Australian Tourism Awards

26. Excellence in Accessible Tourism

CATEGORY QUESTIONS & CRITERIA

25/3/2026

2026 South Australian Tourism Awards

TiCSA TOURISM INDUSTRY COUNCIL

DESCRIPTOR

This award recognises businesses that provide a tourism product, experience or service that goes above and beyond to accommodate and cater for people with disabilities and/or specific needs e.g. mobility, vision, and/or hearing impairment, neurodiversity, or other access needs.

Prerequisite to enter

- The business must be able to demonstrate that they meet base business operating standards. This can be done by either:
    a) Holding current Sustainable Tourism Accreditation through the Quality Tourism Framework.
    b) Completing the Business Standards within their awards submission online.
- Businesses must have met the standard for at least one (1) of the five (5) 'badges' in the Accessible Tourism program within the Quality Tourism Framework (QTF).
- Entrants may nominate for this category before completing QTF Accessible Tourism program, but it must be completed before the submission is completed.

WORD COUNT

Maximum of 3000 words.

IMAGE COUNT

Maximum 10 images.

QUALIFYING PERIOD

The Qualifying Period is 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

PROCESS

FOR BUSINESSES WHICH ARE ENTERING INTO ANOTHER NATIONAL CATEGORY

For those that are entering into an existing national category, there will be an option within the submission for entrants to elect to transfer their submission responses into the Accessible Tourism Award.

The Excellence in Accessible Tourism submission for this award will draw out the response from specific questions relating to the Overview and Customer Service sections of their other submission. Businesses will be able to edit the submission

response for the questions drawn from their other submission before submitting their Excellence in Accessible Tourism submission.

To clarify, the following table lists the questions in the categories 1-25 and where they appear in the Excellence in Accessible Tourism category.

Accessible Tourism Questions	All categories other than those listed elsewhere in this table	5. Ecotourism, 7. Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Tourism Experience	6. Cultural Tourism	14. Tourism Marketing and Campaigns
1.1.A	1.1.A	1.1.A	1.1.A	1.1.A
1.1.B	1.1.B	1.1.B	1.1.B	1.1.B
2.1.A	4.2.A (overview only)	5.2.A (overview only)	4.2.A (overview only)	-
2.1.B	-	-	-	-
2.2.A	4.1.A	5.1.A	4.1.A	-
2.2.B	4.1.B	5.1.B	4.1.B	-

FOR BUSINESSES WHICH ARE ONLY ENTERING INTO EXCELLENCE IN ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

For those that are only entering into the Accessible Tourism category, entrants will need to complete all questions.

SCORE SUMMARY

Submission Score	40 points
Digital Review Score	10 points
Consumer Rating	5 points
Site Visit	0 points
TOTAL	**55 points**

SUBMISSION SCORE BREAKDOWN

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS **10 POINTS**

- Question 1.1 (10 points)

SECTION 2. THE ACCESSIBLE TOURISM OFFERING **30 POINTS**

- Question 2.1 (15 points)
- Question 2.2 (15 points)

FINAL REMARKS

- Final Remarks

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS

Question 1.1

A. Provide an overview of the business and its inclusive products/services/experience.

B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 2. THE ACCESSIBLE TOURISM OFFERING

Question 2.1

A. Detail 2-5 improvements have been made to develop business operations and/or the product offering to be more accessible during the qualifying period? These may be new initiatives or improvements to existing practices. Only activities and outcomes from the qualifying period should be included.

B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

Question 2.2

A. Detail 2-5 initiatives the business put in place during the qualifying period to deliver excellent accessible and inclusive customer service throughout the visitor journey? These may be new initiatives or improvements to existing practices. Explain how these initiatives enhanced the visitor experience at key stages of the visitor journey.

B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 3. FINAL REMARKS

Final Remarks

Last updated: 25/3/2026

RESPONSE GUIDE

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS	10 POINTS
Question 1.1	**10 points**
Question 1.1.A Provide an overview of the business and its inclusive products/services/experience.	

(text box response)

Response Guidance

Provide a clear and concise description of the business and the product/service/visitor experience it provides.

Include the vision and the values of the business to help set the scene for later questions.

Assume the judge has no prior knowledge of the business, so take them on a journey of how and when it began, where the business is located or where the services are provided, who works in the business, etc.

As the judges may not be familiar with the business – and your submission may be judged nationally by judges that are not from your state/territory - explain everything from the ground up including;

- *History*
- *Size/scale of business*
- *Business structure*
- *Location/Map*
- *Involvement in tourism industry.*

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 judges (and auditors) need to understand how the business fits into the category; therefore, be sure to include a clear explanation.

Highlight the business's points of difference and what makes it stand out from others. Consider the amenities, products, services, or facilities that enhance visitor satisfaction.

Question 1.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	**Description of Evidence** (up to 10 words)	**Evidence Attachment**
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

Visual evidence must support and not replace the written response.

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q1.1. Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- *Images of staff, services, experiences, buildings, room types etc.*
- *Map of location of business, route etc.*
- *An accessibility map/s showing the accessible features including accessible pathways, toilets, parking, viewing platforms/areas etc.*

This is an opportunity to show each of the accessible products or services that are on offer.

Do not include any documents (plans, procedures, policies etc.).

SECTION 2. THE ACCESSIBLE TOURISM OFFERING — 30 POINTS

Question 2.1 BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND PRODUCT — 15 points

Question 2.1.A Detail 2-5 improvements have been made to develop business operations and/or the product offering to be more accessible during the qualifying period? These may be new initiatives or improvements to existing practices. Only activities and outcomes from the qualifying period should be included.

