



Destination  
North Coast NSW

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## Visitor Economy News

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### **NSW Tourism Awards Nominations Open**

Entries for the North Coast Regional Tourism Awards are now closed, but visitor economy operators who did not enter regionally are now encouraged to submit an entry for the 2025 NSW Tourism Awards. Delivered by the NSW Tourism Industry Council, this year's program features a simplified process with reduced word counts and a guided format to help you highlight your achievements. Nominations close 13 June 2025.

All regional entries are automatically progressed to the NSW Tourism Awards, with the initial entry fee covering both programs. You may update your submission with additional examples or activity from the period not included in the regional awards window, using judge feedback to strengthen your entry. If a more suitable category exists at the state level, entries may be reassigned accordingly.

[Enter here](#)

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### **DNC Industry Networking 21 May 2025 - Nambucca Heads**

The Destination North Coast Board traditionally rotates around the region for our bi-monthly Board meetings and we have pleasure in planning our May meeting to be in Nambucca Heads.

After the Board meeting, 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: Wednesday 21 May 2025
- Time: 5.30-7.00pm
- Where: [Nambucca Heads Island Golf Club](#)

RSVP is required by Friday 16 May 2025 and for catering purposes, please include any dietary restrictions.

We look forward to connecting with industry in region and meeting in Nambucca Heads.

**RSVP here**

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### **Accessible & Inclusive Communication Audit**

To help destinations connect with this strong section of the market, Sparrowly Group are offering a free Accessible and Inclusive Communication Audit and Report. This report is focused on your digital channels to help you identify gaps in your destination marketing plan and what elements can be expanded upon to reach an audience with accessibility needs

[Find more here](#)

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### **Discover Aboriginal Experiences Storyteller Video Series**

Discover Aboriginal Experiences (DAE) has developed a suite of Storyteller videos offering the opportunity to hear from guides firsthand about their work, their cultures, and the importance of sharing Indigenous stories with visitors. Each video highlights a different theme, designed to both

educate and inspire viewers, showcasing the profound impact Aboriginal-guided experiences can have on any Australian journey.

[Find more here](#)

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## Industry Insights



### Record Number of Tourism Businesses

The 360,202 tourism-related businesses Australia in June 2024 represent the highest number since records began. A greater proportion (30%) are in regional Australia than ever before. Most tourism businesses (95%) remain small.

[Learn more here](#)

### Future Trends in Travel & Tourism

The [World Travel & Tourism Council \(WTTC\) report](#), in collaboration with Trip.com Group, explores 16 transformative technologies, across four major trends:

1. Digital Technologies;
2. Financial Technologies;
3. The Future of Mobility and
4. Breakthrough Innovations.

From AI-driven personalisation and super apps to sustainable travel and space tourism, this report offers a forward-looking perspective on how these innovations will reshape the travel and tourism industry.

### Hotels Key Driver of NSW Economy

New [Deloitte Access Economics research](#) has found hotels are employing more people and contributing more to the NSW economy.

The research, commissioned by AHA NSW, found that member hotels source the majority of their intermediate inputs from local suppliers (77 per cent of expenditure) - ensuring the bulk of the flow-on economic activity is retained within the state.



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## Industry Development



### Earlybird Tickets on Sale Now

Destination North Coast is delighted to be collaborating with destination co-host, Byron Shire Council to deliver the **2025 North Coast Tourism Symposium and Awards Gala** events on 31 July 2025.

We are thrilled to be holding this year's symposium at the impressive Byron Community Theatre, a hub for art, culture and social good - right in the heart of Byron Bay.

This year's theme is ***Inspire! Shaping Tomorrow's Visitor Economy*** and will feature a dynamic program including a keynote by Mark Bouris AM, renowned Australian entrepreneur and changemaker. The program will include key updates from Destination North Coast, Destination NSW and Tourism Australia as well as thought-provoking and relevant case studies and panel sessions that will spark ideas and help you put the day's learnings to action.

The day will conclude in style with the **North Coast Regional Tourism Awards Gala** at Elements of Byron, an elegant evening celebrating the dedication, innovation and achievements of those who make up the heart and soul of the NSW North Coast visitor economy.

Don't delay in securing your tickets, space is limited, and this year's event will sell out fast!

