



Destination
North Coast NSW

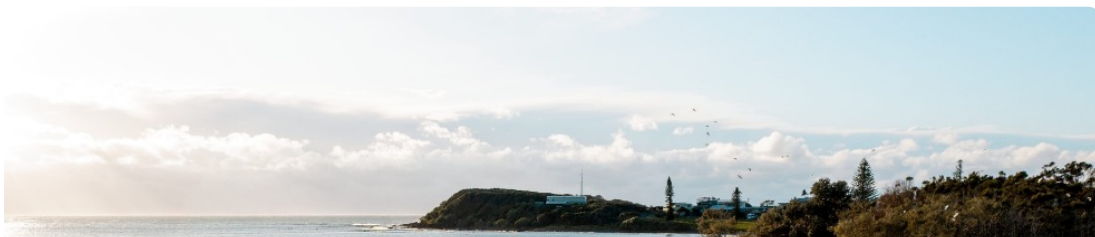
Visitor Economy News



New DNC Industry Engagement Manager

We are delighted to announce that Ashley Gray will be joining the DNC team from the 28th January as the new Industry Engagement Manager. Many of you may know Ashley from her roles at Kempsey Shire Council where she has been instrumental in improving the visitor experience and developing the wider visitor economy.

Ashley is a seasoned marketing and tourism development professional with over 12 years of experience specialising in brand awareness, integrated marketing, and public relations campaigns. With a strong foundation in relationship building and cross-channel marketing, she has successfully led strategic initiatives at Red Bull and other organisations. All of this experience and skillset combined will bring a new perspective and energy to the role and we look forward to engaging with you over the coming year.





NSW Visitor Spend Breaks Records

Visitor spending has broken records in NSW, reaching \$31.3 billion for domestic overnight expenditure across the state in the year ending September 2024.

NSW was the number one destination for Australians during the period, drawing 37.3 million domestic overnight visitors (up 3.2%). NSW received a total of 100.5 million domestic and international visitors during the period, who spent \$52.9 billion, up 5.8% compared to the year ending September 2023.

Regional NSW continued to be the best performing destination across regional Australia in terms of visitors and nights, with 64.6 million international and domestic travellers visiting regional NSW in the year ending and spending \$26.2 billion across the period, up 30.7%

The **North Coast celebrated the highest increase in domestic overnight visitor numbers** during the period (up 5.8%), while visitor expenditure was up 2.1% to \$4.8 billion.

Let's Go Surfing Byron Bay Surf School Director Brenda Miley said: "The iconic road trip to Byron Bay is the quintessential Aussie summer experience. Instead of looking overseas for family trips, Aussies are turning to good, old-fashioned fun in the sun in beautiful Byron Bay.

"As pioneers of the surfing industry, we're so excited to see it. We've been enjoying the great surf and amazing community in Byron for years and we couldn't be more stoked about the growth in domestic tourism on the North Coast. And we're looking forward to a great summer season."

[Find More Here](#)



Image: DNSW

Regional Events Drive Visitor Economy Growth

Regional events will play a key role in growing the NSW visitor economy in 2025. Tourism Research Australia data shows regional NSW contributed a record \$26 billion (49%) to the NSW visitor economy in the year ending September 2024.

The NSW Government is supporting communities to host events that reflect local character and create authentic experiences, attracting visitors and driving expenditure.

In FY2024-25 Destination NSW is investing in more than 85 regional events, including Great Southern Nights and Bluesfest.

[Find Out More](#)



eeger - where people people grow

The Tourism, Hospitality and Travel industries in Australia are set to experience a transformative shift with the announcement of eeger - a careers and training platform designed to address the challenges of workforce development, skills shortages and career growth in these vital sectors. The platform's introduction comes at a pivotal time for the sector with 691,000 direct tourism jobs in the Australian economy in 2024, up 5.7 percent on last year and a massive increase from the 443,000 jobs in 2022.

eeger is currently in development and will launch in March 2025. Early registrations are now open for individuals and businesses to stay updated on this industry-led initiative.

[Register Here](#)

[Industry Insights](#)



Strong Recovery For Global Tourism

The latest World Tourism Barometer by UN Tourism shows around 1.1 billion people travelled internationally in the first nine months of 2024, with the global tourism sector recovering to 98 per cent of pre-pandemic levels.

Australia was among the countries with the highest expenditure growth during the period, up 34 per cent compared to 2019.