Provide a brief overview of the business's approach towards accessibility

EXAMPLE

Improvement 1: **----------** *Name the improvement the business implemented in its operations and/or the product offering during the qualifying period to be more accessible.*	
	Describe the improvement and how it improves accessibility *Provide detail on the improvement - what is it and how it improved accessibility.*
	Rationale: *What were the reasons for this improvement? Include what specific goals the business aimed to achieve with this improvement.*
	Outcomes: *What were the measurable results and learnings of these changes?*

Response Guidance

Provide between 2-5 examples.

(?) Describe the improvement

Provide the judge with an overview of what inclusive practices have been integrated.

Some examples include:

- *Business Operations*
  - *Marketing*
  - *The development of a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)*
  - *Updating equipment and technology for internal use.*
- *Product Offering*
  - *Technological*
  - *Facility development or upgrade*
  - *Design of space*
  - *Transport*
  - *Circulation/wayfinding.*

(?) Target Market

Identify who the improvements were developed for.

This could be, but is not limited to, external (e.g. visitors) or internal (e.g. staff) that are/have:

- *Mobility impaired*
- *Vision impaired*
- *Hearing impaired*
- *Sensitivities (e.g. to noise, bright or flashing lights, crowds)*
- *Young children*
- *Cognitive impairment*
- *Cultural visitors*
- *LGBTQIA+*
- *Dietary requirements/preferences*
- *International Visitors.*

(?) Research and Rationale

Provide an overview of how and why these improvements were developed.

Outline why the business implemented the initiative.

What research was undertaken to understand how the improvements would achieve the desired outcomes?

How were people with accessibility needs involved/consulted?

(?) Specific Goals

Provide the judge with the specific goals that the business aimed to achieve with the improvement.

Some goals can include, but are not limited to:

- *Increase in interaction with website specific to accessibility page/s*
- *Increased visitation by individuals or groups with access needs.*
- *Reduction in incidents/complaints*
- *Increased occupancy by customers with access needs*
- *Improved customer feedback*

(?) Outcomes

What were the measurable results of these changes?

Provide measurable results that demonstrate to the judge the outcomes of the improvement.

Measurement examples could include:

- *Percentage increase or decrease (visitation, satisfaction, complaints)*
- *Number changes (visitors, sales, hours saved, costs reduced)*
- *Ratings or review improvements*
- *Operational efficiencies*
- *Usage or uptake of new offerings.*

Remember to include (where you can) the evidence source (e.g., POS system, CRM analytics, survey results, booking system data, financial reports). This helps judges validate accuracy.

Consider what learnings were made during this process, particularly if intended outcomes were not achieved.

Has/will the product or service be adjusted given the outcome?

Question 2.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	**Description of Evidence** (up to 10 words)	**Evidence Attachment**
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

Provide evidence to support your response. For example:

- *An image of the improvement*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)*
- *Before and after images of works*
- *An infographic e.g. graph, demonstrating the outcomes.*

Visual evidence must support and not replace the written response.

Question 2.2 CUSTOMER SERVICE	**15 points**

Question 2.2.A Detail 2-5 initiatives the business has undertaken during the qualifying period to deliver excellent accessible and inclusive customer service throughout the visitor journey? These may be new initiatives or improvements to existing practices. Explain how these initiatives enhanced the visitor experience at key stages of the visitor journey.

Provide a brief overview of the business's customer service philosophy.

EXAMPLE

Customer Service Initiative 1.		
	Describe the initiative that enhances the business customer service:	
	At what stage of the visitor journey does this impact? *(Pre, During, Post, All)*	(checkbox with multiple choice option)
	Rationale **What influenced the development of this initiative?**	
	Outcome **What outcomes have come from this initiative?**	

Response Guidance

Provide the top 2 - 5 examples.

Focus on the initiatives that have specifically related to customer service and provide examples that have not been included in question 2.1.

Ensure that you include activities that occurred in the qualifying period, identifying new or longstanding activities.

This could include, but is not limited to:

- *Accessibility information on website*
- *Staff/volunteer training and development*
- *Employment of people with specific needs*
- *Customer feedback and post-stay surveys*
- *Improved booking processes*
- *Improved service delivery Front of House*
- *Additional/customised services available for customers with specific needs e.g. audio descriptions, quite spaces/hours, tactile tours/exhibits, point of contact for accessibility services.*

(?) Describe the initiative

Consider the various touchpoints of visitor engagement and how these have been enhanced, specifically for the customer experience.

(?) Stage of the visitor journey

Specify at what point the initiative takes place within the visitor journey – pre, during, post or across multiple stages.

(?) Rationale

Explain why the business focused on improving this aspect of customer experience.
This may include, but is not limited to, examples such as:

- *Customer feedback or reviews*
- *Staff input*
- *Competitive landscape*
- *Operational needs or service gaps*
- *Data/survey insights*
- *Changes in customer expectations or industry trends.*

(?) Outcomes

Describe the outcomes and learnings that were achieved during the qualifying period that were a result of the initiative.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- *Improved online ratings or reviews by XX%*

- *Increased repeat visitation*
- *Improved customer satisfaction or feedback results*
- *Reduced complaints*
- *Positive testimonials.*

Where possible, include:

- *A baseline (e.g. previous performance or feedback)*
- *The result achieved during the qualifying period*
- *Evidence of improvement (e.g. percentage change, rating increase, customer quotes).*

Testimonials may be included as supporting evidence, but should complement measurable results rather than replace them.

2.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	**Description of Evidence** (up to 10 words)	**Evidence Attachment**
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

Visual evidence must support and not replace the written response.

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q2.2.A.

Examples of the type of evidence you could include are:

- *Staff initiatives*
- *Customer initiatives in place*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)*

SECTION 3. FINAL REMARKS **0 POINTS**

In 100 words or less, provide any final remarks as to why the business should be considered as a winner in its chosen category.

(text box)

Response Guidance

Make this a personal response to close out the submission.