

27. LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARD FOR TOURISM

This category is open to all local government authorities and recognises excellence in tourism planning, the provision of tourism facilities and services, marketing, event development and management, and the overall contribution made both locally and overall to the Victorian tourism industry.

NOTE

This Award is only offered at the Victorian level. Winners in this category will not proceed to the Australian Tourism Awards.

SCORING

Entrants in this category will be scored from the following sources:

- Written submission: 100 marks. The score for each question is highlighted below.
- Site visit: 0 marks. Due to the nature of entrants in this category, the site visit will be for verification purposes only, therefore no points will be awarded.

Total score: ___/100 points

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

- Respond to the following questions using maximum 8,000 words and 25 images. Please note Q1 (COVID-19 & Bushfire Impact) is not included in the word count and it will not contribute to the overall score.
- Submissions are made via the [Australian Tourism Awards portal](#).
- A good answer should include:



1. COVID-19 & BUSHFIRE IMPACT (0 marks)

Provide the judges with an understanding of your organisation situation resulting from the national and world events (e.g., COVID-19, bushfire) during the qualifying period. Please answer:

1. Describe how the restrictions impacted the organisation.
2. Describe the overall impact of COVID-19 and/or the bushfires to your organisation.

NOTE: These responses do not contribute to your overall score but provide a clearer picture for judges to understand what you have been able to achieve. This is factual information allowing you to tell your organisation story in your written submission.

2. INTRODUCTION (20 marks)

Please provide an overview of your tourism products and services including the nature and history of the organisation. Describe your commitment to tourism excellence and your involvement in the tourism industry.

Response Guidance

- ❖ Set the story of your organisation, your tourism product and service. Take the judge on a journey of how your commitment to tourism began, how you have developed your organisation's tourism offering over time.
- ❖ This is where the judges (and auditors) will gain an understanding of how you fit into the category. Therefore, it is important to clearly demonstrate your eligibility by aligning with the category criteria to ensure that there is no misunderstanding as to why you have entered this category. The focus of this question is tourism.
- ❖ Your response should demonstrate why your organisation should be considered as an award-winning organisation for tourism by highlighting your points of difference and what makes you stand out.
- ❖ Demonstrate your commitment to tourism excellence by explaining your organisation's values and philosophy and how the organisation has been actively involved with and contributed to the tourism industry (locally, regionally and nationally).
- ❖ Tourism excellence can also be demonstrated by listing any awards you have won and accreditations you hold.
- ❖ Use graphics to support and enhance your response provided. For example, a map of where you are located, images of the product/service and any specific facilities, amenities, services you have highlighted in your response.

3. TOURISM PLANNING (40 marks)

A. Outline your tourism strategy and Council's tourism development plan. 10 marks

Response Guidance

- ❖ Provide information on Council's approach to tourism, e.g., is it pro-active or reactive?
- ❖ Give an overview of your tourism strategy, e.g., what are the main focus and investment areas, if your region has seasonal challenges, how do you address those requirements?
- ❖ Consider including any links with other strategy formulation, e.g., an economic development plan.
- ❖ What processes do you have in place to identify and meet the needs of tourists visiting or passing through your region?

B. What relationships do you have with the local tourism industry, visitor centres, regional tourism associations, the State Tourism Organisation and neighbouring councils in the provision of tourism services/infrastructure and in tourism marketing? 10 marks

Response Guidance

- ❖ Detail your involvement in and/or support of tourism industry bodies and businesses. Do you work with neighbouring councils in tourism development and marketing? What contribution does Council make towards the provision of visitor information services?

