



On behalf of the tourism industry, Tourism Victoria is pleased to present the Melbourne Airport 2009 Victorian Tourism Awards.

The Melbourne Airport 2009 Victorian Tourism Awards celebrate and acknowledge tourism businesses and individuals that have demonstrated outstanding achievements and success during the 2008/2009 financial year.

The Awards program is launched annually and is a submission and inspection based competition for tourism businesses, industry suppliers and individuals working in the tourism industry.

The Awards Ceremony and marketing program provides the opportunity to publicly recognise and showcase the State's finest tourism operators.

The Victorian Tourism Awards aim to:

- Encourage and celebrate creativity, professionalism and innovation.
- Provide a benchmark for best practice within the tourism industry.
- Promote business planning amongst tourism operators.
- Encourage the continual raising of standards.
- Publicly recognise and reward professionalism and excellence.
- Reinforce the value of the tourism industry.
- Promote an annual platform of celebration for the industry and offer networking opportunities for operators and sponsors.
- Provide an opportunity for successful entrants to progress to the Australian Tourism Awards.

The formal Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner (held in November) is the largest and most prestigious event on the Victorian tourism calendar. Over 1,000 guests from the tourism industry attend the ceremony to network and celebrate their fellow colleagues' achievements.

Levels of achievement

The Victorian Tourism Awards recognise four levels of achievement.



Hall of Fame

Awarded to the entry which has won the same category for three consecutive years.



Winner

Awarded to the entry which is judged to be the most outstanding in its category.



Merit

Awarded to an entry which is judged to be of an extremely high standard and very close to the winner in points scored (between 1-3 points).



Finalist

Awarded to acknowledge the high standard of an entry, that has scored at least 75 per cent of the total possible score. As a result there can be more than one finalist in any one category.

Note: Where the minimum score (75 per cent) is not achieved, the Victorian Tourism Awards reserves the right to not award a winner, merit or finalist placegetter.

2009 Rules for Entry

1. You are encouraged to enter the category that best reflects your core business. If entering more than one category, then a separate and complete entry must be submitted for each category.

Entrants may only enter **one** submission in any one of the following group of categories:

- Attractions – either category 1 or 2;
- Festivals and Events – either category 3 or 4;
- Tour and/or Transport Operators – either category 11 or 12;
- Accommodation – either category 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 or 24

2. Achievements or activities referred to within your entry must relate to the **qualifying period 1 July 2008 – 30 June 2009**.

Entrants must have traded for the **entire** qualifying period.

Exceptions apply to seasonal facilities and the following categories:

- 3 - Major Festivals and Events
- 4 - Festivals and Events
- 14 - Tourism Marketing
- 25 - New Tourism Development

where the activity being put forward for consideration must have occurred **within** the qualifying period.

3. Each category has specific entry requirements, which are articulated within the category descriptor. Eligibility must be clearly demonstrated as part of your response to Question 1a. Failure to demonstrate your eligibility will result in your submission being penalised.
4. All questions must be answered under the submission headings provided. Please state the question then your response in the submission. Unanswered questions will attract zero points. If you feel that you cannot answer a question please discuss this with your Tourism Awards Coordinator. If you still feel the question is not relevant please explain your reasons within your submission.
5. Entrants must be based or operate in Victoria.

An exception to this rule exists where there is a genuine community of interest allowing an entrant to choose to nominate in another state/territory's Awards program. To qualify for this exception the entrant must be able to demonstrate proof of membership in a relevant association OR provide a letter from that state/territories tourism office confirming the entrant's participation in marketing campaigns or activities.

Should a company have individual operational branches or properties in other states/territories they may enter the individual state/territory awards as long as the majority of the submission focuses on the activities undertaken in that state/territory.

6. An entrant, such as a chain or franchise that has multiple products, must enter each product individually if they want each property to be able to promote the achievement of winning a tourism award. Alternatively the business may enter but the logo may only be used by the corporate entity, not the individual products.
7. An entry cannot be moved into another category following the closing date for lodgement of submissions.
8. If at any time following submission of an entry the business being put forward goes into administration, voluntary receivership, liquidation or bankruptcy, the entrant is required to advise the Manager, Tourism Awards in writing and accepts that the submission will no longer be eligible for an award.
9. There is no direct entry into the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards. Only state or territory tourism award winners in categories 1 through 26 will be nominated as finalists in the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards.

