast News & Views No. 175

Register Now: NSW Visitor Economy Forum - Building Momentum To 2030

Join Destination NSW at ICC Sydney on 5 October 2023 for the **NSW Visitor Economy Forum - Building Momentum to 2030** to hear about the market trends and programs that will drive the visitor economy over the coming 12 months.

Destination NSW will preview plans for its Feel New brand and marketing programs, dynamic major events calendar, alongside concurrent sessions on topics including accessibility, inclusion, First Nations experiences, eco-tourism and more.

Visitor Economy Forum participants will have the opportunity to gain further insight into the state of play through keynotes and engaging panel discussions and help build or strengthen important business connections through networking.

[Registrations are now open](#) - places are limited.



Visitor Economy Workforce Interim Action Plan

The [Visitor Economy Workforce and Skills Interim Action Plan 2023-24](#) is now available to download. The plan helps to build workforce capability in the visitor economy in accordance with the THRIVE 2030 strategy.

Lifting Of COVID Cruise Ship Protocols

The NSW Premier Chris Minns has ended COVID rules for cruising as the industry prepares for a busy summer.

Governments have agreed there is no longer a need for formal protocols with increasing community immunity to COVID-19 and lessons learned from the cruising industry since voyages resumed.

[Read more here.](#)

Aviation Green Paper Open For Feedback

The Commonwealth Government has taken the next step towards reforming Australia's aviation sector, this week releasing the Aviation Green Paper and calling for community and industry feedback. Consultation on this document will contribute to the development of the Aviation White Paper which will set the policy direction for the aviation sector out to 2050. The aim is to deliver a more competitive aviation sector, secure Australian jobs, develop stronger consumer protections, improve accessibility and transition the industry to net zero emissions. Industry, including the Australian Airports Association, welcomed the release of the paper. Submissions are open until 30 November 2023.

[Read more here.](#)

Approved Destination Status (ADS) scheme

On 10 August 2023 the Chinese Government announced Australia has been included on a list of countries for China's Approved Destination Status (ADS) scheme.

Austrade is working closely with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Home Affairs and industry partner the Australian Tourism Export Council on the ADS refresh and restart.

[Find more information here.](#)

Agritourism Opportunity: Kids To Farms

Kids to Farms is a new Federal Government-funded program to increase engagement between primary school students and NSW agriculture.

The website makes it easy for schools to connect with farms and the experiences that they offer and even allows for 'virtual' excursions for times when an in-person visit may not be possible.

Farmers are being encouraged to join the program to provide students with educational opportunities to learn about where their food and fibre come from. For more information, visit the [Kids to Farms](#) website or email kidstofarms@nswfarmers.org.au

Industry Training/Development & Communications Survey

Destination North Coast (DNC) is committed to providing our tourism industry operators and key visitor economy stakeholders, with training and development opportunities, relevant communication, insights and resources.

We are seeking your feedback on what you need in your business, to ensure what we deliver is relevant, timely and designed to help your business or organisation prosper.

Please take the time to fill in this short [Industry Training/Development & Communications Survey](#) (allow 5-10 minutes), as your feedback will help us build out our communication and development program.

The survey will close 13 October 2023.

TRA Snapshots For June Released.

The National Visitor Survey (NVS) snapshot for the month of **June 2023** is now published. It provides statistics on how Australian residents travelled in your state or territory and nationally during this period. In June 2023, Australian residents took 8.6 million overnight trips and spent \$7.5 billion.

The International Visitor Survey (IVS) snapshot for the month of **June 2023** has also been published. It provides statistics on how overseas visitors travelled in Australia during this period. International visitation to Australia continues to recover, with 492,000 trips recorded in the month of June 2023. Spend in Australia was estimated at \$1.9 billion in June 2023.