[Find Out More](#)

Tourism Forecasts Webinar

Tourism Research Australia will hold a *Tourism forecasts for Australia 2024-2029* webinar on Tuesday 21 January 2025, at 11:30am AEDT. [Register to attend here.](#)

Four Emerging Trends In Business Travel

Four themes are taking shape across the business travel landscape according to a new report by McKinsey & Company. Business travel "appears at last to be on solid footing"; there is an evolving marketplace for servicing unmanaged business travel (in which employees are given the freedom to book for themselves but have less company oversight and support); digital transformation in managing business travel; and the continued blurring of lines between business and leisure travel. [Find more information here.](#)



Accommodation Sector Starts 2025 On A High

Australia's accommodation sector is reporting solid bookings during the summer holiday period. Accommodation Australia CEO James Goodwin said January was looking "positive" on the back of a solid December period, with occupancy levels in Sydney up two per cent. Occupancy for the next three months was also promising, with levels exceeding the same period last year.

[Find Out More](#)

Travel Jobs Surge

Travel specialist jobs in Australia are among the fastest growing job types in the country, according to a new study published by LinkedIn. Based on unique data from its platform, annual rankings combined for the last three years show that travel advisors have been the third-fastest growing role type sought by employers.

The growth in travel roles finished behind only English teachers and food and beverage servers in the study. LinkedIn Career Expert, Cayla Dengate, said the report also showed that upskilling should be an important factor for workers. "With 80% of the roles on the list being new, it underscores the importance of upskilling to future-proof careers," she said. [Find more information here.](#)

Industry Development And Other Opportunities





Maximizing Revenue Growth through Strategic Collaboration in the Business Events Sector

Operators in the business events sector have the opportunity to unlock significant revenue growth through strategic collaboration within the industry. This two-hour seminar will demystify the art of collaboration, offering practical guidance on how to develop robust support systems and foster mutually beneficial relationships.

- The Tweed - Thursday 6 February 2025
10.00am - 12.00pm - HPC Surfing Australia, Casuarina
- Port Macquarie - Wednesday 19 March 2025 10.00am - 12.00pm - Waters Edge Port Macquarie, Port Macquarie

[Register Here](#)



ATEC Host Online Learning Modules

Destination NSW has partnered with the [Australian Tourism Export Council](#) (ATEC) to provide free access to three ATEC Host online learning modules: China Host, India Host and Accessible & Inclusive Host.

The training shows how to attract and service visitors by being culture, product, marketing and trade ready, plus how to work effectively with key travel distributors.

The training is available to eligible visitor economy businesses until 30 June 2025.

Complete the EOI using the link below.

[Find Out More](#)

Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Discussion Paper

[Sparrowly Group](#) has released the latest edition of the Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Paper. The Paper provides in-depth research and case studies into the economic significance of accessible and inclusive tourism. [Download the latest edition here.](#)

Review the accessibility of your business and discover how you can improve access for customers using the [Accessible Business Checklist.](#)

Around The Region



Clarence Valley Launches New Visitors Information Guide



Byron Bay Lighthouse Aboriginal Walking Tour

Clarence Valley Council is excited to announce the release of the new Clarence Valley Visitors Information Guide developed by the My Clarence Valley Tourism Team.

This 52-page guide is packed with essential information, highlighting the region's natural beauty, national parks, beaches, museums, art trails, local events, and vibrant businesses, positioning the Clarence Valley as a premier destination in the Northern Rivers, offering both inspiration and practical resources for visitors.

Local businesses are welcome to [bulk order copies](#) for collection from either Grafton or Maclean.

[Find Out More](#)



NORPA's New Home

The Joinery, in the heart of Lismore, will support NORPA's innovative theatre-making and provide a vibrant, contemporary space for the community to connect with story and performance.

Their bold vision is to transform the historic Hampton & Larsson factory in Lismore's CBD into a creative beacon for the Northern Rivers - a place that nurtures artistic talent, celebrates the Northern Rivers region's unique stories and drives community renewal.

[Find Out More](#)

Share The Shore

Threatened shorebirds need space to nest on our beaches, but they face threats from dogs, beachgoers and vehicles. Each summer threatened pied and sooty oystercatchers, little terns, and beach stone curlews, lay their eggs in shallow nests along the NSW Coast but sadly they face many threats from dogs, beachgoers and vehicles.

Large numbers of people head to the shores in summer, which means the birds are likely to be disturbed. So keep an eye out for these beach-nesting birds, their chicks and eggs when you go

Award-winning Indigenous tour operator Delta Kay has launched a new walking tour that provides visitors with an Aboriginal perspective of the coastline around the iconic Byron Bay Lighthouse.