Important Notes:

- Once a national Hall of Fame has been won the entrant may not re-enter in the same category at the state/territory level for the following two consecutive years. Note: the entrant may enter other categories.
- Unlike the national Hall of Fame an entrant who achieves Hall of Fame status for the Victorian Tourism Awards will not be precluded from re-entering the following year.

10. **Regional Tourism Awards**

Entry to the Melbourne Airport 2009 Victorian Tourism Awards is open to all Victorian operators irrespective of whether they have entered regional tourism awards.

Entrants who did not win their regional category are encouraged to enter the State awards and are not disadvantaged in the judging process.

Category winners from regional tourism awards are also encouraged to enter the Victorian Tourism Awards.

Tourism operators who did enter regional tourism awards must ensure their submission addresses the full Victorian Tourism Awards criteria including the qualifying period and financial information. All relevant forms and attachments must also be included in the application (as per the submission checklist). They must then forward their submission to the Victorian Tourism Awards Unit by 19 August 2009.

Operators who have not entered any Regional Awards are encouraged to enter the Victorian Tourism Awards and are not disadvantaged in the judging process.

11. **IMPORTANT NOTE: FROM 2009 APPENDICES/SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS ARE NOT REQUIRED AND WILL NOT BE JUDGED.**

The submission must be formatted as follows:

Page Size: A4 (297 x 210 mm)

Font: Font for questions, answers and tables must be no smaller than 12 point Times New Roman or Arial. Font for captions can be smaller than 12 point Times New Roman or Arial.

Format: All text should be 1½ line spacing (Microsoft Word) or equivalent, with the following exceptions:

- Text contained within a multi-column table may be single line spaced as long as tables do not represent more than 8 pages of the total submission.
- Question text and captions may be single line spaced.

All pages should be numbered.

Layout: State the question then your answer.

Pages: The submission must have no more than 30 printed pages (single sided) or 15 pages (double sided) including text, graphs and images (note this does not include the cover page).

Entrants are discouraged from using plastic sleeves.

Dividers: Are optional. If used they must be **blank** i.e. they must not carry images, logos, watermarks or text. They may however be numbered for example "Question 1".

Binding: The submission must be bound. For example in an A4 ring binder or wire/plastic spine binding.

Compliance with Competition Rules

To ensure consistency and fairness in judging, the Rules for Entry must be strictly met. Failure to follow the rules may attract a deduction of up to 15 points.

*Note: In some categories the competition is very close and the deduction of **any points** could be the difference between winning and losing.*

- Failure to comply with size of document A4 – attracts 2 penalty points
- Font that is less than 12 points – attracts 4 penalty points
- More than 30 pages – attracts 1 penalty point per page
- Failure to format to 1½ line spacing – attracts 4 penalty points
- Use of more than 8 pages of tables – attracts 2 penalty points

What Should I Submit?

- ✓ A signed Entry Form (form available on the Victorian Tourism Awards website – www.victoriantourismawards.com.au)
- ✓ A Statutory Declaration form signed by an appropriate third party to confirm that financial statements and other business activity claims made within the submission are accurate (form available on the Victorian Tourism Awards website – www.victoriantourismawards.com.au).
- ✓ The submission. Refer to the rules for entry for specific formatting guidelines.
- ✓ The cover page of the submission should be clearly marked with:
 1. The name of the entrant;
 2. The category entered;
 3. The state/territory tourism awards entered; and
 4. An image(s) representative of the product entered.
- ✓ A separate unbound copy of your answer to Question one and two – to assist with the site visit process.
- ✓ Ten digital images (**Note:** only 600dpi files (High Resolution) in a JPEG format will be accepted) illustrating the entrant's operation should accompany each submission in each category entered. By supplying images you ensure maximum exposure at the presentation ceremony and in official advertising and publications.
- ✓ A 100-word description of your company/product, which will be used by media, for announcements at the presentation ceremony, in promotional material and on website listings. This should be submitted electronically on the same CD as the images.

