

# Queensland's Tourism Priorities

2017 State Government Election



**Queensland Tourism Industry Council**

PO Box 13162, George Street, Qld 4003

07 3236 1445 // [policy@qtic.com.au](mailto:policy@qtic.com.au)

[qtic.com.au](http://qtic.com.au)

## TOURISM IN QUEENSLAND

---

The tourism industry in Queensland contributed **\$25.0 billion** to Queensland's Gross State Product (GSP), representing **7.9% of total GSP<sup>1</sup>** and generated **\$6.6 billion in exports** in the year ending June 2015<sup>2</sup>, making it one of the state's largest export industries.

In recent years, government and business communities have recognised tourism is contributing significantly to economic growth in Queensland and **generating significant numbers of new jobs**. With a slowdown in some other parts of the economy, tourism has become more prominent and recognised for the powerful contribution it makes to regional economies and employment. In Deloitte's *Tourism and Hotel Market Outlook*<sup>3</sup>, it is reported that international arrivals to Australia grew at twice the rate of global outbound travel and international visitation "continues to outshine broader economic performance". Forecasts to 2020 indicate tourism will continue to grow faster than the wider economy.

Income growth in China and other source markets, coupled with a favourable Australian dollar, has seen visitor expenditure in Queensland grow to an all-time high of **\$56.0 million daily spend in the Queensland economy** (year ending March 2017)<sup>4</sup>. The broader impact of tourism expenditure is large; every tourism dollar spent injects **an additional 87 cents into the economy**. Tourism continues to play an important role in regional Queensland as well as in urban centres. Benefits of tourism are widespread in communities, with almost half of all expenditure going into regional Australia<sup>1</sup>.

The World Travel and Tourism Council<sup>5</sup> (WTTC) projects travel and tourism employment will grow **5.8% (compound annual growth) over the next decade** in the Asia Pacific region. In contrast, total economy growth is projected at 4.1% per annum while industries such as mining and agriculture are forecast to grow at 1.8% and 2.2% per annum respectively.

The five-year average growth rate for total visitor nights in **Queensland is projected to be 4.0%** over 2014–15 to 2019–20, or 3.9% over 10 years.



---

<sup>1</sup> Tourism Research Australia, *State Tourism Satellite Accounts 2015-2016*

<sup>2</sup> Tourism Research Australia, *State Tourism Satellite Accounts 2014-2015*

<sup>3</sup> Deloitte, *Tourism and Hotel Market Outlook*, Edition 1, 2017

<sup>4</sup> Tourism Queensland, *Tourism Economic Key Facts*, April 2017

<sup>5</sup> World Travel and Tourism Council. 2017. *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2017 Asia Pacific*

## VOICE OF TOURISM

---

QTIC is the peak body for tourism in Queensland and represents the interests of the tourism industry including, 18 sector associations, **3,000 regional members** and all of Queensland's **13 Regional Tourism Organisations**. QTIC works in partnership with government agencies and industry bodies at a local, state and national level to strengthen the voice of tourism in all relevant policy forums.

QTIC's vision is to be the "voice for tourism" and we have been raising the industry's voice for over 15 years.

To achieve our vision, we work in collaboration with our members, government agencies and industry bodies at a local, state and national level to **influence and shape the business environment** in Queensland through innovative thinking and strategic decision making.

Through business commitment and with bi-partisan support for the tourism industry, Queensland is **attracting record numbers of visitors**. The focus should now turn to ensuring our industry can strengthen its global competitiveness and create **high-value visitor services and experiences** that provide the greatest benefits to Queensland's community. QTIC is seeking a strong partnership and a firm commitment from the state government to drive tourism growth across the state and its regions.

**"A significant share of** new jobs created is generated by tourism businesses **across the state**. Billions of investment dollars are flowing into Queensland **to build new and exciting tourism infrastructure** and communities challenged by economic transition can rely on a thriving visitor economy. Now is the time for the business sector and governments at all levels to focus on building on this momentum".