[Get tickets here](#)

### TA Industry Webinar

The next TA Industry Webinar will be held on Friday 16 May at 11am. [Register to attend.](#)

### Mid North Coast 'Costs of Doing Business' Forums

**Business NSW** is bringing their annual Industrial Relations Update Forums to the Mid North Coast this May:

💎💎 Coffs Harbour - 13 May

💎💎 Port Macquarie - 14 May

The forum brings together key industry experts to discuss some of the most pressing issues affecting your business right now, including **insurance, employment law changes, and the future business landscape in NSW.**

[Tickets for Costs of Doing Business Forum](#)

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## Around the Region

Discover what's been happening across the tourism industry within the Destination North Coast network. To share your new product, experience or event, please [get in touch with Ashley Gray](#), our Industry Development Manager or submit them via the link below.



Il Delfino



Basq House

### North Coast Venues Included in Best Hotels Lists

Yamba's [Il Delfino](#) has been included in the [Condé Nast Traveler Best Hotels Hot List for 2025](#).

Byron's [Basq House](#) has been included in [Travel & Leisure's Best New Affordable Luxury Hotels in the World](#).

### Best Gin Experiences

Australian Traveller have just released their list of [best gin experiences across Australia](#), with [Husk Farm Distillery](#) coming in at number 4 and [Lord Howe Island Distilling Co.](#) number 5.

### Tweed Shire Council Events Funding

Funding is available for events that bring the Tweed Events Strategy 2024-2028 to life - supporting the growth and delivery of festivals and events that celebrate our natural, creative and culinary strengths, and showcase the unique experiences that make the Tweed so special. [Submissions close 30 May 2025](#).

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## New Products and Experiences

Have a **new** product or experience you'd like to tell us and DNSW about? Submit it via the link below.

### [Navia Bathhouse Byron Bay](#)

Navia Bathhouse has officially opened its doors, bringing a slice of Scandinavian wellness culture to the Byron region. Designed around the Nordic principles of community, connection and "hygge" (that warm, cosy feeling of togetherness), Navia is a bathhouse where slowing down isn't just encouraged - it's ritualised.

[Submit new product updates here](#)

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## 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.

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#### **2025 Flavours of NSW Zone**

Apply now for the opportunity to be awarded one of eighteen (18) \$4,500 subsidies to exhibit in the Flavours of NSW zone at Fine Food Australia 2025. Investment NSW is offering 12 subsidies, and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is offering an additional 6 subsidies specifically to support regional NSW manufacturers. **Closes 12 May 2025.**

#### **Arts and Cultural Funding Program**

2-Year multi-year funding provides core investment to the NSW arts and cultural sector to support sustainable growth of the industry, with a focus on all NSW citizens being given the opportunity to contribute to and experience arts and culture. **Closes 26 May 2025**

#### **Regional Filming Fund**

The Regional Filming Fund offsets costs associated with shooting in regional areas of NSW. Regional NSW is defined as all areas in NSW outside the Sydney Metro area. **Closes 30 June 2025**

#### **International Travel Fund**

The International Travel Fund supports NSW screen practitioners for travel related to significant international festivals, markets, awards, industry trade missions and financing projects. **Closes 30 June 2025**

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## **Sustainability and Eco-tourism**



#### **Booking.com - Travel & Sustainability Report 2025**

Key findings include:

- 53% of travellers are now conscious of tourism's impact on local communities as well as the environment.
- 69% of travellers now want to leave the places they visit better than when they arrived.
- 73% of travellers want their spending to go back to the local community.
- 77% of travellers seek authentic experiences that are representative of local culture.
- Sustainably remains important for 84% of travellers.

[Read the report here.](#)

### **EV Fleets Incentive Kick-start Funding**

This is a [new fixed incentive funding option](#) part of the EV fleets incentive designed to support small organisations or those in the early stage of their fleet transition to test Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) and charging infrastructure. **Closes 30 June 2025**

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## **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.](#)

[Casino Beef Week](#) - Casino 24 May to 1 June 2025

[VW State Surfing Classic 2025](#) - Coffs Harbour 27 May to 1 June 2025

[Crescent Head Malibu Classic](#) - 22 to 25 May 2025

[Bellingen Readers and Writers Festival](#) - Bellingen 5 and 6 June 2025

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## **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 [subscribe here](#).

