



ENTRANT GUIDEBOOK

A Step-by-Step Guide to Preparing Your Best Submission in 2022!



Welcome

Congratulations on nominating your business for the 2022 South Australian Tourism Awards!

As well as recognising our State's leading tourism businesses, the South Australian Tourism Awards are designed to help improve your business. In developing your submission you'll need to review your current goals, strategies and performance and identify areas for improvement and plan for the future, which makes the Awards process an important business development tool. Many tourism operators have told us that entering the Awards forces them to look at the big picture, to monitor their progress and to commit to a culture of continuous improvement.

Entering the Awards also helps position your business as a leader in its field and to develop important ties with industry, government and fellow tourism operators. Of course, those entrants who win their category or receive a medal will receive further prestige, exposure and recognition, and have the opportunity to leverage their Award win to further promote their business.

The South Australian Tourism Awards program is managed by the Tourism Industry Council South Australia (TiCSA) - a not-for-profit membership organisation that aims to engage, represent, strengthen and empower the South Australian tourism industry. The South Australian Tourism Awards are part of the National Quality Tourism Framework, with categories and questions set by the Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC). Winners of most categories in the State Awards will go on to contest the Australian Tourism Awards, competing against operators from across Australia.

Good luck with preparing your submission!

Shaun de Bruyn
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, TiCSA

Michael Geddes
CHAIR OF JUDGES

About this guide

This guide aims to help entrants through each stage of the Tourism Awards process, from collating the information you will require to start your submission through to submitting it online. It also contains information on the support that is available to businesses that enter the Awards, key dates, the judging process and site visits, the rules for entry, and advice on how to tackle specific questions. We encourage you to refer to it regularly and to use the checklists provided to ensure you stay on track with your submission.

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Contact the Industry Programs Coordinator for all Tourism Awards queries.

Disclaimer

By entering the South Australian Tourism Awards, you authorise the use and/or reproduction of images and the 100-word description provided in relation to any editorial/advertising purposes initiated in conjunction with the awards and the Australian Tourism Awards. Your contact details may also be supplied to agencies/sponsors engaged on behalf of award/organisers/committees for promotional purposes.

Under no circumstances will judges be held responsible for any comment, viewpoint or expression, whether expressed or implied, concerning the standard or quality of an entrant's submission. By ticking the terms and conditions box, you agree not to bring a claim against any Judge, or the Tourism Industry Council South Australia in relation to feedback on your submission.

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1.0 STEP ONE – THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

1.1 Key Dates - 2022

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Event</u> |
|---|--|
| Now until 27 July | Not QTAB Accredited? If your business is <u>not</u> QTAB accredited, complete <i>Business Standards</i> questions. Refer to section 2.2 for more information. |
| | Accommodation Category Entrants: if your property is <u>not</u> Star Rated, complete the <i>Accommodation Standards</i> questions. Refer to section 2.3 for more information. |
| | Prepare for Online Review Prior to the Site Verification Visit, a judge will review your businesses online presence including website, social media channels and external listing sources. Refer to section 5.1 for more information. If you would like assistance with improving your digital presence, Purple Giraffe or Hood Sweeney offer a <u>complimentary</u> one hour digital & marketing advisory consultation to TiCSA members. |
| Friday 20 May Tuesday 28 June Tuesday 19 July | View an Award-Winning Submission Book a 30-minute appointment between 9am-5pm at the TiCSA office to View an Award-Winning Submission. Contact rebecca@ticsa.com.au to book an appointment. |
| Monday 23 May | Workshop #1 Understanding Your Consumer Rating Score Online webinar 2:30pm-3:30pm. FREE workshop for nominees. Book online via this link . <i>This webinar recording will be available online.</i> |
| Tuesday 14 June | Workshop #2 How to Enter LG House Local Government Association of SA 148 Frome Street, Adelaide 9:30am – 12:30pm. FREE workshop for nominees, bookings essential via this link . Please note, this session will be live streamed and recorded for those unable to attend, click here to register for the livestream. |
| Thursday 30 June | Workshop #3 The Art of Storytelling + Layout Support Online webinar 11am-12pm FREE workshop for nominees. Book online via this link. <i>This webinar recording will be available online.</i> |
| Monday 4 July Monday 11 July | Ask the Experts Sessions Majestic M Suites 202 Tynte St, North Adelaide All nominees are invited to book a free 30-minute one-on-one session between 9am - 5pm with an experienced Tourism Awards mentor or judge either in person or via phone. Please book your 30-minute appointment for: Monday 4 July Monday 11 July |
| Wednesday 13 July | Draft Submissions due for submission via the QTF Online Portal. Note: drafts can also be reviewed from July 1st if submitted early. |
| July – September | Undergo Site Verification Visit All categories undergo a Site Verification Visit excluding: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 3. Major Festivals & Events |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4. Festivals & Events ○ 8. Tourism Retail & Hire Services ○ 14. Tourism Marketing & Campaigns ○ 24. New Tourism Business ○ 26. Excellence in Accessible Tourism ○ 27. Outstanding Contribution by an Individual ○ 28. South Australian Student of the Year <p>The site visit will be prearranged at a mutually convenient time and the judges have a proforma from which they work.</p> |
| 10 August | <p>Submissions due: 12pm - Categories 1 - 15 4pm - Categories 16 - 26</p> |
| 21 September | <p>Submissions due for categories 27 - 29 Outstanding Contribution by an Individual, South Australian Tourism Student of the Year, South Australian Taxi Driver of the Year</p> |
| November – Date TBA | 2022 South Australian Tourism Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner |

***Please note:** it is recommended that you use **Google Chrome** when accessing your submission in the [Awards Online Portal](#). In addition, please ensure you write your submission into a Word document and upload to portal as needed for Draft Review and Final Submission. Do not write your submission directly into the portal as the information may drop out.

1.2 The submission judging process

Once all submissions are received, the Tourism Awards Coordinator allocates each written submission to a judging team comprised of three judges. Your submission will be independently read and scored by each judge.

When the judges convene, all scoring data is entered into a scoresheet to determine the winner and any medalists. If there are any anomalies in the three judges' scores, the judging team will reassess the submissions to determine the winner. In the case of large anomalies - or when a category is particularly close - other judges, including the Chair of Judges, may be called in to offer advice.

The judging team will also refer to the site verification visit feedback report when finalising your score.

It is likely that the judge who conducts your site visit will not be the same judge who reads your submission.

1.3 How is the winner determined?

The entrant with the highest overall score in each category is declared the winner. Medals (Silver and Bronze) are awarded to the second and third highest scoring entrants, where the entrants have scored 75% or higher. 'Hall of Fame' recognition is awarded to entrants who win the same category three years in a row.



WINNER – Presented to the entrant with the highest score in the category, where the entrant has scored 75% or higher. The Winner will go on to represent South Australia at the 2022 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards.



SILVER – Presented to the entrant with the second highest score in the category, where the entrant has scored 75% or higher.



BRONZE – Presented to the entrant with the third highest score in the category, where the entrant has scored 75% or higher.



HALL OF FAME – Presented to entrants who win the same category three years in a row.

1.4 What are the judges looking for?

- A well-written and clearly presented submission.
- Evidence of a well-managed and financially sound business.
- Clearly stated and measurable goals and strategies, with clear outcomes.
- An innovative and strategic approach.
- Demonstrated flair, passion and enthusiasm for your business and the industry in general.
- Demonstration of tourism industry knowledge and evidence of your contribution to the industry.
- A recognition and understanding of target markets.
- A substantiated commitment to sustainability.

| <u>Feature</u> | <u>Avoid</u> |
|--|--|
| Logical and succinct answers | Meandering and 'wordy' answers, waffle |
| Quality photos that complement text | Poor quality photos that aren't relevant Extensive text where a photo and brief description would have done |
| Clean presentation with clearly labelled charts and diagrams | Hard to read entries Charts and diagrams with no explanation |
| Evidence of great ideas, innovation and passion | Promising submissions that lose steam |
| Quotes and testimonials that support your answer | Generic responses using sweeping statements |
| Evidence of tangible measurement tools | Non-substantiated claims |
| Demonstrated understanding of tourism industry | Submissions with little tourism industry acknowledgement or relevance |

1.4.1 Why do the judges need to know so much?

The South Australian and Australian Tourism Awards require you to conduct a detailed analysis of your business. Not only are judges looking for a great product or experience, they also want to see evidence of a well-managed and financially sound business, which adds to the credibility and value of the Awards. Also, entering the Tourism Awards isn't just about winning recognition for your business - it's an important business development tool that will help you review where you've been, where you're at and your plans for the future.

