

Important Updates & Changes

The Australian Tourism Awards and Queensland Tourism Awards have always been about celebrating the hard work and dedication made to create quality tourism experiences. This year we also want to celebrate resilience.

2020 saw many challenges faced by business, with some similar, and some different across the states/territories and sectors.

So, this year's awards program will see us continue to celebrate excellence, to reward business innovation and exceptional customer service, as well as championing the resilience of our industry.

Therefore, for the 2021 program we have made some adjustments to the rules of entry to enable businesses to share the stories that include how they overcame difficulties experienced due to the global pandemic.

Furthermore, we have listened to feedback on incorporating a consumer element to the judging process and we are pleased to announce that the 2021 program will incorporate a more encompassing scoring system where various elements, including consumer reviews, will contribute to the overall result.

For the 2021 awards program the following changes will come into effect.

- Scoring

Each submission will be scored on the following elements

- 1) Written submission
- 2) Online review
- 3) Consumer ratings * do not apply to some categories, see Rules for more information
- 4) Judges Site Visit (applicable categories only)

- Qualifying Period

The qualifying period for this year's awards will be adjusted to account for the variances in closed businesses across the states over the past 12 months due to natural disasters and COVID-19.

Therefore, the qualifying period is extended from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2021.

The exception to the rule would be for New Tourism Business. Please see Rules for more information.

- Questions

The question set has been updated for the 2021 program so business can choose what they want to focus on - strategies implemented to attract or grow and/or strategies implemented as a part of their recovery and resilience to COVID-19.

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Therefore, the existing questions have been amended to enable a response from the business which is relevant to them.

Whilst Responsible Tourism is an incredibly important part of any business, the challenges faced by many during the qualifying period make it difficult to respond to this question, though at no fault of their own. So, rather than disadvantage businesses, the businesses innovation/excellence in social/economic/environmental/ethical tourism can form part of their response to the Business Development question and the Responsible Tourism section will be temporarily suspended for the 2021 program.

- Word Count

Having temporarily suspended the Responsible Tourism question the 2021 program will also temporarily drop the word count to 8000 words.

- Judges Choice

A Judges Choice award will be introduced in 2021 which will recognise a finalist that the judges believe showed great resilience in what has been a difficult time. The winner of the judge's choice will not progress to nationals. There will be a separate Judges Choice awarded at the nationals that will be determined from list of finalists from the award categories 1-25 of the national program.