



Image: Nambucca Heads, Courtesy of Destination NSW

Key Updates



New Roadmap to Turbocharge NSW Visitor Economy

Destination North Coast joined the NSW Government this week for the launch of the **NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2035**—a bold roadmap to turbocharge tourism across the state. The strategy sets ambitious targets: **\$91 billion** in annual visitor expenditure, **40,000 new hotel rooms**, **8.5 million extra airline seats**, and **150,000 additional jobs** by 2035.

Developed with input from more than 500 stakeholders, the plan focuses on five key pillars:

- **Easier access** – expanding aviation, accommodation and workforce capacity
- **Visitor attraction** – bold storytelling and data-driven marketing
- **Events-driven growth** – building a nation-leading calendar of major events
- **Immersive experiences** – showcasing culture, landscapes and produce across NSW
- **Data and insights** – enabling smarter, more agile decision-making

Staged growth targets include **\$59 billion by 2026** and **\$71 billion by 2030**. Destination NSW will lead delivery, working with industry and government to strengthen global competitiveness, attract high-value travellers, and grow tourism across Sydney and the regions.

[Find more here](#)



The Rise of the Grey Gap Year

Australian Seniors has released its Grey Gap Year Report 2025, which shows a shift in perception of retirement, with travel now regarded as a central pillar of a fulfilling life. The report shows Australians aged 50 and over are more engaged in travel than ever before. Nearly 39 per cent went on a 'big' holiday in the past year—a significant jump from less than 18 per cent in 2022.

Among those who booked a big holiday, 36 per cent travelled within Australia, with 26 per cent going interstate and 10 per cent staying within their state.

[Find more here](#)



Symposium Survey Prize Winner!

Congratulations to Lydia Crossingham from The Observatory Apartments, Coffs Harbour who was the winner of the artwork completed by Maria at the North Coast Tourism Symposium in July. Thank you to everyone who provided valuable feedback on this year's events!



ATIC June 2025 Report

Tourism operators show resilience in June 2025, with 72% trading steadily and 36% growing through diversification and digital reach. International demand is rising from Singapore, China, and Southeast Asia, while operators expand into weddings, retreats, and cultural

experiences. Despite cost and workforce pressures, 45% plan to invest further, backed by Quality Tourism programs driving excellence and innovation.

[Find more here](#)



Accessible Tourism Accreditation Program

The **Accessible Accommodation Program** is an accreditation and booking platform helping travellers with disability find reliable, accessible places to stay. Now adopted by ATDW, the Accessible Tourism Accreditation Program rates accommodation across three physical disability tiers and key sensory needs, helping businesses showcase accessibility and enabling travellers to book with confidence.

[Find more here](#)

Industry Insights

Arrivals & Departures for June 2025

The latest [Australian Bureau of Statistics data](#) shows there were 624,510 short-term visitor arrivals to Australia in June 2025, an increase of 6.3 per cent year on year.

The three leading source countries for NSW were New Zealand (32,930 trips),

The Future of Travel: International Trips

The world of tourism is standing on the edge of big changes, expecting around 2.4 billion international trips a year by 2040.

Using information from billions of online searches and a huge collection of data from 230 countries, [the report by Deloitte](#) gives a clear idea of how travel choices,

China (27,700) and the United States (25,640).

new technologies, and different markets will change over the next 15 years.

Industry Development

Regional Arts Webinars

Regional Arts NSW has a few upcoming webinars for the arts community, including:

- Business Plans for Artists including how to promote your business
- Building your online presence through websites, Directories and social media
- Admin tips for running a successful creative business
- Good Governance Tips for Not-for-profit groups in the arts

All webinars cost \$21.97 for non-members or are free for members, including booking fees.

[Register here](#)

AI for Travel Professionals

ATEC is launching their 2025 AI webinar series, designed to help tourism and travel professionals to harness AI tools to streamline their operations and grow their business.

[Learn more](#)

New Cyber Security Guides

Your business could be at risk if your digital devices are compromised, so protecting them is important. The ASD's ACSC has released 3 new cyber security guides to help you protect your business by securing your Apple, Google and Microsoft devices and operating systems.

[Learn more](#)

Free ATDW Webinar

Delivered by ATDW, you'll learn how to create, optimise and get the most out of your ATDW listing in this practical, Q&A-style webinar on **17 September at 2.00pm**.