1.5 The Rules for Entry

It's important for all entrants to **carefully read the Rules for Entry**, which can be found on the South Australian Tourism Awards [website](#) and in your Nominees Kit.

Auditors are involved in the judging process and points can be deducted if the Rules for Entry aren't followed.

If you have any queries regarding the Rules for Entry, please contact the TiCSA Industry Programs Coordinator.

1.6 Nominee Support

Industry Programs Coordinator - will maintain contact with each nominee during the Awards process. You can contact the Industry Programs Coordinator at any time to discuss your submission.

Nominees Kit – the online Nominees Kit will be accessible via the [TiCSA website](#) and contains extensive information about the Awards criteria, judging process, hints and tips. This is where you will also be able to register for workshops and view past recordings.

View an Award-Winning Submission – Friday 20 May, Thursday 30 June, Tuesday 19 July - Book a 30-minute appointment in the TiCSA office to View an Award-Winning Submission. Contact rebecca@ticsa.com.au to book an appointment directly.

Workshop #1 – Understanding your Consumer Rating – Monday 23 May, 2:30pm-3:30pm **Online Workshop**

Gain insights into online reputation management platform Reviewpro and the part it plays in generating a consumer rating for your submission. **Book for the online session via this [link](#).** *This workshop will also be recorded as a continued resource for those unable to attend.*

Workshop #2 - How to Enter Workshop – Tuesday 14 June, 9:30am – 12:30pm **LG House | Local Government Association of SA - 148 Frome Street, Adelaide**

Get practical advice from judges and industry experts. Nominees will be given exclusive hints and tips on how to successfully answer each submission question.

How to Enter Workshop for nominees, [bookings essential](#) via this [link](#). *This workshop will also be live streamed and recorded as a continued resource for those unable to attend.*

Workshop #3 – The Art of Storytelling + Layout Support – Thursday 30 June, 11am-12pm **Online Workshop**

Our final workshop in the series aims to highlight the importance of storytelling to lift the quality of your submission. We'll also walk through the portal to guide you through the functionality, how to layout your submission for judging and the new image upload feature introduced this year. **Book for the online session via this [link](#).**

Ask the Experts Sessions – Monday 4 & 11 July - 30-minute appointments between 9am-5pm **Majestic M Suites | 202 Tynte Street, North Adelaide**

A great opportunity to meet with a judge or mentor and ask questions, bring any work on your submission, or discuss judges' feedback from the previous year. Please note you **must** provide any questions and progress on your submissions prior to your appointment.

Nominees can book a 30-minute appointment between 9am-5pm via this [link](#) for the first date, and this [link](#) for the second. Appointments in person, or by phone. Spaces are limited so book early to guarantee an appointment.

Draft Submission Review – FREE (Due by Wednesday 13 July)

All nominees can submit a draft submission for review by an experienced Tourism Awards judge via the [QTF Online Portal](#).

A polished, **almost completed submission** should be supplied to ensure that quality feedback can be given prior to submitting your final application by 10 August.



STEP ONE CHECKLIST

- Nomination submitted and paid for
- Register for Workshops 1-3
- Register for an 'Ask the Experts' appointment
- Book a time to 'View an Award-Winning Submission'
- Submit draft review by 13 July



2.0 STEP TWO – GETTING STARTED

Suggested timeframe: Now until July

Preparing a Tourism Awards submission is a significant commitment - no matter the size of your business. It's not something you'll be able to put together in a day or two, particularly if you want to access the support services that TiCSA offers nominees.

However, though the Awards do require a significant amount of staff resources, countless tourism operators have told us that it's well worth it. Not only do you have a chance of gaining recognition at both a State and National level, the process of entering the Awards alone is valuable, forcing you to step back from your day-to-day operations and assess the performance of your business, to review past efforts and to plan for the future.

2.1 Preparation is key

There's no doubt that the more prepared you are, the easier it will be to prepare a winning submission. Ideally you should be collating and preparing materials for your submission year-round, filing relevant information in a separate folder on your computer or in hard copy. If you haven't done this, start now.

To prepare a Tourism Awards submission you will need:

- Your **Business Plan and Marketing Plan**: if you're QTAB accredited there are various free templates and examples within the program.
- Visitor numbers for the qualifying period, as well as previous year's figures to compare;
- Financial information (sales figures, revenue, profit margins etc). **You don't need to state actual figures in your submission but percentage representations are a good idea;**
- A clear description of your **target markets** and percentage breakdown of actual visitation by market;
- Copies of **customer feedback and evidence of customer satisfaction** - this could take the form of satisfaction surveys, feedback forms, TripAdvisor comments etc;
- Copies of **PR activity and media coverage** achieved during the qualifying period;
- Details of marketing and advertising activity, and results of activity;
- Examples of **marketing collateral** - brochures, flyers, posters and information on how they are distributed;
- **Statistics on website traffic and social media usage;**
- OHS and **Risk Management** policies and procedures;
- Staff development and training policies, and information on activities that took place during the qualifying period;

2.2 Not a [Quality Tourism Accredited Business \(QTAB\)](#)?

In 2019, the Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC) introduced a new module within the [Awards portal](#) called '*Business Standards*' for any business who is **not** [Quality Tourism Accredited Business \(QTAB\)](#) accredited. Please note: this module must be completed before you can submit your Tourism Awards Submission on 18 August.

The Business Standards features questions from the [Quality Tourism Accredited Business \(QTAB\)](#) program about the Insurances/Licences/Permits, Business and Marketing Plan, Human Resource Management, Customer Service, Sustainability Practices and Hazard/Risk Management for your business.



These questions can be answered at any time throughout the awards process up until the Business Standards due date on **27 July**.

Once completed, you will have satisfied all requirements of the [Quality Tourism Accredited Business \(QTAB\)](#) program. As a member of TiCSA, it is **free** to become Quality Tourism Accredited at any time - please contact Rebecca if you are interested.

Please note: QTAB Accredited businesses are not required to complete Business Standards questions.

2.3 Accommodation Entrants - Not [Star Rated](#)?

It is a national requirement for all accommodation category entrants who are **not** officially Star Rated to demonstrate their adherence to '**Accommodation Standards**'.

The 'Accommodation Standards' pre-assessment questions are based on the Star Ratings program which assesses the various components of your property in two key areas; Facilities & Services and Quality & Condition. When this pre-assessment is completed, **you will receive an un-official Star Rating** and be provided with a report on how your property scored in specific areas.



These Accommodation Standards can be completed at any time throughout the awards process up until the Accommodation Standards due date on **27 July**.

Please note, this **does not give your business an official Star Rating**, however it does take you one step closer to obtaining an official Star Rating and use of the trademark if you wish to pursue.

As a member of TiCSA, the cost to become officially Star Rated is \$200 (+GST) per annum on top of your membership - please contact Rebecca if you are interested.

Please note: Star Rated businesses are not required to complete Accommodation Standards questions.

Now is also a good time to:

Decide who will write the submission - most tourism operators write their submission in-house, but some choose to outsource this to a specialist consultant. If you're planning to do this, allow plenty of time to brief your consultant and to allow for drafts to be revised. (A list of consultants who are experienced in writing Tourism Award submissions can be found in the Nominees Kit.)

Though some tourism operators believe you need to employ a professional consultant to win an award, this simply isn't the case. Most award-winning submissions have been written by the business owners/managers themselves.