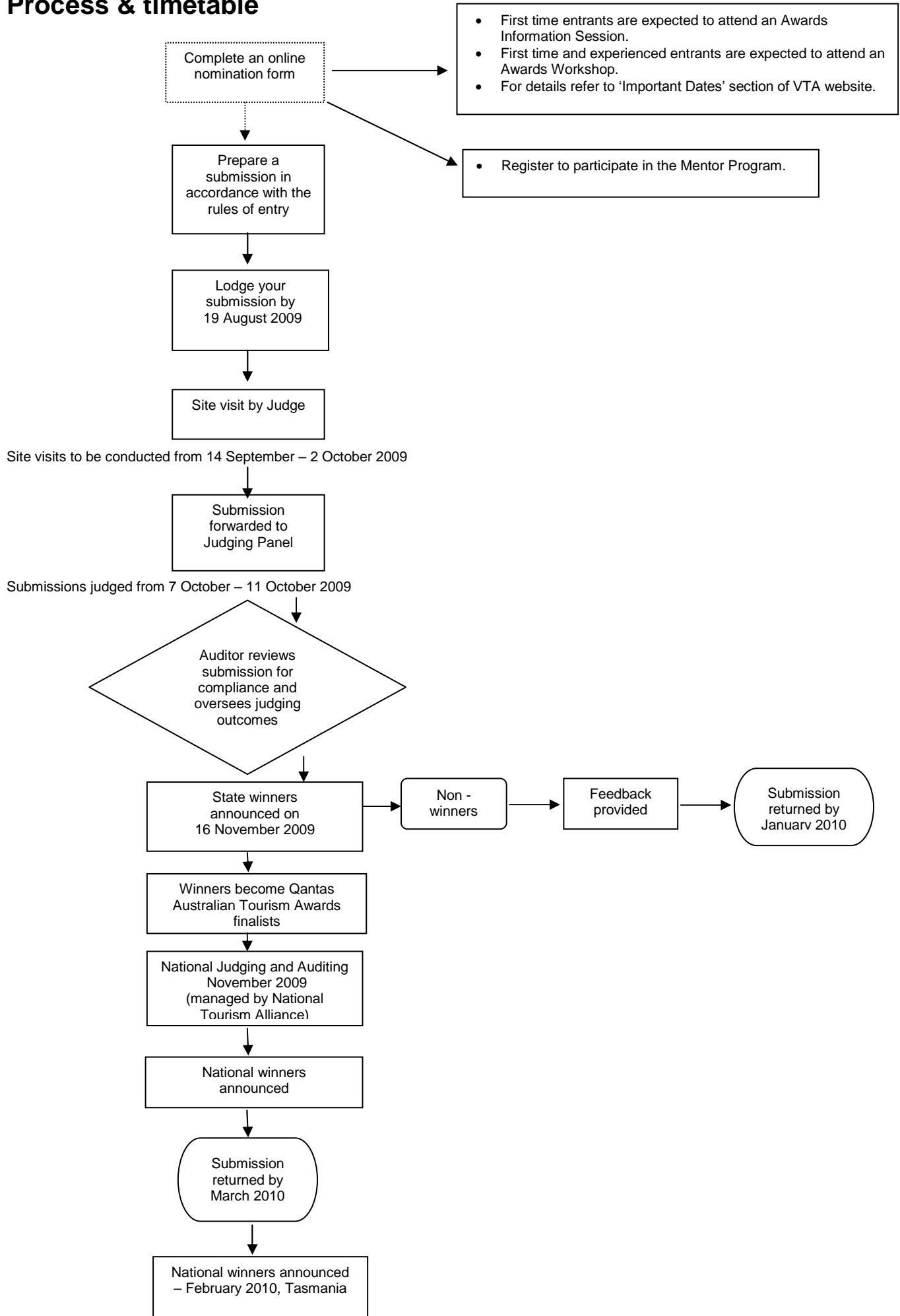
Please mark all image CDs with your entry details ie name and the category number in which you are entering.

- ✓ The contents of the submission must be properly labelled and well packed, in an Australia Post box (BM Mailing Box) for transport.
- ✓ A return postage paid, self-addressed satchel for the return of your submission and Judges feedback. Please ensure this is large enough to contain your returned entry and has the correct amount of postage. The use of Australia Post Express Post or Prepaid Postage satchels will allow for any postage price increases and are preferred.

Important note: Return materials with no paid postage may be delayed in despatch.

Important note: The judges view only the submission and not the packaging.

Process & timetable



How does it work?

Judging

The Judging Process

State judging is conducted by a panel of industry peers appointed by Tourism Victoria and Chair of Judging Panel with the endorsement of the Minister for Tourism. This panel comprises a cross-section of tourism industry experts, some of them former award winners. Each judge has been selected for his or her knowledge and experience, and for their willingness to volunteer and commit time to a non paid role of judging the Victorian Tourism Awards. The selection ensures that a broad range of the industry is represented and that skills are complementary. The judging panel operates independently of Tourism Victoria and is convened each year specifically for the Tourism Awards.

The criteria and category guidelines for the Awards are set at a national level and are consistently applied by all states and territories.

