

6. CULTURAL TOURISM

This category recognises tourism businesses that foster a greater understanding and appreciation of authentic culture, history, heritage and/or the arts.

COVID-19 Impacts (0 marks)

Please provide the judges with an understanding of your business's situation resulting from national and world events during the qualifying period. E.g., COVID-19, natural disasters (fire/flood).

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 only, allowing you to tell your business story in your written submission.

Bullet points are recommended. These responses should be short and sharp.

Q.1 Outline how many months in the qualifying period (1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022) you were operational for.

Q.2 Describe what the restrictions were on your business e.g., gatherings.

Q.3 Describe the impact of travel restrictions on your business e.g., border closures.

1. Introduction (15 marks)

A. Describe the nature and history of your tourism business as well as key features of your business plan. 4 marks

Take the judge on a journey of your business product/service; how and when it began, where the business is located or services provided, who works in the business etc.

How has the business developed the over time?

Describe the vision, mission and core values.

Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan, including main goals and strategies. This will assist the judge to understand how business development (Q2) and marketing efforts (Q3) align with the business's overall strategies.

B. Provide an overview of your tourism products, experiences, and services available. 7 marks

What products/experience/service are on offer to visitors?

Highlight your points of difference and what makes your business stand out from others (your unique selling points). Consider your amenities, products, services, or facilities that enhance visitor satisfaction.

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.

C. How does your business demonstrate tourism excellence? 4 marks

Demonstrate your commitment to tourism excellence by explaining the values and philosophy of your business. This should be reflected in your policies and procedures, on how staff is inducted, incentivised and/or trained – so include details of these to show the business commitment to excellence.

How has the business been actively involved with and contributed to the tourism industry (locally, regionally, and nationally) through both business and personal participation?

Tourism excellence can also be demonstrated by listing any awards you have won and accreditations you hold.

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two 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, a collage of the accreditation programs you participate in and/or any award achievements.

2. Cultural Protection and Preservation (30 marks)

A. Demonstrate how the business mitigates or minimizes its impacts on our cultural heritage resources. 10 marks

This is where the judges will gain an understanding of how you carefully consider your impact on the cultural heritage resources and how you marry preservation and protection with allowing visitor access and providing a tourism experience.

Consider, if applicable, both the physical and reputational impacts.

Outline the services and facilities available which have been designed to respect heritage resources and places.

Describe the outcomes of the mitigation/minimisation activities that are in place. The inclusion of actual measurement data including the amounts saved/reduced in comparison to the previous qualifying period will enhance response. However, it is anticipated that data may not be available, or the predicted outcomes may not be able to be demonstrated due to business disruptions. If this is the case, demonstrate to the judge how your results have been impacted.

B. What have you implemented or improved to protect and preserve cultural heritage whilst enhancing the visitor experience, or what strategies have you implemented to provide business recovery/resilience in the wake of national and world events during the qualifying period? 10 marks

The previous question is designed to give judges a broad overview of all the preservation and protection you undertake to minimise the impact on cultural heritage resources. This question requires you to share what innovations and/or developments you have introduced or updated during the qualifying period to enhance the visitor experience. Additionally, or alternatively, it seeks to understand what strategies were implemented for business endurance through a year of challenging national and world events.

An innovation can be defined as “The process of introducing new or significantly improved goods or services and/or implementing new or significantly improved processes.” (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics). This could include, for example, a new experience/facility, creation of education programs, development of asset management strategies, etc.

Actions that supported the ongoing survival of your business could include, for example, diversifying your product/experience, seeking alternative ways for the delivery of the experience/product/service.

C. Why were these innovations and/or developments initiated, and what were the outcomes? 10 marks

Explain the decision-making process and what drove the business to implement these innovations/developments. Consider how these enhances the visitor experience whilst protecting culture and/or developing cultural understanding.

Include the research, planning and outcome/s of these innovations/developments and how they align with the business' main goals and strategies.

Demonstrate how these protect and preserve our cultural heritage.

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response.

3. Marketing (15 marks)

A. Describe the marketing strategies you have used to differentiate your cultural heritage business and promote the appreciation and enjoyment of the region's cultural heritage. Why were these strategies chosen and what was the result? 15 marks

The response needs to focus on innovative approaches to marketing and promotions and relate back to the cultural heritage experience.

Judges are looking for a clear overview of the innovative approaches you have taken to marketing and what you have done differently to attract your customers within the qualifying period. Consider, for example, social media, digital or interactive advertising, apps, product packaging, tactical or paid advertising campaigns, relationship marketing.

Explain why these strategies were selected and how it aligns with local, regional and/or state cultural heritage marketing plans.