Important Note: Always write your submission in a Word document or Google Doc and then copy into the portal as required for draft review and final submission - **never write your submission directly into the portal**. When accessing the portal, **be sure to use Google Chrome**.

Brief your staff (if relevant) - explain why you're entering the Tourism Awards and what this entails. If appropriate, delegate tasks to staff members such as compiling media coverage or social media statistics. If you're an owner-manager who will be writing the submission yourself, then try to tackle the task in stages - question by question.

Review judges' feedback - if you have entered the Awards before, be sure to critically review the judges' feedback from last year. When doing this try to keep an open mind and take all comments on board. Feel free to discuss your feedback with the Industry Programs Coordinator.

Think about photography - as the saying goes, a picture tells a thousand words, and choosing the right imagery to illustrate your submission is vital. Professionally shot photos are ideal (and are an excellent investment for any tourism business) however amateur shots can also work well. Review the photography you currently have available and shoot new pictures if required.

Develop a schedule - be realistic and allow sufficient time for editing, proofreading and any external suppliers. Please see suggested schedule from TICSA below.

2.4 Suggested Schedule

| Date | What You Should be Doing | Status/Notes |
|-----------------------|--|--------------|
| Once nominated | Read this guide, the Rules for Entry and become familiar with your category criteria. | |
| | Prepare for Online Review refer to section 5.1 | |
| | Ensure 25+ online reviews have been received over the qualifying period for your consumer rating score. | |
| | Complete Business Standards questions if <u>not</u> QTAB accredited. Refer to section 2.2 | |
| | Complete Accommodation Standards questions if <u>not</u> Star Rated. Refer to section 2.3 | |
| | Register for workshops 1. Understanding Your Consumer Rating 2. How to Enter | |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| | 3. The Art of Storytelling + Layout Support | |
| | Register for an Ask the Experts Session | |
| | Register to View an Award-Winning Submission | |
| By Early June | Gather all information required to write your submission – <i>always write submission into Word document, never work directly in the portal.</i> | |
| | Review last year’s judges’ feedback and submission, if Relevant | |
| | Check photography and organise if required | |
| By Late July/Early August | Site visit booked in or already completed. | |
| | Your submission should be in the final stages of proofreading . Once a section is complete, start to upload final submission into portal from Word document . Ensure you have prepared your 100-word profile, 2 hero images and 8 media images (uploaded via Awards Online Portal) and ensure it adheres to Rules for Entry. Do not leave this image upload to the last minute. | |
| 10 August | Final submissions due – submit through the Awards Online Portal and ensure you are aware of the time your category submission is due: 12pm - Categories 1 - 15 4pm - Categories 16 - 26 | |
| By mid-October | Book your tickets for the 2022 South Australian Tourism Awards Gala Dinner | |
| November – Date TBA | Attend the 2022 South Australian Tourism Awards Gala Dinner | |

Refer to the step-by-step checklists at the end of each section in this guide for more information on what you should be doing when.



STEP TWO CHECKLIST

- Gather the information that is required to write your submission
- Meet with and brief your external submission writer, if relevant
- Collate or organise photography for use in your submission
- Adapt the date schedule above to suit your needs and block out time in your diary to work on submission



3.0 STEP THREE – ROLLING UP THE SLEEVES

Suggested timeframe: Now until early July

Now is the time to really get down to work. A great way to start the process is to block out a few hours and brainstorm each question with your team (or yourself), noting down any activities or achievements that can be aligned to each question. This process will also reveal any questions that require further consideration or research, and determine what additional information is required to write your submission.

As soon as possible after the brainstorming session, make a list of relevant points under each question. This process is all about getting your ideas down, not writing a finished copy, so don't worry about crafting perfect prose at this stage.

The next step is to gather up any information that you may require to explain and/or substantiate your answers - refer back to Step 2 for a list of the type of information you are likely to require. Now group this additional information under each relevant question, focusing on getting the raw material aligned to the questions, rather than writing in finished sentences. For example, the information on your target markets will be aligned to Question 3, while results from guest feedback forms will be most suited to Question 4.

Once you've been through this process you should have a rough first draft. Well done!

3.1 Advice for previous entrants

In addition to the process above, dig out last year's submission and go through it with a red pen, highlighting areas that need updating, that need improving or that are no longer relevant. (Remember: your submission must refer to the qualifying period). Be sure to also address the judges' feedback from the previous year and note on your draft any areas that the judges suggested as needing improvement. (For example, if judges commented that your marketing outcomes were not tangible and measurable, then make a note of this in your first draft so you don't forget to address it).

If you are entering the same category again, make sure you review the questions carefully - they can change slightly from year to year so don't assume they are the same. You can re-use generic information on your business in a subsequent submission, but remember that activities, strategies and outcomes need to relate to the qualifying period.

3.2 Writing tone

A Tourism Awards submission is both a motivational sales document and an information piece that provides evidence of why your business is worthy of an award. It's important to share your enthusiasm and passion in your submission and to 'sell' your business, however, avoid overly promotional language and unsubstantiated claims. As well as telling the judges why your business is unique and an industry leader, you need to include relevant factual information that backs up your claims. In summary, a balance of 'sizzle' and 'substance' is required.

Be sure to also pay attention to written expression, spelling, typos and grammar, and allow ample time for proofreading. Submissions that contain multiple spelling and grammatical errors reflect badly on the professionalism of the business and are likely to be scored down. It's also a good idea to use dot points and sub-headings throughout your submission to break up large 'chunks' of text and to make it easier to read.

3.3 Other important things to consider

Are you accredited? If so, you are already halfway to preparing your Tourism Awards submission as there is a direct alignment between some of the questions asked in the Tourism Awards and the Quality Tourism Accreditation Program. And don't forget to display your accreditation logo and refer to it in your submission.

Answers must relate to the qualifying period (1st July 2021 – 30th June 2022) - you can refer to past results if relevant, but only if it helps you to answer the question. (For example, you might refer to past year's visitor numbers as a way of demonstrating growth.)

It's a Tourism Award - make sure you reinforce throughout your submission how and why your business contributes to the **tourism** industry. This is particularly important for nominees who operate in multiple industry sectors, such as restaurants, wineries and events.

Are you in the right category? It's important to enter the category that best reflects your core business. You will also need to establish your eligibility for the category in question 1. If unsure, please contact the Industry Programs Coordinator to discuss.

Note the points allocated to each question - this reflects the weighting of the question and should guide you in determining how many words to dedicate to the question. For most categories that are 10,000 words maximum, you should aim to write approximately 2000 words per question. Take careful note of the *Response Guidance* points and 'tick' them as you go.

Don't assume local knowledge - your judge may not be familiar with your region or community, so don't assume they are. Furthermore, if your submission wins its category and goes onto the National Awards, the judge is unlikely to have any knowledge of your business and/or region. Set the scene and write for an interstate reader.

For example, if referring to the Coorong, explain what it is, where it is in relation to Adelaide and why it's so important. Always include a location map (in relation to Adelaide and SA) in Question 1 and include drive times and kilometers.



STEP THREE CHECKLIST

- Brainstorm each question and make notes under each heading
- Sort through information gathered in Step Two and collate/align this to the relevant questions
- Identify further research that needs to be done
- Prepare rough first draft of submission



4.0 STEP FOUR – GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

- **Suggested timeframe: March – mid-July**

By now you should have gathered all the information required to write your submission (see Step 2), have brainstormed ideas and strategies for answering each question and have a rough first draft.

4.1 How to Write your Submission

As discussed earlier, writing a Tourism Award submission takes time and it's unlikely you'll be able to finish it in a day or two. We suggest approaching your submission question-by-question and allowing ample time for revisions and editing.

Where do I start? Your first draft will probably be a collection of dot points and notes under each of the questions. Now is the time to assemble your thoughts and draft a response to each question. Use the opening paragraph of each question to make the most important overall points about the approach you take in your business, then follow this with an explanation of how this works in action, using real-life examples wherever possible.