Teams of three judges independently read and score the submissions in a particular category before collaborating as a panel for the final decision. Each judge will assess approximately five categories and will not review the same category in successive years. In addition, all entrants are visited or contacted in person by a judge. The judging process is overseen by the Chair of Judges and an independent auditor.

Judges look for:

1. A financially sound business
2. A thorough and sound business plan and an innovative marketing plan
3. Demonstrated flair, passion and innovation
4. A business that knows its customers and has a service culture
5. A business or individual that has made a significant contribution to the Victorian tourism industry
6. A passionate and innovative submission that clearly illustrates excellence in the tourism industry.

Workshops provide an opportunity for entrants to gain an insight into how the judges score and assess submissions. Judges tips are also available at these workshops.

The Site Visit

The purpose of the site visit is two-fold; verification of claims made within the submission (for example sighting of a risk management policy) and testing of the experience. The site visit will be prearranged and the judges have a proforma from which they work.

Scores from the site visit will not apply at the national level however the judging panel will have access to the written comments.

Further information will be provided by the VTA team during Awards workshops.

Keeping It Fair

To ensure consistency and fairness in judging, the rules for entry must be strictly met. Failure to follow the rules of entry may attract a deduction of up to 15 points. Refer to Rules of Entry.

Note: In some categories the competition is very close and the deduction of any points could be the difference between winning and losing.

Judges' Decision

The decision of the Victorian and Qantas Australian Tourism Awards Judging Panel is final. Any grievance should be forwarded to the attention of Nicole McLean, Manager Tourism Awards, Tourism Victoria, GPO Box 2219T, Melbourne 3001.

Assistance Program

Tourism Victoria has enhanced the Awards Assistance Program to support entrants through the 2009 Victorian Tourism Awards process.

As the Awards are based on written submissions, and winners go on to compete at a national level, the Assistance Program is designed to provide entrants with the tools and information they need to prepare a professional Awards submission.

Information Sessions – NEW for first time entrants

Topics will include:

- Why complete a submission? What is the value?
- How your business will benefit from entering into the Victorian Tourism Awards
- Find out about how to work with a Mentor to complete your submission
- Key dates for the diary

Plus lots of valuable hints and tips to ensure your business is recognised as an industry leader.

The Information Sessions will run for approximately 2 hours. First time entrants are encouraged to attend. Attendance at the Information Sessions is free.

For details refer to http://victoriantourismawards.com.au/Important_Dates/ from April.

Workshops

Join Tourism Awards professionals for an informative and interactive workshop on the Victorian Tourism Awards program.

Topics will include:

- What's new for 2008
- Category/question changes
- Rules for Entry changes
- Hints and Tips for content, presentation and layout

You will have the opportunity to hear from the judges and gain critical insights to what makes an award winning submission.

The workshops will run for approximately 4 hours. First time entrants and experienced entrants are encouraged to attend. There will be a small cost to attend a workshop.

For details refer to http://victoriantourismawards.com.au/Important_Dates/ from April.

Mentoring Program

If you are interested in participating in the Mentor Program with please complete the application form on the Victorian Tourism Awards website http://victoriantourismawards.com.au/Mentor_Program

Advisory Service - NEW for 2009

In addition to the information sessions, workshops and mentoring program, we will provide entrants with the opportunity to gain further professional assistance to enhance the quality of their submission.

Conditions:

Entrants who attend a Victorian Tourism Awards workshop are eligible for the free advisory review service.

The free advisory review service is open from Monday 1 June and concludes on Friday 7 August 2009.

Details of this opportunity will be advised in Awards workshops around Victoria.

Submission Template – NEW for 2009

A template has been designed to help guide entrants through the submission questions and Judges tips. The template provides useful advice about how to approach preparing your submission.

Details of this opportunity will be advised in Awards workshops around Victoria

Categories

For a full list of categories and questions, please refer to -
http://victoriantourismawards.com.au/Entry_Categories/

Our Assurance

All information submitted is strictly confidential. All persons, for example tourism awards coordinators and judges, who may come into contact with your submission, are each required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Delivery

Please ensure your submission is received at Tourism Victoria, Awards Unit, Level 32, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne by no later than 4.00pm on Wednesday 19 August 2009.

Late entries will not be accepted. Please plan to get your submission in early.

More Information

For further advice and information contact your Nicole McLean, Manager Tourism Awards, on (03) 9653 9789 or Kerry McClure, Senior Coordinator Tourism Awards on (03) 9653 9796 or visit our website – www.victoriantourismawards.com