Inbound Travel Boosts Economy

Figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics show the economy grew 0.4 per cent during the June quarter 2023 and 3.4 per cent in annual terms. This was the seventh successive quarter of economic growth. Travel exports were at 88 per cent of pre-pandemic levels. Exports of travel services rose 18.5 per cent as the number of visitors arriving from China increased. [Find more information here.](#)

Business Confidence Increases

In August 2023 [Roy Morgan Business Confidence](#) was 94.7 (up 7.2pts since July). This is the highest Business Confidence for six months since February 2023 and the first increase in the index since the traditional 'new year's jump' in January. The Business Confidence survey was conducted after the RBA left interest rates unchanged for a second straight month in August at 4.1 per cent and after the [ABS showed official inflation figures falling rapidly during the June quarter 2023](#), down one per cent point to six per cent. Business Confidence is highest in NSW and Tasmania.

Cultural Tourism Accelerator Program Research

Regional Arts Australia and Culture Counts have released new research findings on cultural tourism demonstrating the major influence that arts and cultural events have in driving tourism to regional and remote Australia. The [Cultural Tourism Accelerator Program](#) was an Australian Government initiative delivered through the Regional Arts Fund to help strengthen local visitor economies. The Program sought to increase tourism visitation in regional, rural, and remote communities across Australia, by providing financial support for the promotion of arts and cultural activities. [Learn more and download the report here.](#)

Around The Region

Australian Gourmet Traveller's Annual Best Restaurant List

Congratulations to three North Coast restaurants who made it on the Gourmet Traveller's Annual Best Restaurant list- [Bar Heather](#), Byron Bay; [Pipit](#), Kingscliff and [Bistro Livi](#), Murwillumbah.

Special congratulations to Ollie Wong-Hee - the head chef behind Bar Heather who was announced as this year's Best New Talent. [See the full list of winners here.](#)

Celebrating Big Things

Australia Post have released limited edition \$1 coin and stamp collections available to buy at your local post office or online. The collectable coins are paying homage to 10 of [Australia's Big Things](#) and [The Big Banana](#) will have its very own coin.

Celebrating the weird and wonderful Big Things found across Australia, enthusiasts can collect 10 different coins, each celebrating one of our Aussie Big Things. There's Western Australia's Giant Ram, while South Australia boasts The Big Lobster and Northern Territory's The Big Jumping Crocodile. Heading east Queensland's The Big Pineapple and The Big Banana of New South Wales make a tasty fruit salad, then travelling south, there's The Big Blue Heeler of New South Wales, Canberra's Big Swoop, Victoria's Giant Koala and Giant Murray Cod, and The Big Tasmanian Devil on our island state of Tasmania.



Port Macquarie In The News

Some great media coverage for our Port Macquarie colleagues, with coverage including:

- [22 Exciting Things To Do In Port Macquarie](#)
- ['Food, Coastal Walks, Massages, Sightseeing... This Is How I Spent 72 Hours In Port Macquarie'](#)
- [10 Best Australian Travel Destinations Revealed](#)

17 Short Breaks List

Delicious magazine have released their top [17 short breaks near Sydney](#) for a long weekend, with Byron, Sawtell and Port Macquarie making the cut.

Potoroos Released Into Barrington Wildlife Sanctuary

Team members from [Destination Barrington Coast](#) helped release 20 potoroos at [Aussie Ark's](#) conservation facility hidden high in Barrington Tops, the highest point of the Barrington Coast. All of the potoroos released into the 400 hectare feral-proof Barrington Wildlife Sanctuary were born and bred at the Ark... a beacon of hope for the species' future.

Aussie Ark is proud to be a world leader in breeding and rewilding threatened and endangered species, and the Long-nosed Potoroo is one of their signature species. Potoroos populations have been devastated since European settlement and continue to face immense challenges in the wild, from feral predators to land clearing and bushfires.

These little marsupials play a vital role as "ecosystem terrestrial engineers" in the Australian bush. Their foraging helps oxygenate and moisturise the soil, aids in decomposition, and reduces fuel load, thus reducing the incidence and severity of fires.





Industry Development And Other Opportunities

DNC Industry Networking - Port Macquarie

The Destination North Coast Board traditionally rotates around the region for our monthly Board meetings and we have pleasure in planning our September meeting to be in Port Macquarie.

We invite members of the Tourism Industry to a casual get-together and an opportunity to meet and network with the Board, the DNC team and industry peers.