Writing style - as discussed earlier, your submission needs to achieve a balance of promotion and personalization, providing accurate information that answers the question. Most importantly, make sure you understand and answer each question. Use a clear, concise, easy-to-read writing style, and play close attention to spelling and grammar. Avoid repetition where possible, and don't use sector-specific acronyms without spelling them out in full on first use. A mix of paragraphs, dot points and tables are encouraged.

Don't cut and paste - if you are entering more than one category, although some sections may be similar, make sure that the entries are tailored to the specific category and relevant questions. Likewise, if you are revisiting a previous year's submission, be sure to refresh and update your submission and to check for changes to questions.

Substantiate claims - use examples and anecdotes to back up what you're saying where appropriate. Not only does this help the judge understand the point you are trying to make, it helps them to see the personality and culture of your business or operation. Guest and/or stakeholder comments can also be incorporated into your submission as a way of substantiating your claims.

Can it be measured? When stating goals and/or strategies, ensure they are measurable and directly related to the outcome. For example:

Goal: (*What do you want to achieve?*) To increase the profile of the AAA Hotel in the travel industry, with the aim of increasing wholesale and retail travel agent business by 10% on the previous year.

Strategies: (*How are you going to achieve it?*)

- Attended the Discover SA trade expo at the Adelaide Convention Centre on 5 October to meet with key wholesalers and agents.
- Conducted sales calls to South Aussie specialist travel agents in Melbourne and Sydney in November 2021.

Outcomes: (*What was the benefit of these activities?*)

- Signed three-year contracts with Qantas Holidays and Flight Centre, with another three

interested in packaging our product in the future.

- Bookings from wholesalers for 2021/22 increased by 12 (13%) over the previous year.

4.2 How to Answer Each Question

The section below contains advice on how to answer each of the generic questions in each category, using Category 1 (Major Tourist Attractions) as an example.

Please note that each category has specific questions relevant to that sector, so the information below should be used as a guide only.

4.2.1 COVID-19 Impacts (0 marks)

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

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

1. Outline how many months in the second half of the qualifying period your business was operational for.
2. Describe what the business restrictions were to your business e.g. gatherings.
3. Describe the impact of travel restrictions to your business e.g. border closures,

4.2.2 Question 1. Introduction (15 marks)

Please provide an overview of your tourism products, experiences and services including the nature and history of the business. How does your business demonstrate tourism excellence? (15 marks)

This question acts as an executive summary of your entire submission. It should set the tone for your submission by conveying the essence of your business and the experience on offer and explain its ownership structure and location.

Your answer should:

- Take the judge on a journey of your business; describe the visitor experience and the product/experience/service on offer.**
 - Include relevant visuals, such as photos of the different types of accommodation on offer and/or facilities, such as the restaurant, garden, bar etc.

QUESTION 1) TIP



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

- Provide a **brief summary of the history of your business and how it has developed over the years**, noting any continuous improvements that have been made.
- It is essential that you clearly **demonstrate that your eligibility to enter the category** (pay close attention to the category descriptor)
- Clearly **state what sets your business apart from your competitors** and why your business should be considered as an award-winning product/experience/service.

- Demonstrate your **commitment to tourism excellence** by explaining how the business has been actively involved with and contributed to the tourism industry (locally, regionally and nationally). Use headings to break this information down.
 - For example, are you a member of your local tourism association, do you work closely with your local VIC, do you attend industry conferences, seminars and forums and/or do you participate in State/National tourism programs and/or marketing and PR campaigns?
 - Tourism excellence can also be demonstrated by **involvement in any other award or industry programs or accreditations you hold**.

4.2.3 Question 2. Business Development (15 marks)

During the qualifying period, what have you implemented to improve your product/experience/service and/or to provide business recovery/resilience in the wake of national and world events during the qualifying period? Why were these innovations/developments implemented, how does this align with your business goals/strategies and what were the outcomes? (15 marks)

Your answer should:

- Clearly **outline how you have improved the product/experience/service within the qualifying period**. Additionally, or alternatively, it seeks to understand **what strategies were implemented for business endurance** through a year of challenging national and world events.
- Demonstrate the planning and implementation of the improvement/development by **outlining the Goal, Strategies and Outcomes** within the qualifying period (refer to table example below).

This question is asking you to **explain what you wanted to achieve (the goal), how you went about it (the strategies) and what happened as a result (outcomes)**. A three-column table works well for this question, as shown below, though you should use a format that works best for your business:

| <u>Goal</u> | <u>Strategies</u> | <u>Outcomes</u> |
|--|--|--|
| Achieve 5% revenue growth to \$50,000 in 21/22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase repeat client rates by introducing an incentive program. • Increase average spend per guest by offering add-on experiences at time of booking. • Control expenditure through account management and cash flow analysis. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat visitation represented 20% of overall business in 21/22 (\$10,000), up from 16% in 20/21 • Average spend increased by 8% to \$95 pp in 21/22 • Expenditure maintained at \$25,000, or 50% of gross revenue. |
| Increase visitation by 15% from 5,000 people in 20/21 to 5750 people in 21/22. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a social media networking strategy. • Conduct a PR campaign in the Adelaide and regional SA markets. • Expand product offering for families in order to attract more of this market. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook followers increased by 20% in 21/22 to 300. • Distributed 6 media releases, did 2 ABC 891 radio interviews and achieved coverage in the Northern Argus, Sunday Mail and South Aussie with Cosi. |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Achieve a 95% guest satisfaction rating for 21/22</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email an experience survey to all guests within one week of their stay, with the incentive of a 10% discount on future stays for those who complete it. • Empower staff to deal with complaints/concerns as they arise. • Ensure all staff undergo customer service training on an annual basis. • Introduce an 'employee of the month' award for staff based on guest feedback. | <p>60% of guests completed the guest survey in 21/22, providing a high response rate.</p> <p>98% of guests indicated they were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their stay.</p> |
|--|---|--|

- Consider choosing 4 to 5 goals to include in this section. Ensure they are specific, measurable and have a clear timeframe.
- Choose goals from a cross-section of your business - for example, **financial goals, marketing goals, customer service goals, environmental/sustainability goals, risk management goals** etc.
- Include at least one goal that is related to the **financial performance of your business** as this will help demonstrate that your business is viable and sustainable. You do not need to include actual figures – instead consider using percentage increases.
- **Each goal should have several strategies associated with it.** These are the methods you used to achieve the goal.
- Include **quantified results and outcomes** wherever possible. These could include:
 - Sales (bed nights, passenger numbers, attendance figures), visitor numbers, increased number of tours, restaurant patronage/number of meals served, new/improved facilities, merchandise sales, wholesaler/travel agent statistics, social media/website statistics, event numbers and patronage or customer satisfaction ratings.
- You could also consider what **environmental/social/economic/ethical initiatives or achievements** were made during the qualifying period
- If you have made a **financial investment to training and development**, then state the figure and whether this was an increase on the previous year. If your investment has been non-financial then explain this.
- Remember that professional development is broader than training, encompassing career and succession planning, performance reviews and personal development.

Examples of professional development activities might include:

- Attending workshops, seminars and conferences - either in-person or online
- Subscribing to and reading industry newsletters and reports
- Formal study at TAFE or university (Providing staff with time off for study is another way you can support professional development.)
- Having regular staff meetings and/or team building sessions
- Administration and/or IT training

Be sure to explain how any staff training and development activities have improved your business and visitor experience.

