

# NORTH COAST TOURISM AWARDS ENTRY GUIDELINES



# Entering the Awards?

Entering the Tourism Awards is a rewarding but sometimes daunting experience. It provides an opportunity to reflect on the goals, strategies and vision which have shaped your success, and the insights you gain will help drive the growth and longevity of your business. Here's some tips to get your started in writing an award-winning submission.

## **GIVE YOURSELF ENOUGH TIME**

Ensure you have ample time to draft, review and make necessary changes to your entry. Consider having someone else review it for a fresh perspective. Engage your team. Writing an award entry is an excellent opportunity to acknowledge and reflect on the hard work and results achieved. A collaborative approach can bring fresh ideas and strengthen your submission.

## **SHOW YOUR PASSION AND ENTHUSIASM FOR YOUR BUSINESS AND THE VISITOR ECONOMY**

We work in a fun industry. As you introduce the story of your business journey, don't be afraid to share your passion, values and brand personality. Why do you do what you do? What is your purpose? Grab the reader's attention and make them excited to read more. Use descriptive language that makes the judges feel like they are there - they need to get a feel for your offering from your written submission.

## **FOCUS ON YOUR MESSAGE**

Be clear and concise in your response, addressing all aspects of the questions. Where possible, highlight any major milestones over the business history, as this demonstrates continuous improvement over time. If you have a Unique Selling Proposition, elevator pitch or Brand ID, this could also be a good base. You need to explain why your business should be considered an award-winning product/experience/service. Make sure you mention any significant achievements, media recognition, consumer or industry awards or accreditations. What makes you different from your competitors? If your core offering is an experience, consider how your products and services support this. Providing linkage between all aspects of your operation shows that you have considered how to best deliver an offering that meets the customers' needs and expectations.

## **QUANTIFY THE RESULTS**

These are tourism excellence awards, and the judges want to see HOW you deliver excellence in customer service. Use your answers to showcase all the strategies you implement, including how you measure them and the measurable outcomes. What tools do you use to capture and measure the data? Explain how you go above and beyond in providing excellent customer service and experiences at all stages of the customer journey. Mention any consumer site ratings, e.g. TripAdvisor and/or awards, to back up your statements. How do you monitor success and report on it?

Reinforce your achievements by including relevant statistics, clearly demonstrating growth and success to the judges. What research you have conducted or used to determine your target markets and what market intelligence have you used to assist guide your strategic direction? When explaining your answer, provide examples of research, feedback, data from past visitation, focus groups, emerging market trends and/or current market changes to back up what you say.

Survey data and guest feedback should be used if relevant to your answers. Mention if you align your marketing strategy with your Destination Network or Destination NSW (DNSW). Do your social media or Google Analytics insights provide a means of research? What are people saying about your business online? Do you use tracking tools that could enhance your answers with measurable data? Who do you benchmark against and why?

Showcase any sustainability commitments and initiatives and link them back to your core values, guest experience and business objectives. Show measurable actions and quantify outcomes wherever possible. Do you have any Eco-Accreditations or certification programs, i.e. Eco-Tourism Australia, Strive for Sustainability, Sustainable Tourism Certification, B-Corp Certification etc.

In all of your answers, as much as is possible, it is important you provide evidence and the quantifiable outcomes.

## **READ YOUR ENTRY OUT LOUD AND PROOFREAD**

Reading your entry out loud helps check structure of your sentence and how someone else may read your entry. It is also a great tool for checking spelling mistakes and grammar.