- **What:** Afternoon Industry Networking
- **When:** Tuesday 19 September 2023
- **Time:** 5.15-6.45pm
- **Where:** Rydges Port Macquarie, 1 Hay Street, Port Macquarie

RSVP is required by Thursday 14 September 2023 and for catering purposes, please include any dietary restrictions.

We look forward to connecting with industry in region and meeting in Port Macquarie.

Tourism Australia September Industry Webinar

Tourism Australia's September Industry Webinar will be held on Friday 29 September at 11am. The webinar will include an update on Tourism Australia's activities and insights along with industry guests.

[Register to attend here.](#)

Growth For NSW Visitor Centres

NSW has 105 Accredited Visitor Information Centres (AVICs) across the state that play an important role in growing the NSW visitor economy. Destination NSW engages with [The Tourism Group](#) to manage the accreditation process for AVICs, with data for FY22/23 showing there were 2,766,736 walk-in visits to AVICs (up 19 per cent on previous year) and 8,675,422 unique visits to AVIC websites (up 49 per cent). Revenue generated from tourism product sales was up 136 per cent to \$4,905,864.

For more information on opportunities to engage with the AVIC network, email [Destination NSW Associate Director, Distribution Development David Strickland](#).

ATDW Webinar

The [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse](#) are sharing an update on some exciting developments happening for Destination Managers (including Regional & Local Tourism Organisations & Boards, Councils, Visitor Information Centres and more). Set to launch later this year, these changes are all part of ATDW's commitment to providing the industry with even more powerful tools to enhance visibility and promote the beauty of Australia. They are hosting an informative webinar, where their Industry Manager and program delivery team will present the new features and functionality of ATDW's modernised platform. Thursday, 28 September, 2023 at 11.00 am. [Register here.](#)

Nail Your Next Grant Application

The Sparrowly Group have compiled a [resource to help business owners confidently apply for grants](#). Getting grant ready means that your chances of success are higher and the time it takes to write a submission can be reduced. If you currently apply for grants or are considering applying, this resource is for you.

Aboriginal Business Advisory Initiative

The [Aboriginal Business Advisory Initiative](#) (ABAI) provides business coaching and advice delivered locally by independent Aboriginal business advisors.

Service NSW for Business can connect business customers with local Aboriginal business advisors for free one-on-one coaching and advice. They can choose to speak with an independent advisor face-to-face or on the phone.

Businesses can register to attend events and access resources on a range of topics for small businesses. Here's some information about some upcoming events that are available for NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned small businesses.

- 20 September in Tweed Heads [Build your Aboriginal tourism business](#)
- 27 September - online [Supporting Aboriginal business in NSW](#)
- 27 September in Redfern [How to start a business in NSW](#)

New in person and online events are added each month.

Digital Solutions Program

In collaboration with the Australian Government, [Realise Business](#) is leading on the delivery of the new Digital Solutions across NSW and the ACT. The program provides a tailored pathway to empower business owners with digital solutions, resources, and expert guidance to accelerate their growth, productivity and efficiency in the digital age. [Find more information here.](#)

Introducing the Arival Survey: Shaping Experiences in Australia and New Zealand!

[Arival](#), recognised as the Global Research Authority for tours, activities, and attractions, is excited to announce its latest research endeavor focused on the dynamic landscapes of Australia and New Zealand. As the leading authority in travel experience insights, Arival is dedicated to uncovering the pulse of the experiences sector and the trends that define it.

As a business operating in this space, your unique perspective is invaluable. Your insights will contribute to a deeper understanding of the sector's landscape. Your voice matters. By sharing your experiences, challenges, and aspirations, you become an integral part of this transformative research project.

[Find survey details here.](#) For any further information, please contact [Meredith Rangel](#).