4.2.4 Question 3. Marketing (15 marks)

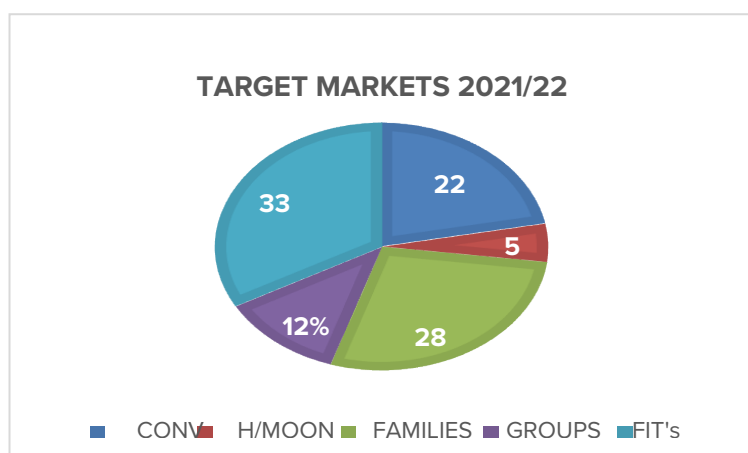
What marketing strategies did you implement to attract or maintain your existing or new target markets to support business growth and/or business recovery/ resilience. Why were these strategies chosen and what was the result? (15 marks)

Your answer should:

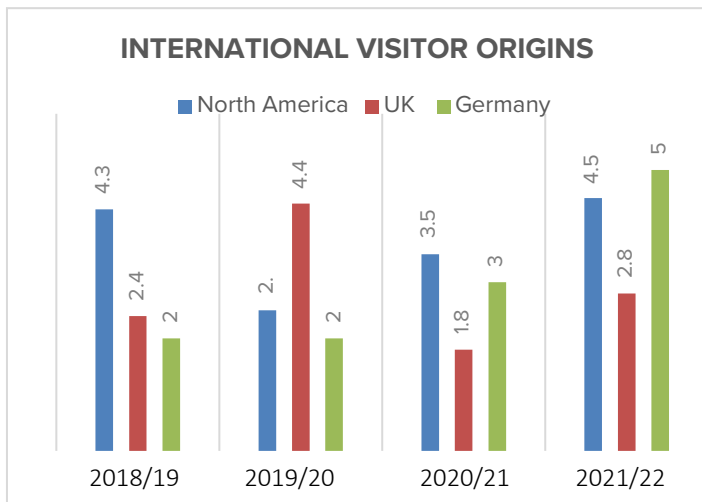
- **Demonstrate a clear knowledge of your target market.**
- The judge wants to know **who your target markets are, where they come from, how old they are, how they purchase travel, what motivates/inspires them and how your product meets their expectations.** You can segment your target markets according to geographic origin (ie; local, intrastate, interstate, international) and/or the type of market, such as business, families, conventions, FIT etc.
 - After identifying your key target markets, avoid introducing any further target markets in subsequent sections.
- When using graphs ensure they are clearly labelled and provide a brief explanation of what the graph shows (see below):



Sample pie graph indicating where guests come from (geographic)/



Sample pie chart indicating target markets by market segment descriptors.



Sample column graph representing international visitors home locations over 4 years.

- Also try to develop a ‘profile’ for your markets according to demographic and psychographic factors. For example, your target market may be Adelaide families but ‘who’ are these families, what age are they, where do they live, what motivates them to travel, what media do they consume etc.?
 - Demographic considerations include age, sex, income, origin and employment status.
 - Psychographic considerations that you can discuss include motivations for travel and whether they are empty nesters, families, backpackers, young couples etc.

Your answer should also:

- Explain how your chosen marketing activities relate to your target market** and demonstrate considerations made to broader **local/regional/state tourism strategies**.
- Clearly demonstrate** the **outcomes** of these marketing strategies.

What research have you conducted or used to determine your target market, and how do you know these target markets are the right ones for your business?

When explaining your answer provide examples of research, feedback, data from past visitation, focus groups, emerging market trends and/or current market changes to back up what you say.

For example:

- Have you analysed your past visitation statistics to determine the geographic profile of visitors?
- Have you reviewed SATC Regional Profiles and/or research on emerging profiles?
- Has the local tourism association, council or RDB conducted research into existing and emerging markets?
- Have you surveyed past guests as to their demographic profile and/or motivations for travel?

To best answer this part of the question, it is strongly recommended that you use a table format to answer this question, as per the example below:

| Target Market | Strategies | Outcomes |
|--|--|--|
| Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney couples aged 40+ | Target key travel writers for media famils. Redevelop website and add an online booking facility. Increase social media activity to engage with previous clients and attract new ones. | Hosted 6 famils in 21/22, including journos from SA Life Magazine, The Australian and The Age, valued at \$50,000 (AEV). 23% bookings online in 21/22. Website page views up by 20% in 21/22. Facebook friends up by 30% to 1200, engagement rate increased by 10%. |

| | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| United Kingdom (FIT) | Nurture relationships with key ITOs and wholesalers. Attend UK Corroboree Trade Show. Attend ATE. | Product contracted with 3 additional ITOs. Tours featured in 5 UK wholesale brochures. UK visitor numbers increased by 8% compared to previous year. |
|----------------------|---|--|

Other useful tips:

- Consider what you have done differently to attract customers during the qualifying period.
- Focus on innovative approaches to marketing.
- Provide measurable outcomes.
- Include at least one strategy for each target market identified in the first section of your response.
- Strategies might include:
 - Paid advertising and promotional activity
 - Brochures and other marketing collateral, and distribution
 - Sales promotions
 - Public relations activities (media releases, media interviews, famils)
 - Package holiday programs (SA Product Manual, airlines, wholesalers, ITOs)
 - Cooperative marketing activity with other operators, industry associations, regional tourist associations.
 - Direct marketing
 - Websites, e-marketing and social media marketing
 - Participation in local, state and national travel events such as Discover SA and ATE

4.2.5 Question 4. Customer Experience (15 marks)

How do you provide quality visitor experiences and demonstrate inclusive practices? What processes does your business have in place to communicate with guests pre and post visit? (15 marks)

Your answer should:

- Clearly **outline the practices you have put in place to ensure the delivery of high-quality customer service throughout the visitor experience journey.**
- Start this answer by **describing your commitment to customer service** and explaining what ‘great customer service’ means to your business.
- Explain **how you make an effort to understand customers’ needs**, and the systems and procedures you have in place to deliver outstanding customer service.
 - Consider all points of customer engagement e.g. email, phone, guest greetings/welcome and interaction during and after the experience.
- Discuss any customer service initiatives that are designed to achieve great service and explain your philosophy for engaging with customers.
- For those businesses that had **significant disruption during this specific qualifying period you should consider how you provide quality customer experiences in the alternatives ways in which you operated** – communicated to customers during changing restrictions, kept customers informed during closers etc.,

Other points you might like to consider:

- Do you have a repeat business strategy?
- Do you have Tourism Accreditation? What are the benefits of accreditation in terms of customer service?
- Do you have a TripAdvisor rating or other third-party endorsements of your service?

- What formal and informal customer service training programs do you engage in?
- Do any staff members hold formal qualifications in customer service?
- Do you have regular staff meetings?
- How do you ensure your facilities are in good working order?
- How do you supervise sales and operational areas? For example, are there cleaning guidelines, do you have a policy of responding to customer queries within 24 hours etc?
- When recruiting new staff, how important is customer service experience and/or attitude?
- What are your service standards for telephones and online queries? How accessible is your service?



QUESTION 4 BONUS TIP

Testimonials are a great way to back-up any statements you make about customer service and can be from a range of sources, not just customers (e.g. staff, suppliers, community members etc.)

- Demonstrate how you **actively seek and respond to customer feedback**.

Examples of methods to actively seek feedback include:

- Feedback and/or guest comment forms
- Guest books
- Formal research methods such as surveys - hard copy or online; or focus groups
- Monitoring social media, including blogs
- Mystery shoppers
- Informal discussions with clients
- Word-of-mouth from external sources, such as visitor information centres, regional tourism representatives, industry partners such as wholesalers, referrals from other tourism operators etc

- Demonstrate how this data is used to **continuously monitor and assess customer service** to improve the visitor experience.