**Daniel Gschwind – CEO, QTIC**



Photographer – Caroline and Craig Makepeace  
Courtesy of TEQ image gallery

## INVESTMENT IN INNOVATION TO DRIVE BUSINESS AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

### BUILD BUSINESS CAPABILITY THROUGH INDUSTRY-LED PROGRAMS

---

*Commitment of \$4million investment annually in industry-led capability building programs.*

*Commitment to ongoing investment to build a skilled workforce that meets increasing demand.*

- Focused \$4million investment per year for industry-led capability building programs that drive entrepreneurship and encourage innovation and product development.
- Continued investment in current programs that support innovation in tourism.
- Maintained focus on Young Tourism Leader program to promote tourism careers.
- Focused investment towards a skilled future workforce.
- Commitment from government for the endorsement and adoption of tourism accreditation programs.

Every part of the tourism industry is challenged to meet evolving consumer needs and expectations and must find ways to innovate, improve and invest in business development, product improvement and human capital.

As Queensland markets itself as “the best address on earth”, the experiences delivered must meet this expectation. By **building business capacity** across small and medium sized businesses in particular, destinations will become **more competitive in a global market**. Government support for appropriate programs to foster dynamic entrepreneurship and highly professional business practices in tourism’s **53,100 tourism business** will lead to **higher quality** products and increased yield and profitability.

Business competitiveness is also under threat from new technologies that are disrupting the traditional business models and the economy in a profound way, particularly in the tourism industry. Operators are challenged to keep up and adapt to new opportunities to remain relevant.

Visitors are increasingly using online tools to organise and manage every aspect of their holiday, from travel booking to accommodation, to recreational activities. This trend is expected to continue and shape the evolution of businesses and skills demand across all sectors of the tourism industry. Innovation and up-skilling for tourism businesses, particularly in the digital space, is integral to strengthen Queensland’s position, to drive industry leadership and to compete with other destinations. Targeted and coordinated support for industry in meeting the competitiveness challenge can drive destination growth.



“It’s crucial tourism receives ongoing investment to entice and upskill school leavers and those interested in pursuing a long term career in this rewarding industry.

In order to accommodate and sustain future growth in the hospitality and tourism industry, business owners must take advantage of new technologies and continue to innovate to remain competitive and relevant in such a dynamic industry”.

**Brad Illich – CEO, Newbook**

A more competitive and high-value tourism industry is the path to attract a greater share of a rapidly growing international and domestic market. Greater market share will deliver significant benefits to Queensland: more jobs, more regional economic activity and a brighter future for the state.

Improved industry capability is a key driver for economic success. If Queensland had achieved to the same average international visitor spend as NSW in 2016-17, the state would have seen an additional \$1.3 billion in expenditure, or at the level of Victoria, an additional \$1.8 billion. Given that each ‘tourism dollar’ earned generates a further 87 cents indirectly for the economy, this would deliver significant benefits for Queensland. The opportunity is there for the taking.

If the tourism industry in Queensland is to capitalise on current and future opportunities, all sectors across the industry must develop and maintain quality products and services and offer unique experiences that meet, and exceed, the increasing expectations of visitors.

To achieve this goal, industry must enhance professional and contemporary business practices to improve experience quality. The development of improved services and business practices will increase visitor expenditure and improve economic growth in regions across the state. Accreditation is a valuable tool to drive business practices and meeting customer expectation. Government endorsement and support in the promotion of accreditation programs is critical.

With more than 225,000 Queenslanders employed in the tourism industry and predication of a need for more than 20,000 additional jobs by 2020 it is vitally important that government maintains commitment to relevant skills training that supports industry growth and job creation. With so many opportunities available in the industry, now is the time to inspire the next generation of tourism leaders and promote the variety of jobs and skills that school leavers can develop through the industry.

The information and action plans assembled through the *Queensland Tourism Workforce Plan 2018-20* are a valuable resource to give direction for industry-government strategies to prioritise workforce development initiatives in regional Queensland.

“Working in the tourism industry builds transferable skills, provides flexible hours and conditions and has diverse and long term career opportunities.

A shortage in skills has the potential to limit the sector’s ability to meet upward demand for the Australian tourism experience. Businesses and governments need to support the development of skills for existing workers, attract new workers to the sector and demonstrate the sector as a viable career.

If we don’t address these labour market issues, we will not prosper from the rising demand for the world wanting to visit the best address on earth, Queensland!”