Delta's company [Explore Byron Bay](#) has been offering Indigenous-themed tours of Walgun (Cape Byron), Bangalow, and Broken Head for five years. Last year, her tours won gold for Excellence in Cultural Tourism in the North Coast Tourism Awards, an award recognising tour operators that foster a greater understanding and appreciation of authentic culture, history, heritage and the arts.

[Find Out More](#)



Top Regional Bakeries Announced

Australia's regional bakeries have become destinations in their own right, with loyal locals and visitors raving about their flaky pastries, fresh sourdough and creative cakes. Australian Traveller have released their 28 top regional bakeries with four north coast establishments making the cut.

Congratulations to [Sunday Sustainable Bakery](#), Byron Bay; [Baker and Daughters](#), Mullumbimby; [Barnett's Bakery](#), Crescent Head; and [Peach and Wolf](#), Coffs Harbour.

[Find Out More](#)

Beyond Venice Masquerade Ball

[Beyond Venice](#) is an annual Italian Masquerade Ball held in Lismore, NSW, coinciding with Venice's famous Masquerade Ball. It serves as a fundraiser for various initiatives, including LisAmore!-the signature Italian cultural event held yearly to celebrate the Northern Rivers Italian community. **Saturday 15 February 2025.**

Call For Nominations Extended - Solitary Islands Marine Park Advisory Committee

Community members who are interested in providing local advice across the wide range of values and activities that take place in the Solitary

to the beach.

[Find information here](#) for 5 small things you can do to help threatened shorebirds raise their chicks on our beaches.

Learn from NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services Discovery Rangers about the plight of the region's incredible shorebirds. Discover ways in which we can be responsible when interacting with the environment to help protect threatened bird species when nesting and feeding through some fun interactive activities on the day. Next event is Sawtell Boronia Park- **Friday 24 January 25** at 8.30am

Islands Marine Park are encouraged to nominate. To find out more or to access a nomination form, please visit [Marine park advisory committees](#). Nominations close 31 January 2025.

Three Blue Ducks Open At Hotel Brunswick
[Three Blue Ducks](#) and [Hotel Brunswick](#) are thrilled to announce the opening of '[The Ducks at Hotel Brunswick](#)', a new eatery that combines the relaxed atmosphere of a classic Aussie pub with the food style and sustainable ethos that Three Blue Ducks is known for.

Funding And Other Opportunities

Government agencies and organisations offer grants and funding programs, designed to assist with improving your business or product offering. Review the latest opportunities for [grants in NSW](#) and [nationally via Austrade](#).

Destination North Coast may be able to provide a Letter of Support (LOS) for your project if it aligns with the [Destination North Coast Destination Management Plan \(DMP\)](#). Letters of Support requests can be made [via the online form](#) found on our website.

[Caring for State Heritage Grants](#)

The 2025-27 Caring for State Heritage Grants program will better help to recognise, value and care for State significant heritage in NSW. It is focused on the preservation, maintenance and conservation of items listed on the State Heritage Register. **Closes 30 January 2025.**

[Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program](#)

The Regional Economic Development and Community Investment Program is open to initiatives that promote regional economic development and support employment creation and retention. **Closes 20 February 2025.**

[Playing Australia Project Investment](#)

The aim of this program is to support organisations to undertake performing arts tours to reach regional and remote communities across Australia. The program supports costs associated with touring to regional and remote areas of Australia. **Closes 4 March 2025 for projects starting after 1 June 2025**

[Contemporary Music Festival Viability Fund](#)

This program supports existing large-scale contemporary music festivals presented in NSW with a track record of delivering significant outcomes for contemporary music. **Closes 30 April 2025 or when the budget is exhausted**

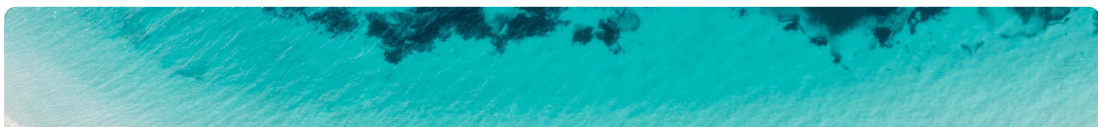
[EV Destination Grant Closing Date Extended](#)