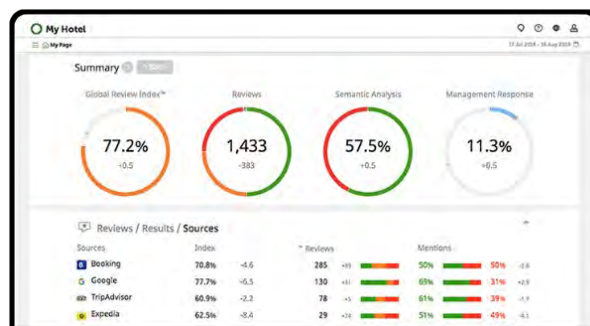
QUESTION 4 BONUS TIP

Practical examples of improvements made as a result of client feedback (either positive or negative) are ideal to include here, to illustrate the processes outlined being implemented.

ReviewPro

All Quality Tourism Accredited Businesses and 2022 Tourism Awards nominees have access to complimentary [ReviewPro](#) account via the Quality Tourism Framework (QTF) dashboard.

ReviewPro is a one-stop-shop for online reputation management, which collates all reviews about your business from 175 websites into a streamlined dashboard.



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This new addition to the Quality Tourism Framework is an extremely valuable tool which can be used in your Tourism Awards submission. It enables operators to generate reports and graphics which illustrate their digital presence during the qualifying period. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Contact the Industry Programs Coordinator to find out more.

□ **Demonstrate how you actively 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.

You need to both identify the 'specific needs' and then explain how you cater for these needs, giving examples and/or testimonials where possible.

Specific needs might include:

- Mobility issues, including wheelchairs and walking aids
- Medical conditions such as asthma, respiratory or skin allergies
- Specific market segments, such as families with young children
- Large or special interest groups
- Impaired vision or hearing
- Dietary requirements
- Intellectual disabilities
- Business travellers
- Honeymooners/special occasion guests
- International visitors/non-English speaking visitors
- Accessibility issues
- Parking for tour buses, cars etc.



QUESTION 4 BONUS TIP

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

4.2.6 Question 5. Responsible Tourism (10 marks)



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM SECTION KEY TIP

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) may enhance response.

- **How have you considered and progressed your environmental, social, economic and ethical responsibilities during the qualifying period? (10 marks)**

This question requires you to outline how you have considered and acted on reducing or improving your overall impact within the four areas.

You should break this question into the four parts. **Consider using a table or headings to assist in your answer.**

- **Environmental:**

- Your answer should: **Clearly demonstrate an understanding of your environmental impact and the instigated activities to mitigate adverse impacts.**
 - How have you considered your environmental impact?
 - Some examples of how you might minimise your environmental impact are:

WATER

- Low-flow shower heads
- Dual-flush toilets or toilets with low-flush systems
- Watering your gardens with a drip irrigation system
- Water tanks
- Grey water recycling
- Planting of drought resistant native plants in gardens, mulching
- Checking for and fixing leaks

ENERGY

- Installing timers or programmable thermostats to maximise efficiency of your heating and cooling systems
- Installing solar power and/or heating or ceiling and wall insulation
- Reducing the temperature of the water used when washing linen, tea towels, clothing etc.
- Installing blinds, solar screen shades or reflective window film
- Using energy efficient lighting i.e. substituting incandescent lamps with compact fluorescent lamps
- Installing an energy management system (EMS) technology to control lighting systems automatically
- Using light sensors to minimise overnight energy
- The use of energy efficient appliances
- Encouraging guests to re-use linens and towels
- Turning off all appliances at the end of each day, e.g. computers, printers, lights
- Reducing paper use by emailing information/booking confirmations to clients; and/or printing double- sided or re-using paper

WASTE

- Having a waste management plan
- Recycling of paper, plastics, food scraps and metals
- Recycling toner and ink cartridges
- Purchasing recycled products e.g. recycled paper, stationary
- Providing environmental education to your employees/colleagues
- Donating excess food to local shelters, food banks etc.
- Worm farms

In this answer you should also **demonstrate your commitment to environmental sustainability.**

Examples might include:

- Carbon offset programs

- The installation of signage that encourages guests to re-use linen, conserve water and turn off lights, electronics and appliances etc.
- Having a clearly labelled bin system e.g. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Providing bicycles, walking maps and information on public transportation
- Providing seasonal or local products on your menus, or growing your own herbs/veggies/eggs
- Encouraging guests/visitors to purchase local products
- Providing clear walking trails in sensitive natural areas
- Having small tour groups to reduce the impact on the environment
- Offering paperless tickets, vouchers or confirmations
- Tourism Accreditation, Ecotourism Certification programs, or Sustainability Awards
- Providing tips on sustainability on your website, social media, brochures and newsletters - give examples where possible
- Educating staff about environmentally friendly benefits - both at work and at home
- Choosing suppliers who provide environmentally sensitive products and/or adopting a sustainable procurement policy.

- **Social & Ethical:**

- Your answer should: **Demonstrate an understating of your social and ethical responsibilities to the local community.**
 - Explain your business' involvement in the community and the benefits you have gained from this involvement, such as reputation, motivated employees or strong local support.
 - Include appropriate testimonials from the community to support your answer. Your response should consider non-monetary examples.

Examples of how you engage with the local community and demonstrate social responsibility might include:

- Supporting local businesses
- Packaging product with other tourism businesses in the region
- Making sponsorship and charitable donations to local sports and community groups, schools etc
- Involvement with community groups such as the CFS, Lions etc
- Positive working relationships with local government
- Briefing local VIC staff on your product/experience
- Relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Building community pride by actively promoting local crafts, artists etc
- Involvement in environmental initiatives, such as revegetation or weed clearing
- Networks and relationships you have with other tourism businesses and attractions
- Promoting local heritage in your region.
- Your involvement in local tourism associations
- Providing access to infrastructure developments and/or provision of community amenities/experiences
- Involvement in volunteer programs

- **Economic:**

- Your answer should: **Demonstrate an understating of your social responsibilities and economic contribution to the local community.**
 - Explain how your business contributes financially to the local economy in your town and/or region. Remember to quantify your economic contribution in dollar terms, where possible.
 - Some examples of how you 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
 - Providing sponsorship or charitable donations to community groups
 - Providing work experience and internship opportunities for local high school and tertiary students
 - Partnering/collaborating with local tourism operators to package experiences and/or to promote the region
 - You can also discuss the average spend of your visitors within the region, and how you encourage guests to experience other attractions, restaurants etc within the area.
 - You should determine the percentage of total contribution. E.g. '75% of all our expenses were spent in X region.'



QUESTION 5 BONUS TIP

Think about both the direct and indirect contributions that you make to the local economy.



STEP FOUR CHECKLIST

- Second draft of submission complete



5.0 STEP FIVE – GETTING READY FOR YOUR SITE VERIFICATION VISIT

Suggested timeframe: Early July to late September

This year, all categories will undergo a Site Verification Visit excluding categories:

- 3 & 4 (**Festivals & Events**)
- 8 (**Tourism Retail & Hire Services**)
- 14 (**Tourism Marketing & Campaigns**)
- 26 (**Excellence in Accessible Tourism**)
- 27 (**Outstanding Contribution by an Individual**)
- 28 (**SA Tourism Student of the Year**)

The Tourism Awards site visit serves as a verification of the business and their visitor experience, not the awards submission. The Onsite Judge will 'verify' that the business is operating in a legitimate manner and delivering a high-quality visitor experience.

The site visit will be prearranged at a mutually convenient time and the judges have a proforma from which they work. As a condition of entry, you will be required to:

- Provide your product/service on a **complimentary basis** if a judge's visitation is required for your category of entry.
- **Must be available for judges** to stay/visit if required on weekend days/evenings between July and September.

State judging is conducted by a volunteer panel of industry peers appointed by the Tourism Industry Council South Australia. Judges are selected for their knowledge and experience and for their willingness to commit time to the Award process and are convened each year specifically for the Tourism Awards.