**Zac Garven – Marketing & Business Development, Cassidy Hospitality Group. Young Tourism Leader**



Photographer – Tony Gwynn-Jones  
Courtesy of TEQ image gallery

## DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH QUEENSLAND'S NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

---

***Commitment for new visitor infrastructure and experiences in Queensland's protected areas of \$50million over the next four years.***

***A long-term commitment of the State Government to work with the Commonwealth Government to increase funding for the protection of the Great Barrier Reef to the level required to achieve the goals of the Reef 2050 Plan.***

***Commitment of \$5 million for the development of new cultural experiences and business opportunities, with a specific focus on Indigenous experiences.***

- Sustainable development of tourism opportunities in National Parks.
- Increased funding to the Great Barrier Reef to meet 2050 goals.
- Dedicated and coordinated commitment to Indigenous tourism development.

### **Natural Assets**

Queensland is fortunate to have some of the most iconic natural assets, not just in Australia but the world: the Great Barrier Reef, the Wet Tropics Rainforests, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast Hinterland, the Whitsunday Islands, Cape York, the Savannah, the beaches along all of its coast and more. We also have a longstanding and well-thought out *Ecotourism Plan 2016-20*. And yet, we are not achieving the full potential of these the outstanding opportunities.

Other states and destinations around the world have been able to capitalise on often less impressive natural assets and build nature-based attractions and facilities that drive visitation and business opportunities. There is no denying that Queensland has lost market share in one of our most promising tourism markets due to a lack of facilities and innovative experiences. Despite the excellent commitment of the agency, the resources of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) are insufficient to adequately maintain, let alone upgrade visitor facilities and protected area infrastructure.

Additional resources for maintenance and – importantly – to provide and build new facilities will have a catalytic impact for additional private investment and employment. Specific opportunities have been identified over a long period, including walking trails, mountain bike tracks, board walks, viewing platforms, tent sites, marine infrastructure etcetera in protected areas.

The idea that a private investor would be able fund such projects in protected areas without significant government commitment is not realistic given the experience over the last two decades. This has been borne out by the evidence in other states also. The opportunity is for the state government to fund and build such facilities with the prospect in some cases to reach a commercial arrangement with the private sector to operate and maintain facilities. The Mamu Tropical Skywalk in North Queensland is an example of such an arrangement.

Specific suggestions have been identified in several Destination Tourism Plans (DTPs) and could readily be activated with a commitment from government.

Based on numerous assessments of such opportunities and examples in other states, including the highly successful Tree Capes Walk in Tasmania, a funding commitment for protected area visitor facilities of \$50 million over the next four budget periods is necessary.

The industry is ready and prepared to engage in a process of prioritising opportunities that would have the most immediate and greatest effect on regional economic activity and employment. Without a significant affirmation of Queensland's commitment to build sustainable prosperity on its natural assets, we will cede the opportunities to our competitors.

### **Great Barrier Reef**

QTIC supports the Australian and Queensland Governments' strong ambition to protect and responsibly manage the Great Barrier Reef region consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable use and to enhance its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) attributed to the World Heritage status. State and federal budgets must provide certainty for industry and communities that the long-term protection of our natural assets, like the Great Barrier Reef, will be adequately funded to address the scope of environmental and development challenges.

The *Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan* is recognised as a comprehensive plan for ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Great Barrier Reef however a firm commitment – supported by sufficient funding – for the implementation is needed.

In 2016, in a historic partnership, peak bodies QTIC, Queensland Farmers' Federation and WWF-Australia joined forces to apply a robust economic assessment to value the Reef. The peak bodies jointly commissioned international consulting firm Jacobs for a new report: Investing in the Great Barrier Reef as economic infrastructure. Jacobs used economic tools normally applied to built assets to determine the Great Barrier Reef's asset value and annual investment requirements. We recommend our conservative asset value for the GBR of \$21 billion, and note that based on this asset value, an appropriate level of annual funding for the GBR would be \$547 million, far in excess of the current estimated \$200 million annual investment of both governments. This level of funding is to maintain the asset condition, which supports a contribution to the Australian economy of \$4.7 billion, returning between 5 and 6 times the value of the funding. The report has been presented to state and federal Ministers.