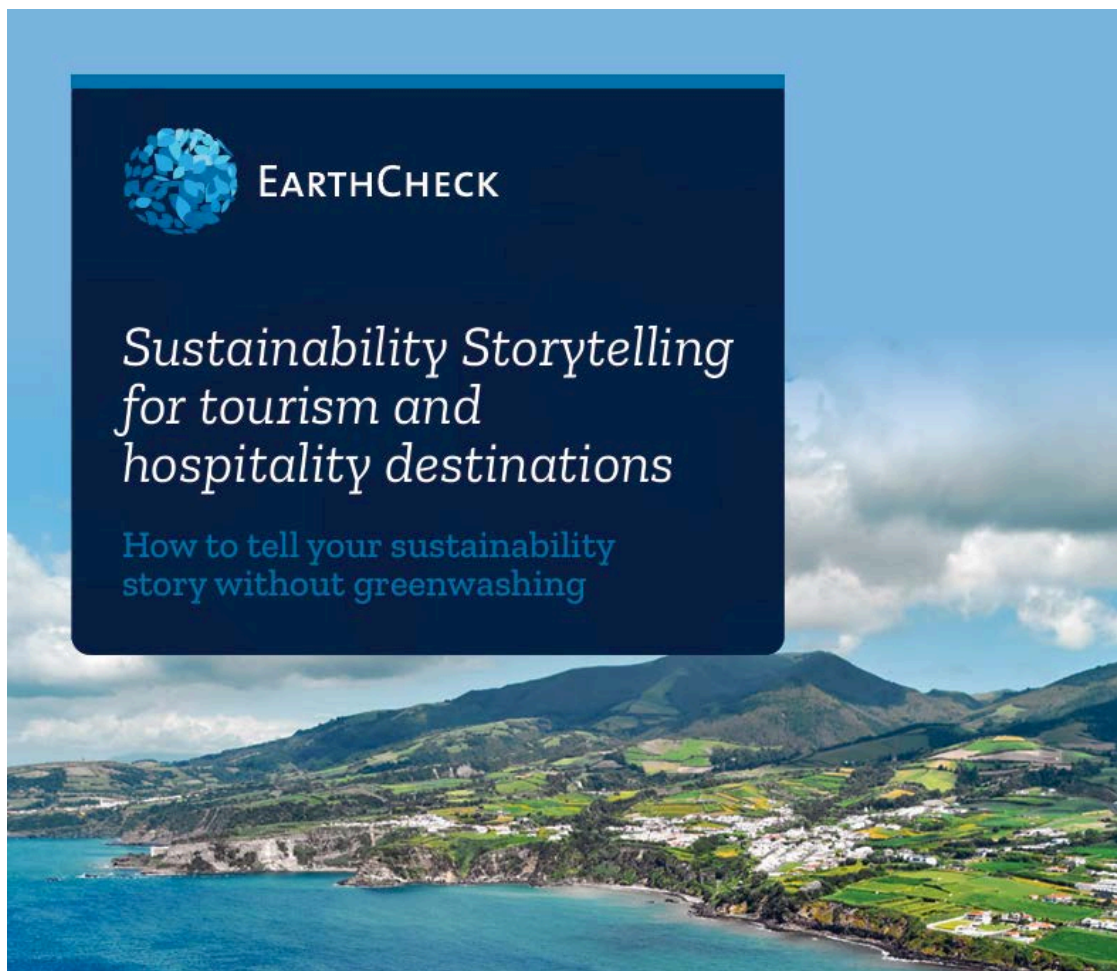
[Register here](#)

Free TAFE Courses

TAFE NSW are offering a number of free courses showing that the visitor economy is more than just tourism; it's a vibrant ecosystem that encompasses travel, hospitality, events, and cultural experiences.

[Register here](#)

Sustainability Spotlight



Sustainability Storytelling Guide

Earthcheck's Sustainability Storytelling Guide for Destinations is a resource designed to assist in crafting and sharing compelling sustainability stories without falling into the trap of 'greenwashing'. If your destination is committed to sustainability, and communicating it in the right way, then before you get started it is important to have the right systems in place in your region to deliver real outcomes.