Detail how these marketing activities have been successful. Use metrics to measure the outcomes and consider media coverage, social media engagement, increased web traffic, increased bookings, etc.

Ensure that your response is relevant to the qualifying period.

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response. For example, images of marketing placement (social media screen shots, website, advertisements).

4. Customer Experience (20 marks)

A. Demonstrate how you educate both visitors and host communities about our cultural heritage resources and how to enjoy them sustainably. 10 marks

The judges are looking for leadership in visitor education of cultural tourism.

Therefore, you need to outline how you share knowledge on cultural heritage and support its sustainability.

Consider all the ways in which awareness and education is delivered to visitors and the wider community. For example, onsite communications/signage, staff training and development, education programs.

Demonstrate how the business influences visitors through activities which foster responsible use and enjoyment of our cultural heritage and our communities.

Demonstrate what the outcomes of these activities are and how you have influenced visitors to participate in cultural tourism in a sustainable manner.

Describe how you communicate to and educate communities about the importance of cultural preservation. This might include demonstrating how you involve stakeholder groups with a meaningful role in planning and decision-making for the design, development and delivery of ecotourism programs and services.

**B. How does your business provide quality customer experiences and demonstrate inclusive practices?
10 marks**

This question requires you to outline the practices you have put in place to ensure the delivery of high-quality customer service throughout the visitor experience journey.

For those businesses that had significant disruption during the qualifying period, consider how you provided quality customer experiences in the alternative ways in which you operated, such as communicating to customers during changing restrictions, kept customers informed during closures etc.

Demonstrate 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.

Consider all points of customer engagement e.g., email, phone, guest greetings/welcome and interaction during and after the experience.

Once you have provided an overview of how customer service is delivered, describe how your business monitors and assesses customer service to ensure continued quality delivery. For example, feedback forms, monitoring social media, blogs, mystery shoppers, etc. Consider how the business actively encourages feedback and how feedback is used to improve the visitor experience.

As a part of your delivery of quality customer experiences you need to demonstrate how you consider visitors' special and specific needs and recognise the needs of a diverse community. This can include, but is not limited to, cultural, language, physical, intellectual, dietary, and other specific needs e.g., groups, special interest, LGBTQ, etc.

Provide examples of how you catered for customers with specific needs and explain the outcome or successes. A case study would be beneficial here.

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response. For example, staff communications posters, flow charts of customer service processes, reception cards encouraging feedback.

5. Responsible Tourism (10 marks)

A. How have you considered and progressed your environmental responsibilities during the qualifying period? 3 marks

*This question requires you to outline how you have considered and acted on reducing or improving (whichever applied) your overall impact on the **environment**.*

Consider the following:

- *How have you considered your environmental impact?*
- *What have you done to be environmentally responsible?*

Some examples of how you demonstrate environmental responsibility are:

- *Water conservation, waste management/reduction/recycling, fuel and energy reduction, carbon reduction/offset, reuse initiatives in place.*

The inclusion of actual measurement data including the amounts saved/reduced in comparison to the previous year (or multiple years if you have good records) will enhance the response.

B. How have you considered and progressed your social and economic responsibilities during the qualifying period? 4 marks

This question requires you to outline how you have considered and acted on supporting the local community and businesses.

For social responsibilities your response should consider non-monetary examples.

Some examples of how you demonstrate social responsibility are:

- *Supporting local businesses, product packaging, charitable donations, sponsorship, engagement with community groups*
- *Employing locals and the impact their employment has had on the person, mentoring other businesses, speaking at schools*
- *Work experience opportunities that are offered*
- *Offering gifts for the school raffle that allowed the school to raise money for an item they wouldn't have otherwise been able to afford*

For economic responsibilities, detail how you support the local economy.

Your response should include metric examples. Determine the percentage of total contribution. E.g., '75% of all our expenses were spent in X region.'

Some examples of how you can demonstrate economic responsibility are:

- *Local purchasing, % of employment of local people.*
- *Operators who stock and sell a local artisan's products, or stock local produce in minibars/hampers/outlets and how the business has boomed because of it for the manufacturer/producer (or something similar)*
- *Waiving conference room fees for local not-for-profit groups to give them somewhere to meet which allows the group to keep going*

C. How have you considered and progressed your ethical responsibilities during the qualifying period? 3 marks

This question requires you to outline how you have considered and acted on your business ethical responsibilities.

Some examples of how you demonstrate ethical responsibility are:

- *The engagement and representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*
- *Cultural or historical representation*
- *Animal welfare etc.*

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response. For example, staff communications posters, flow charts of customer service processes, reception cards encouraging feedback.

Submission score /90
Online review /10

<if relevant to your state/territory> Onsite score /10