New Data Hub Supports Regional Growth

The free and easy-to-use online resource will connect users to data on populations, health, education, housing, wellbeing, tourism, environment and climate change, built and digital infrastructure and more - in a single, accessible and searchable location. [Find more information here.](#)

Sustainable Trails Conference 2024

TRC Tourism is holding the Sustainable Trails Conference 2024. This is the peak gathering of leaders who drive the evolution and development of Australia and New Zealand's trail networks. Are you apart of this sector? This is your opportunity to share your story with others as the organisers call out for speakers. [Find more information here.](#)

ATEC's China Host Program Goes Live

[The Australian Tourism Export Council](#) (ATEC) has launched their China Host online self-directed training program. Designed in partnership with Tourism Australia, Austrade and the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations, China Host is for tourism operators large or small, with or without experience in the China market. The program will take participants on a three-module journey to build confidence in the market, grow their understanding of the inbound opportunity and deep dive into the traveller profile and expectations. [Find out how to become a China host here.](#)

Funding And Other Opportunities

[CLOSING SOON 2023 Innovate With nbn Grants Program](#)

The 2023 Innovate with nbn Grants Program aims to help regional and remote businesses and individuals transform their great ideas into game-changing achievements. A total of \$125,000 in funding is available across seven categories - Agriculture, Arts, Education, Health, Indigenous Business, Tourism, and Women in Regional Business - each winner receives \$15,000. The overall Innovate with nbn@ Champion will be awarded an additional \$20,000 grant to help take their idea to the next level. **Closes 29 September 2023.**

[CLOSING SOON Wine Tourism & Cellar Door Grants Program](#)

Funding of up to \$100,000 to wineries and cellar door operators who grow and promote agritourism, largely in regional Australia. **Closes 30 September 2023.**

[Australian Heritage Grants](#)

Aims to improve recognition, conservation, preservation and access to the National Heritage Values of National Heritage Listed places. **Closes 12 October 2023.**

[RAS Foundation Community Futures Grant](#)

The Royal Agricultural Society Foundation (RAS) is offering opportunities for community-minded people to be awarded up to \$25,000 in funding for community projects in their local area. **Closes 29 October 2023.**

[Strategic Opportunities Fund](#)

The Strategic Opportunities Program supports individual initiatives and events that demonstrate long-term benefits to the NSW screen industry. **Ongoing.**

North Coast Product & Experience Development

[Steve Waugh - The Spirit of Cricket India Exhibition](#)

Captured by cricket legend Steve Waugh in diverse locations across India this photographic exhibition showcases the raw emotion and splendour of India's connection to sport. On display at the Slim Dusty Centre, Kempsey until 19 November 2023.

[Journeys Mid North Coast](#)

Journeys Mid North Coast is a new online exhibition showcasing some of the region's special objects, unique collections, surprising stories and significant places. The exhibition focuses on objects and their stories within the broad context of journeys, and encourages viewers to further visit, explore, learn and discover more about the rich heritage of the Mid North Coast. [Journeys Mid North Coast can be viewed online.](#) The exhibition features 48 special objects and their stories, 17 museums and collections and 12 State Heritage Places

[Art Bites Walk](#)

The new Coffs Regional Gallery opens 16 September at Yarilla Place and is now included in the [Art Bites Walk & Talk](#) tour, for art lovers of all ages. Explore the art of Coffs Coast - from art installations, to gallery walls, small maker spaces, and laneway murals. The first tour runs on **Saturday, September 30.**

[Tomaree Coastal Walk Officially Opens](#)

The new 27km Tomaree Coastal Walk has opened. It is the latest [NSW Great Walk](#) developed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and offers a multi-day walking adventure in the heart of Port Stephens. Located on the traditional lands of the Worimi people, the Tomaree Coastal Walk traverses an ancient volcanic landscape rich in culture and nature, starting at Tomaree Head at Shoal Bay and finishing at Birubi Point Aboriginal Place at Anna Bay. The \$6.7 million project was funded by the NSW Government. [Find more information here.](#)

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.](#)

[Great Lakes Food Trail Spring Long Lunch](#)

The Great Lakes Food Trail is proud to host a sumptuous three course lunch at Wootton. Local foodie celebrities Chef Sarah and Nadine the Cake Queen are creating delectable dishes featuring locally grown and ethically sourced produce. The crafted menu will showcase produce to be featured at [The Great Lakes Food Trail](#) over the October long weekend September 29 to October 1. **Sunday 24 Sep 2023**

[Coffs Coast Long Lunch](#)

Enjoy a relaxed and fun event with other like-minded food lovers. The Coffs Coast Long Lunch speakers theme is Local Women In Food. **28 October 2023.**