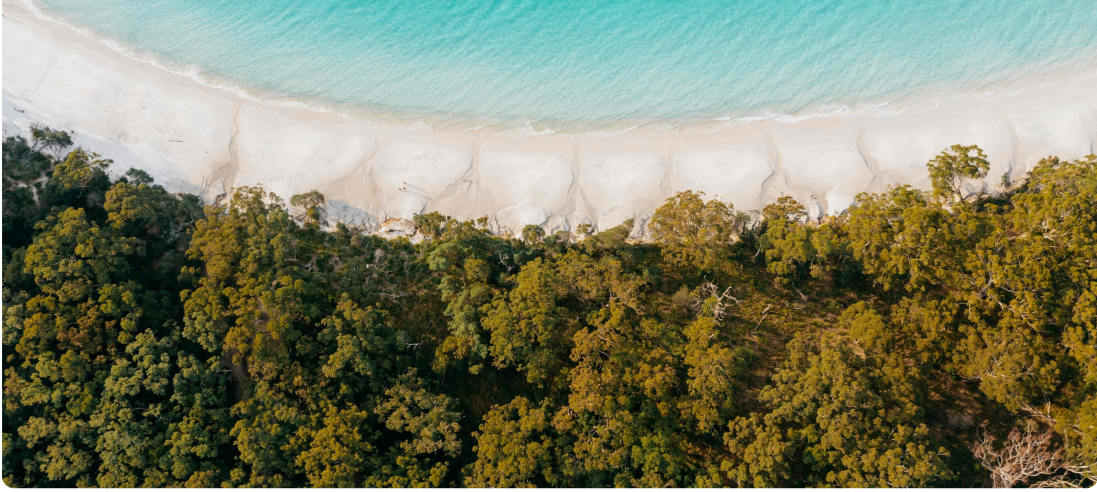
The closing date for the latest round of the NSW Government's EV Destination Charging Grants program has been extended to **28 March 2025**. The program provides co-funding to own and operate public EV fast chargers at visitor destinations across regional NSW.

[NSW Going Global Export Program](#)

The NSW Government is committed to building an exporting culture in NSW and providing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with the tools that help them to succeed and flourish internationally. Investment NSW will deliver 17 tailored Going Global streams (a combination of target international market and industry sector) across 2024-25. **Various closing dates**

Sustainability & Eco-Tourism





Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard

Places are available for the pre-certification Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard **until 30 June 2025**. The scorecard assists visitor economy businesses to make informed decisions and take steps to enhance and promote sustainable practices. Delivered by Destination NSW, in partnership with **Ecotourism Australia**, the Strive 4 Sustainability Scorecard is free to access and supports visitor economy businesses in evaluating their performance across four key pillars of sustainability:

- Environmental impacts
- Socio-economic impacts
- Cultural impacts
- Sustainable management.

[Register Here](#)

Salt Village Joins EV Revolution

[Salt Village](#) has joined other Tweed shopping centres, venues and tourism accommodation providers, installing four new fast charge plugs for electric vehicles.

North Coast Product Development

[Lismore Gateway Motel](#)

Lismore Gateway Motel has recently undergone a comprehensive renovation, enhancing the entire property, including guest rooms, lush tropical gardens, and the relaxing pool area. Also recently introduced is secure parking and a brand-new Guest Kitchen and Laundry for guest convenience.

[Lord Howe Island Distilling Co Experiences](#)

Enjoy bookable gin tastings and gin-making courses that offer a hands-on experience where participants learn the delicate art of distillation, from selecting the perfect blend of botanicals to the intricacies of flavour profiling.

[Big4 Yamba](#)

Big4 Yamba have a new Oasis Resort Pool that is sure to entice parents and kids alike

[Nimbin Shokudo](#)

The Nimbin Shokudou brings a taste of Japanese cuisine to Nimbin.

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](#).

[Trial Bay Triathlon](#) - Trial Bay 1-2 February 2025

[Tweed Enduro](#) - Pottsville 8 February 2025

[Legends of Cricket](#) - Lismore 15 February 2025

[Junior Oztog NSW State Championships](#) - Coffs Harbour 21-23 February 2025

[Lismore Samson Fitness Challenge](#) - Lismore 28 Feb - 1 Mar 2025

Stay Up To Date And Follow DNC On Social Media

Thank you for taking the time to read this update. Don't forget between our e-newsletters, you'll find us on the socials - head over to follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#). You can find training and other content on our [YouTube channel](#). We also encourage you to share our updates with your networks, simply forward this email and they can [register here](#).



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