

VIRTUAL VERIFICATION

Site visits are an integral part of the Victorian Tourism Awards judging process which allows our judges the valuable opportunity to connect with operators and verify the business plans and processes.

Sadly, due to the current lockdown in Victoria, the Victoria Tourism Industry Council has made the decision to not proceed with the site visits on their current format. To allow this important element of the awards to happen during the judging period, and to keep the process fair and equitable, face-to-face site visits will now be replaced by a virtual verification meeting which will not be scored.

All business [categories](#) (1-28) would have received a site visit. Therefore, all of these categories will now have a virtual verification meeting with the site visit judge.

As the site visit score will no longer apply, the total score for the following categories will now be **100 points**:

- Major Tourist Attractions
- Tourist Attractions
- Ecotourism
- Cultural Tourism
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Island Tourism
- Visitor Information Services
- Major Tour & Transport Operators
- Tour & Transport Operators
- Adventure Tourism
- Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services
- Tourism Wineries, Distilleries & Breweries
- Caravan & Holiday Parks
- Hosted Accommodation
- Unique Accommodation
- Self-Contained Accommodation
- 3-3.5 Star Accommodation
- 4-4.5 Star Accommodation
- 5 Star Accommodation
- Excellence in Accessible Tourism

The below two categories score will be:

- Business Event Venues = **80 points**
- Excellence in Food Tourism = **85 points**

There are no changes to the scores for the below categories, as the site visit for these categories were always for verification purposes only:

- Major Festivals and Events
- Festivals and Events
- Tourism Retail & Hire Services
- Tourism Marketing & Campaigns
- New Tourism Business
- Tourism Education & Training
- Local Government Award for Tourism

The previous total score can be seen under each category [on this page](#).

Individual categories (29, 30, 31) do not receive a site visit, therefore, entrants in these categories will not have a virtual verification meeting.

This will in no way impact on your written submission which will continue to be judged in the usual manner. Site visits are not required by the Australian Tourism Industry Council and they are not undertaken in the national level.

If you have any concerns or further queries, please contact:

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The information below will provide you with an outline of what judges will need to verify during the meeting. It is by no means an exhaustive list but highlights the focus areas that the judge will want to know more about.

How will the virtual verification meeting be conducted?

- All meetings will need to be conducted during the judging period – 2 September to 10 October 2021.
- The judge that has been assigned to perform your verification meeting will contact you, either via email or phone, during the judging period to schedule the online meeting.
 - Judges will be using the contact details that entrants have provided in the '*Site Visit Inspection Details*' field at the time of nomination.
 - If you need to verify these details, log-in to the [online portal](#) and click on 'Details'.
- Meetings will be conducted via Zoom/Teams or another conference tool used by the judge. Once the judge has confirmed the day/time for the meeting, he/she will send you the link via email or a calendar invite.
- The virtual verification meetings will take approx. 45 minutes.

Who will conduct the verification meeting?

All [judges](#) of the 2021 Victorian Tourism Awards will be conducting the verification meetings, but **please note**: a 4th judge is assigned to conduct the meeting, therefore, they would not have read your submission. The purpose of the meeting is for verification of the business, not the awards submission.

Businesses that have entered multiple categories, will likely have the same judge conducting the verification meeting for all entries. In this case, the judge will verify all information in the same meeting, but they may schedule a longer meeting if deemed necessary.

What should you expect during the meeting?

The judge will have a checklist from which they work, and they will be taking notes during the meeting.

It is **essential** that you are ready for the judge at the appointed date and time of the meeting. Once you receive the email confirmation/ calendar invite for the meeting, please check which conference tool the judge will be using (e.g., Zoom, Teams) and whether you need to download this to your computer. Or just log-in 10 minutes prior to the meeting so you have plenty of time to download the tool if needed.

We understand that internet connection issues can occur, especially if it is being used by many staff or family members. Ensure that others in the household/workplace are not streaming something or downloading documents/ files, etc. during the time of the meeting. This will help with the internet connection.

If you have any major issues on the day, please contact the judge as soon as possible.

Will the site visits continue to be online in the future?

We hope to resume in person site visits for the 2022 Victorian Tourism Awards. Site visits have only been replaced this year because of the current restrictions in Victoria.

Checklist

The following checklist will assist entrants to prepare for the Virtual Verification Meeting. Entrants are encouraged to review this checklist and ensure they have the information and documentation handy for the meeting.

Section	What the judge will want to know more about:
<p>The Judge assigned to do your verification meeting <u>would not</u> have read your submission. The purpose of the meeting is for verification of the business, not the awards submission.</p>	
Customer Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The business customer service philosophy / values • How the business manages feedback • Your complaint handling policy • How the business handles bookings • Your cancellation policy • How visitor’s specific and special needs are considered
Business Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current business/ recovery plan • Short- and long-term goals for the business • Your involvement with the wider industry and other businesses in the destination
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current marketing plan • Monitoring of your marketing plan • Target market
Operations & Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks associated with the business • Risk management • COVID-19 risk management and response • Staff training program