You (or a representative) will be required to meet with the judge for approximately one hour to conduct a site inspection of your business and potentially answer some questions (see below for more information). The remainder of the site visit is for the judge to **experience your product as a visitor/guest would.**

Site visit judges will primarily assess:

- **Initial contact and communication** with the business & interaction with staff during visit.
- **Appearance/presentation of the business** eg. premises, building and public areas, vehicles, cleanliness, atmosphere, ambience.
- **Services/facilities offered beyond the expected** to enhance the tourism experience.
- Membership with local associations/accreditations/or participation in Awards programs & **how this is communicated with visitors and staff.**
- **Provisions for customer feedback/complaints** and how the feedback is used to improve visitor experience.
- **Evidence of inclusive practices and water, waste and energy actions** to reduce impact on environment.

This year, the site inspection will not be scored however, written feedback from the on-site verification of your customer service & tourism product will be provided to the submission judges. Entrants will also receive this feedback from the on-site assessment in their final Feedback Report after the Gala dinner.

Site Verification Visits Cont.

QTAB Accredited & Non-Accredited Entrants

If a business is **QTAB accredited** but has not undergone an onsite QTAB audit within the last 3 years OR is **not** QTAB accredited, **the site visit judge will also ask additional questions about the policies and procedures** that guide your business operations.

This requirement was introduced by ATIC in 2019 to ensure that all entries into the awards program are operating legitimately.

Where relevant, site visit judges will ask questions related to:

- Business Plan
- Marketing & Social Media plan
- HR Manual
- Customer Service Procedures
- OHS Policy
- Risk Management policy & assessment

It would be advisable to have ready access to these documents or evidence of your planning when meeting with the Onsite Judge. **A copy of these additional onsite questions are available in your nominees kit.**

Contact rebecca@ticsa.com.au if you would like to confirm if these additional requirements apply to your business or if you would like a free template of any of these documents.

5.1 Online Review

In 2022, an Online Review will be undertaken prior to the Site Verification Visit to assess the entrant's online presence including their website, social media channels and external listing sources.

The online review will account for 10% of your overall score (for most categories). Scoring of the online review will occur at the State/Territory level only.

A copy of the Online Review questions is available on the next page.

The online review will be conducted from July onwards, prior to the Site Verification Visit. We recommend that you use this time from now until July to ensure your online presence is optimised prior to the judge's desktop assessment.

For those **categories that do not require a Site Visit**, a member of the TiCSA team will conduct the Online Review desktop assessment.

Entrants will need to provide the following links:

- Website
- Facebook
- TripAdvisor
- Instagram
- Google Listing URL
- Twitter (if applicable)
- Pinterest (if applicable)
- Booking.com (if applicable)

If you would like assistance in improving your digital presence and online channels, TiCSA partners [Purple Giraffe](#) and [Hood Sweeney](#) offer a free one hour digital & marketing advisory consultation to TiCSA members.

Online Review Questions & Guidance

1. Does the website provide a clear overview of the product/service?

Additional support of providing a clear overview may include a selection of high-quality images, a FAQ page, relevant images and logos i.e. QTAB, Star Ratings, Industry Membership, Tourism Awards etc.

2. Is there a clear call to action on the website?

There should be a book now button or detailed contact information or booking enquiry information which is easy to find and clear.

3. Is the website mobile optimised?

Your website should be fully responsive in design when used on a mobile phone or tablet.

4. Is the website search engine optimised?

Your website should appear on the first page of Google if you search xxx (product type) xxx (region). If there are a high number of online booking agencies that fill the first page, then you should appear on the second page.

5. Is the business actively engaged on social media?

The business should regularly (at least weekly) post content to one or more social media channels. This must include at least one of the accounts you have supplied your account name for in the above list.

6. Does the business regularly respond to online reviews?

The business should respond to online reviews in a timely manner. A guide is: within 4 business days of negative feedback made, within 7 days for positive feedback made. No comment is required if just a rating is made. Review sites include TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Google and Facebook.

7. Does their website actively promote the region and encourage visitation?

There should be links to relevant destination and complementary product tourism sites on the website.

8. Do their social media pages actively promote the region and encourage visitation?

There should be links to relevant destination and complementary product tourism sites on social media pages.

9. Is the business listed on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)?

An N/A option will be available here. If a business cannot list on ATDW then a N/A would apply and the full points for this question will be applied.

10. Can the entrant be found on at least two other online booking sites from their supplied list?

There should be at least two other external sites that the business has a product listing on. This can include, but is not limited to online booking sites, destination pages, RTO and/or visitor centre websites.

A N/A can apply if online bookings are not relevant to the business type.

Scoring

Yes = 1 point

No = 0 points

N/A = 1 point

Total: /10 points

5.2 What is the site inspection judge looking for?

As explained above, the main purpose of the site visit is for the judge to experience your product as a regular tourist would. Here are some of the things they'll be looking for:

First impressions - parking, general access, directional signage/access, integration with general environment, initial impact and appeal, maintenance of grounds and buildings, cleanliness, rubbish management.

Product - is it unique or outstanding, how does it compare with competitors, has there been any innovations implemented this year, have it been innovative in packaging product, does the pricing represent value for money, does it meet customer needs and expectations?

Management and staff - are they friendly and helpful, is their appearance appropriate, is there evidence of management, structure and training, is there evidence of awards/achievements?

Customer service - is the initial contact friendly and proactive, what is the general atmosphere like, are there provisions for customer feedback, is there signage and interpretive information, are people with disabilities and/or special needs catered for, what are the trading hours?

Service and facilities - does the business offer special or extra services and/or facilities to enhance the visitor experience, is there visitor information available, is there access to public facilities, are visitor needs and comfort catered for?

OH&S, Risk Management, Environmental - is there evidence of OHS policies and procedures, emergency procedures, management of safety hazards, risk management policies and procedures, recycling of waste materials, evidence of environmental policies and procedures such as energy and water conservation.

Professionalism - what is the overall impact of the business, what is the quality of product presentation and operating standards, is there evidence of contribution to broader tourism promotion and development, staff presentation, awards received, evidence of training and interaction with other visitors.

5.3 Frequently asked questions about the site visit process

When will the site visit happen?

Your site visit can happen anytime between early July and late September. Your judge will contact you by phone or email to arrange a convenient time.

What do I need to provide as part of the site visit?

Each tourism operator who enters the SA Tourism Awards needs to provide the judge with a complimentary experience of the product they are entering in the Awards if that category has a site visit component allocated.

For example, accommodation businesses need to provide an overnight stay; attractions need to provide entry to the experience; tour operators need to provide an all-inclusive tour; and restaurants need to provide a meal that is representative of what is on offer to paying guests. If you are unsure about what to provide your judge, then refer to the 'Site Visit Guidelines' appendix in this guide or contact the Tourism Awards Coordinator.

Do I need to provide meals and/or drinks?

Apart from the Tourism Restaurants category and/or tourism operators where food is included as part of the guest experience (ie; a day-tour that includes lunch), the provision of meals and/or drinks is at your discretion. For an overnight stay it is reasonable to provide the guest with breakfast, however other meals are discretionary.

Likewise, entrants in the Tourism Restaurants and/or Tourism Wineries, Distilleries & Breweries categories need to provide the judge with a 'typical' food/wine/beer experience. Once again, contact the Industry Programs Coordinator for clarification if required.

Will the judge bring their partner?

This is at the discretion of the tourism operator however in many cases (such as an overnight stay or restaurant meal) it may be reasonable for a judge to bring their partner or a friend. The judge will discuss this with you at time of booking. Likewise, in some cases it may be suitable for the judge to bring their children - for example, a caravan park entering the Caravan & Holiday Parks category or a family visitor attraction. Remember: the site visit is all about the judge experiencing the product as a normal guest would. It's also worth remembering that all judges are volunteers.

Do I need to show the judge any documents?

If your business is not QTAB certified, or if your business is accredited but not been audited for 3 years, you are encouraged to show the judge copies of your marketing/business plan, examples of marketing activity and/or policies and procedures, however the judge won't read each document word-for-word. The remainder of the site visit is all about the judge experiencing the product as a normal customer/guest would.

Can I ask the judge questions about my submission?