It is critical that the Queensland Government tasks steps to ensure that the commitment made in the *Reef 2050 Plan* can be funded sufficiently into the future.

“The Great Barrier Reef offers unforgettable experiences and is central to who we are as a nation and how we are seen around the world. We must ensure we invest in the protection of the reef, and other natural assets, to ensure they are around for years to come.

The Great Barrier Reef supports over 64,000 jobs and contributes \$6.4B to the economy. Our priority is to engage the world in the future of the Reef. The role of individuals, communities and business are key to drive meaningful action but this must be met with equal determination and action from those who have the political mandate to drive the change required. Much of the world believes that the reef is dead or that its fate is beyond our control, it is critical that we do not give up on the Reef and that we illustrate with every practical measure that Australia and Queensland will do everything it can to protect and conserve the most famous natural icon on the planet. We need the funding and legislative backing to protect our natural assets, their contribution to the economy, and to send the clear signal that we will lead by example in order to mobilise the world”.

**Andy Ridley – CEO, Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef**

The Reef and the broader natural environment of Queensland will also be affected by the ongoing impacts of climate change. This will have far reaching, long-term consequences of for the tourism economy of the state. An ongoing and increasing investment in climate change adaptation and mitigation plans will be necessary, including through sector-specific approaches.



Photographer – Jemma Craig  
Courtesy of TEQ image gallery

### **Indigenous tourism experiences and opportunities**

Tourism has a vested interest to preserve and protect not only the natural assets and cultural heritage of our state, but also support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through tourism opportunities.

It is understood that the development of Indigenous tourism products requires a tailored approach. To achieve the goal of 1,000 new jobs and 20 new Indigenous businesses, QTIC advocates for funding to support the coordinated development of new Indigenous start-ups, ensuring mentoring opportunities and ongoing development assistance.

“Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander tourism is building momentum across the state and has incredible potential for growth over the next five years. Indigenous tourism products allow us to share our culture, provides a place for mob to work and sets pathways to success for so many. Benefits are felt not just by visitors but also for those reconnecting with their heritage through these experiences.

Moving forward, we need government to walk side-by-side with us, to be a part of this journey, sharing and promoting cultural experiences and engaging with the history of our nation. Beyond that, government involvement in aligning resources with the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism businesses is necessary to further support development of tourism experiences and ventures and to provide opportunities for those willing to give it a go. A collaborative approach to assist in the development of new Indigenous tourism products will support the targets of 20 new Indigenous businesses and 1,000 more Indigenous faces in tourism by 2020. Let’s work together for a better future”.

**Preston Campbell – CEO, Preston Campbell Foundation**



Image courtesy of TTNQ  
Citizens of the Great Barrier Reef Launch

## ACCELERATE PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

---

*Commitment to a strong tourism and events focus for key public infrastructure in Queensland.*

- Increased investment in connectivity and access across regional and remote Queensland through improved aviation and rail and air frequency, capacity and route development.
- Maintained focus and funding toward international aviation attraction.
- Accelerated investment in catalytic infrastructure, including highway upgrades; sport, entertainment and convention venues; visitor facilities in national parks; and multimodal transport systems.
- Focused investment in infrastructure to support re-vitalisation of island-lease tourism experiences.
- Continuation of private sector attraction strategies and improvement of regulatory efficiency to stimulate private sector investment in tourism.
- Greater investment in digital infrastructure to enhance availability of services for visitors, business operators and communities to create consumer and business opportunities.

Public tourism infrastructure plays an integral role in the provision of services to visitors. Whilst private investment in facilities is strong across Queensland with a \$14 billion pipeline, access and connectivity between regions is still a significant issue.

A well connected, carefully planned transportation network has a positive influence on visitor experience and promotes regional visitation. Queensland needs to enhance its connectivity to provide the experiences consumers are seeking and enhance destinations' competitiveness.

Queensland's economy is reliant on a public infrastructure investment that can facilitate a transitioning towards new economic opportunities, including the services sector and tourism.

"As The Mackay Region's tourism industry continues to grow, it needs support and investment for current tourism operators to build on skills and knowledge, as well as for emerging operators to develop new products and experiences so the region can realise its full capacity.