[Learn more](#)

Half of YHA Australia's Network Now Eco-certified

YHA Australia has achieved Ecotourism Australia certification for four more properties – Sydney Central, Cairns, Thredbo, and Newcastle – bringing 50% of its network to the globally recognised sustainability standard. YHA is progressing towards full network certification by the end of 2025, alongside renewable energy adoption, waste reduction programs, and water-saving initiatives.

[Learn more](#)

DNC Out & About

DNC Industry Networking Event - 24 September 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 September 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 24 September 2025
- Time: 5.15-7.00pm
- Where: Nambucca Heads RSL

RSVP is required by Thursday 18 September 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](#)

Around the Region



Casino Truck Show an Economic Powerhouse

Celebrating its 12th year, the North Coast Petroleum Casino Truck Show has grown into a vibrant and well-attended event which attracts thousands of visitors, exhibitors, and

transport professionals from across the country, and from New Zealand.

This year's event was held over two days and attracted around 43,000 attendees. The event's success proved it was a legitimate and significant economic driver not only for Casino and the Richmond Valley, but the wider Northern Rivers region with local accommodation providers booked out months in advance.

[Read media release](#)

PMHC Major Events Grant Program

Port Macquarie Hastings Council's Major Events Grant program is now open. Applications can include large-scale cultural festivals, destination celebrations, and even corporate or industry conferences that bring new audiences, ideas, and energy into towns and villages.

[More here](#)

Restaurant & Catering Awards NSW Finalists

The Restaurant & Catering (R&CA) Hostplus 2025 Awards for Excellence has revealed its finalists for NSW, showcasing leading venues, teams and talent across the state. Winners will be announced at a gala event in Sydney on 22 September. Good luck to all the North Coast finalists

[Finalists here](#)

Product Development

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

[Submit here](#)

Brunch at Bistro Livi - Murwillumbah

Bistro Livi, the Good Food Guide's 2024 Regional Restaurant of the Year has extended their opening hours to introduce Livi Morning. The stylish brunch will run from 10am - 12pm on Saturdays, with a small a la carte menu in the refined Bistro Livi style.

[Check it out](#)

Spring Arts Exhibition - Nimbin

The annual Spring Arts Exhibition kicks off on 27 September 2025 and has been a feature presentation on Nimbin's cultural calendar for over 20 years presenting an incredible variety of works by Nimbin's fine artists, craft workers, designers, photographers and installation artists.

[Check it out](#)

Smokey's - Lennox Head

Smokey's is a boutique bottle shop in Lennox Head, showcasing a handpicked selection of artisan producers from Australia and around the world.

Check it out

Grants & Funding

Looking for Grants?

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.

[Request a letter of support here](#)

APPLY NOW

Live Performance
Venue Grant Program



Live Performance Venue Grant

The Live Performance Venue Grant supports hospitality venues to host live performances, with funding for sound or staging equipment, programming, marketing, and other delivery costs. **Closes 23 September 2025**

[Find more here](#)

First Nations Screen Fellowship

The First Nations Screen Fellowship provides mid-career to established First Nations screen practitioners a dynamic range of funding and support across a 12-month period. **Closes 5 September 2025**

[Apply](#)

Backroads - Arts on Tour

The initiative aims to extend and support the reach of professional productions to regional towns that do not have performing arts centres as well as support small hall activation and the work of independent producers and artists.

Closes: 17 September 2025

[Apply](#)

Live Performance Venue Grant

The Live Performance Venue Grant supports hospitality venues to host live performances, with funding for sound or staging equipment, programming, marketing, and other delivery costs. **Closes 23 September 2025**

[Apply](#)

Regional Filming Fund

The Regional Filming Fund offsets costs associated with shooting in regional areas of NSW. **Closes 30 June 2026**

[Apply](#)

North Coast Events

Laurieton Vintage Motor Club Show and Shine

Laurieton 7 September 2025

Gloucester Tri Challenge

Gloucester 14 September 2025

Tyalgum Music Festival

Tyalgum 26-28 September 2025

Woolgoolga District Orchid Society International Conference and Show Woolgoolga 1-5 October 2025

Destination North Coast NSW, The
Professional Centre Park Avenue, Level
1/9 Park Avenue, Coffs Harbour, New
South Wales 2450, Australia

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