You are welcome to ask the judge questions about the submission, particularly if you are unclear about how to answer a question. However, please do not ask the judge what other businesses have entered your category, or how your business has scored in the site visit as this information is confidential.

5.4 Site Visit Guidelines by Category

The following site visit guidelines have been determined for judges and entrants. If you have any queries, please contact the Industry Programs Coordinator.

| NO | CATEGORY | GUIDELINES & INCLUSIONS |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | Major Tourist Attractions | Admission/entry to attraction – undertake any tours or experiences available to visitors. |
| 2 | Tourist Attractions | Admission/entry to attraction – undertake any tours or experiences available to visitors. |
| 3 | Major Festivals & Events | Entrants in this category <u>do not</u> undergo a site visit. |
| 4 | Festivals & Events | Entrants in this category <u>do not</u> undergo a site visit. |
| 5 | Ecotourism | Admission/entry to attraction – undertake any tours or experiences available to visitors. |
| 6 | Cultural Tourism | Admission/entry to attraction – undertake any tours or experiences available to visitors. |
| 7 | Excellence in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Tourism Experience | Admission/entry to attraction – undertake any tours or experiences available to visitors. |
| 8 | Tourism Retail & Hire Services | This category is a combination of all products, services, tours and accommodation services. Due to the diversity of potential entrants in this category, entrants <u>do not</u> undergo a site visit. |
| 9 | Visitor Information Services | Admission/entry to nominee’s business – undertake any tours or experiences available to visitors that directly relates to the product being entered. |
| 10 | Business Event Venues | Site visit of meetings & business facilities offered. |
| 11 | Major Tour & Transport Operators | Undertake tour/experience available to tourists. If tour unavailable, visit the nominee’s depot/office and inspect vehicles/assets essential to the operation. |
| 12 | Tour & Transport Operators | Undertake tour/experience available to tourists. If tour is not available, visit the nominee’s depot/office and inspect vehicles/assets essential to the operation. |
| 13 | Adventure Tourism | Undertake tour/experience available to tourists. If tour is not available, visit the nominee’s depot/office and inspect vehicles/assets essential to the operation. |
| 14 | Tourism Marketing & Campaigns | Entrants in this category <u>do not</u> undergo a site visit. |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 15 | Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services | Site visit of restaurant and facilities. Experience a meal - lunch or dinner. Menu offered will be at the discretion of the entrant. |
| 16 | Tourism Wineries, Distilleries and Breweries | Admission/entry to winery/cellar door – undertake any tours or tasting experiences available to tourists. |
| 17 | Caravan & Holiday Parks | Undertake site visit of the accommodation and facilities. Overnight stay optional at judge’s discretion. |
| 18 | Hosted Accommodation | Undertake site visit of the accommodation and facilities. Overnight stay essential. Meals and/or provisions may be offered; however, entrants are not obliged to provide catering outside of regular packages offered to guests. |
| 19 | Unique Accommodation | Undertake site visit of the accommodation and facilities. Overnight stay essential. Meals and/or provisions may be offered; however, entrants are not obliged to provide catering outside of regular packages offered to guests. |
| 20 | Self-Contained Accommodation | Undertake site visit of the accommodation and facilities. Overnight stay essential. Meals and/or provisions may be offered; however, entrants are not obliged to provide catering outside of regular packages offered to guests. |
| 21 | 3 – 3.5 Star Accommodation | Undertake site visit of the accommodation and facilities. Overnight stay essential. Meals and/or provisions may be offered; however, entrants are not obliged to provide catering outside of regular packages offered to guests. |
| 22 | 4 – 4.5 Star Deluxe Accommodation | Undertake site visit of the accommodation and facilities. Overnight stay essential. Meals and/or provisions may be offered; however, entrants are not obliged to provide catering outside of regular packages offered to guests. |
| 23 | 5 Star Luxury Accommodation | Undertake site visit of the accommodation and facilities. Overnight stay essential. Meals and/or provisions may be offered; however, entrants are not obliged to provide catering outside of regular packages offered to guests. |
| 24 | New Tourism Business | Admission/entry to nominee’s business – undertake any tours or experiences available to visitors that directly relates to the product being entered. |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 25 | Excellence in Food Tourism | Site visit of food experience. Experience a meal - lunch or dinner. Menu offered will be at the discretion of the entrant. Undertake any tours or experiences available to visitors. |
| 26 | Excellence in Accessible Tourism | Entrants in this category <u>do not</u> undergo a site visit. |
| 27 | Outstanding Contribution by an Individual | Entrants in this category <u>do not</u> undergo a site visit. |
| 28 | South Australian Tourism Student of the Year | Entrants in this category <u>do not</u> undergo a site visit. |
| 29 | South Australian Taxi Driver of the Year | Entrants in this category <u>do not</u> undergo a site visit. |



STEP FIVE CHECKLIST

- Prepare for Online Review – update digital presence
- Site visit judge booked in
- Staff briefed about site visit, if relevant
- Gather hard copies of relevant information to show judge (if non-accredited or QTAB accredited but have not been audited within last 3 years).



6.0 STEP SIX – NEARLY THERE!

By this stage your submission should be nearly complete. What an achievement!

Before you submit make sure you have:

- **Answered all parts of every question.** Failure to answer any question, or part of that question, will automatically result in a score of zero for that question. Remember that many questions have two parts, and both parts will need to be addressed.
- **Proofread your submission - several times.** Ask a colleague, family member or friend to proofread your submission to ensure there are no spelling or grammatical errors. Submissions which contain typos, spelling errors and grammatical errors reflect poorly on the professionalism of the business. Reading your submission out loud or having a third party read your submission can be a great way to pick up extra mistakes.
- **Check that your submission adheres to the Rules for Entry.**

Before you submit you will also need to:

Prepare a 100-word description of your company and/or product. This is submitted through the 'Media & Trophy Recipient Details' section of the Awards Online Portal and will be used for announcements at the presentation ceremony, in promotional and media materials and on website listings.

Prepare and Upload your Images (this is done through the Media & Trophy Recipient Details' section of the Awards Online Portal:

- **Prepare 2 Hero images that illustrate your company/product.** These will be used by the Award Owner in the presentation ceremony and official awards advertising, media and publications. These must be no bigger than 10MB each in jpeg format
- **Prepare 8 further media images that illustrate your company product.** These will be used for media and promotions. These should be no bigger than 5MB each in jpeg format



STEP SIX CHECKLIST

- Final proofreading
- Double-Check Rules for Entry have been adhered to
- Ensure photos and visuals are relevant and appropriately captioned
- Prepare your 100-word description of your company/product
- Prepare and upload 10 images in JPEG format



7.0 STEP SEVEN – ALL DONE

Hang in there because you're nearly done!

Once you have finished your submission and done your final proof reading, it is time to submit through the Awards Online Portal. If all required questions in the entry have been completed (this is indicated by the green ticks on the Awards Online Portal), the 'submit entry' button will appear. When you are happy with your submission, press 'Submit Entry' to finalise your entry.

Once you have submitted your entry no further changes can be made, so make sure you are completely happy with your submission before submitting.

Celebrate! As mentioned earlier, preparing a South Australian Tourism Awards submission is a significant commitment so it's time to congratulate yourself (and your team) on achieving this milestone.

Book your tickets for the SA Tourism Awards Ceremony & Gala Dinner in November 2022. The winners and medalists are kept secret until they are presented at the Ceremony making this an exciting night.



STEP SEVEN CHECKLIST

- Complete your Business Profile
- Ensure you are happy with your 8-10 images uploaded online
- Submit your submission online
- Celebrate!**

What happens after the Awards are announced?

Detailed feedback from the site verification visit and submission judging (all three judges) will be available via the Tourism Awards portal after the awards are announced, whether the entrant is a winner or not.

Winners in categories 1-25 go on to represent South Australia at the 2022 Qantas Australian Tourism Awards in Sydney.

Winners and medalists will receive support from TiCSA to make the most of their Award win.