- ❖ *Ensure that your response is relevant to the qualifying period.*
- ❖ *Use graphics to support and enhance your response provided.*

C. During the qualifying period, what have you implemented to improve your tourism offering and to support tourism businesses survival and recovery in the wake of national and world events (i.e., COVID-19, bushfires)? 20 marks

Response Guidance

- ❖ *This question seeks to understand how you have improved the tourism offering within the qualifying period. Additionally, it seeks to understand what strategies and initiatives were implemented to support the tourism industry through a year of challenging national and world events. To respond, consider:*
 - *What strategies, innovations and/or initiatives the Council has introduced to enhance the tourism offering of the region. An enhancement could include for example, a new experience or facility.*
 - *What strategies, innovations and/or Initiatives the Council has introduced to support the survival and recovery of the industry and tourism businesses. This could include, for example, diversification of product, professional development, grants for tourism businesses, etc.*
- ❖ *The response should also demonstrate why the strategy, innovation and/or initiatives were implemented and how this enhanced the visitor experience of your region or supported the tourism industry in this period.*
- ❖ *An insightful response would include the research and planning that was undertaken as well as the outcome/s of the innovation, development, and/or initiative and how they align with your organisation's main goals and strategies.*
- ❖ *Use graphics to support and enhance your response provided.*

4. MARKETING (20 marks)

What marketing strategies did the organisation implement in the qualifying year to attract or maintain visitation to the region, and/or to support the tourism recovery. Why were these strategies chosen and what was the result?

Response Guidance

- ❖ *This question is looking for a clear understanding of how you are marketing to your target market. You should begin by outlining who you have aimed your marketing towards and demonstrate a clear understanding of this market. Consider for example, who they are, where they are from, how old they are, how they purchase travel, what motivates and inspires them and how your product meets their expectations.*
- ❖ *Identify how the target market/s are right for the region. What research have you conducted or used to determine your target markets?*
- ❖ *You should then provide a clear overview of the innovative approaches you have taken to marketing and what you have done differently to attract and/or connect with visitors within the qualifying period. Consider for example; social media, digital or interactive advertising, apps, product packaging, tactical or paid advertising campaigns, relationship marketing.*
- ❖ *Ensure you outline why these marketing strategies were selected by aligning with your target markets attributes as well as local, regional or state marketing plans.*

- ❖ *It is important that the judge understands whether the strategies were developed to support tourism recovery, or whether the strategies were adopted to keep connected to your target market during travel restrictions.*
- ❖ *Detail how these new, different, unique marketing activities have been successful. You should consider metrics to measure the outcomes and consider media coverage, social media engagement, increased web traffic, increased bookings etc.*
- ❖ *Use graphics to support and enhance your response. For example, images of marketing placement (social media screen shots, website, advertisements).*

5. VISITOR EXPERIENCE (20 marks)

How does your organisation provide quality visitor experiences and demonstrate inclusive practices?

Response Guidance

- ❖ *This question seeks to understand how your local government delivers a quality visitor experience and practices inclusivity.*
- ❖ *Outline the practices the Council have put in place to ensure the delivery of high-quality visitor service during the qualifying year, e.g., how do you make an effort to understand visitor needs, welcome them, and do business with them? Due to the disruptions of recent national and world events, you should also consider how you provided quality visitor experience in the alternative ways in which you operated, e.g., communicated changing restrictions to visitors, kept visitors informed during closers, how you stayed connected with visitors, etc.*
- ❖ *Consider all points of customer engagement, e.g., email, phone, visitor centres, and interaction during and after the visit.*
- ❖ *Outline how you are committed to quality customer service throughout all areas of the business. This could include staff training, service principles and policies, staff reward systems etc.*
- ❖ *Describe how you monitor and assess customer service to ensure continued quality delivery and that you are meeting the needs of your visitors. For example: feedback forms, monitoring social media, blogs, mystery shoppers etc.*
- ❖ *Consider how you actively encourage feedback and how feedback is used to improve the customer experience. It may be useful to provide a case study/example where you have implemented a change based on customer feedback and/or testimonials which further demonstrate outcomes of quality customer experiences.*
- ❖ *As a part of your delivery of quality visitor experiences you need to demonstrate how you consider visitors' special and specific needs and recognises the needs of a diverse community. This can include, but is not limited, to cultural, language, physical, intellectual, and other specific needs. Provide some examples.*
- ❖ *Use graphics to support and enhance your response. For example: staff communications posters, flow charts of customer service processes, feedback forms.*