Our natural resources are our best assets here in The Mackay Region. We need to work seamlessly with the Government to ensure development is continuing whilst simultaneously protecting the environment, and allowing visitors to experience the true nature of beauty.

We also need investment for better infrastructure and roads to support our growing tourism industry. The Mackay Region is an untapped gem and has incredible potential to grow, but investment is crucial in order to build a strong, innovative and supported industry".

**Rob Porter, Mackay Airport**

## PROVIDE CERTAINTY FOR COMPETITIVE PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN TOURISM MARKETING AND EVENT ATTRACTION

---

*Commitment of an additional \$15 million annually to boost event attraction capacity.*

*Four-year funding certainty for marketing and event attraction.*

- Increased commitment to Tourism Events Queensland funding.
- Ongoing investment in regional event attraction.

Tourism is one of the fastest growing consumer markets in the world. Over two million destinations are competing for over 1.2 billion travellers. Maintaining a global market presence is challenging. It is estimated that on average, a person needs to see a brand at least seven times before adding it to their consideration set.

With increasing competition both domestically and internationally, Queensland also needs increased marketing investment to compete effectively on the global stage.

We commend the work that Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) is doing in marketing and promoting the state. The multi-year budget commitment provided is important and essential for long-term planning.

In view of the highly beneficial and high-yielding opportunities that present themselves in the international and domestic event market, an increase in the budget for event attraction by at least \$15 million per annum to place Queensland in a more competitive position and boost event visitation is advocated. This will in turn support private sector investment in the sector. All regions in Queensland, particularly those with relevant infrastructure and facilities, will benefit from an increased event profile for Queensland. This is also particularly relevant to address seasonality issues that affect the viability of some essential private investments.

“Events and festivals offer regional communities across Queensland. They're a wonderful opportunity to encourage visitors to engage in our Queensland lifestyle and culture, not to mention the genuine destination profiling and economic impact it can have for regional communities.

Many Queensland towns are synonymous with their events, such as Boulia Camel Races, Birdsville Races and the legendary Mount Isa Rotary Rodeo. Many events are born from need, to diversify our economies, often due to drought. Desperate to encourage overnight stays, many communities, such as Winton, have created events such as Vision Splendid Outback Film Festival, Outback Festival and the new Way Out West Festival.

Events give visitors a reason to book now and many have the potential to develop a new, special interest market for Outback Queensland”.

**Krista Hauritz, Krista Hauritz – Tourism, Marketing & Consulting**



## MAXIMISING QUEENSLAND'S DESTINATION ADVANTAGE

---

***Commitment of resources to regional tourism destinations to promote and develop product and experiences that strengthen economic and community benefits.***

- Ongoing support for Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) to promote and develop destinations.
- Support local governments to deliver positive social, economic and inclusive growth from tourism in regional communities.

Tourism is a diverse and regionally dispersed industry sector with many stakeholders. Local and regional tourism organisations play a role as do many sector specific associations. All levels of government are also actively involved in maximising the benefits that tourism offers. A coordinated and collaborative approach is critical to achieve efficient use of resources and a unified approach. Existing industry organisations structures play a critical role in the coordination of effort.

Other states may have the advantage of a single, state-capital-dominated promotional tourism focus but Queensland has the opportunity to build on its strong, multiple destinations offering. Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) are a critical to leverage that competitive advantage for Queensland. They are the link for industry and a vital connection to implement state-wide tourism programs. Ongoing collaboration with and funding support from of the state government is fundamental to support that regional tourism network.

Local governments are increasingly involved in the development of business and community opportunities arising from tourism. The state government has a role to play in supporting local governments in accessing resources and funding programs that can help develop tourism opportunities. QTIC is increasing efforts to work with local governments to strengthen their contribution to tourism development. State government, through a number of departments, can make a substantial positive difference by developing an explicit tourism focus for all relevant programs and initiatives. A recent example is the development of the Next Generation Tourism Planning: A guideline for planners in Queensland by the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Appropriate funding support for local initiatives, including events and infrastructure with a tourism focus are equally important.

## FURTHER ENQUIRIES

---

QTIC welcomes the opportunity for further discussion. For all enquiries, please contact QTIC Policy Team on (07) 3236 1445 or email [policy@qtic.com.au](mailto:policy@qtic.com.au).