

## **Festivals and Events**

This category recognises tourism leisure festivals, events and exhibitions that enhance the profile/awareness and appeal of the destination they are held in as well as creating economic impact, increased visitation and community involvement.

This category is open to (but not limited to) sporting, arts, historical, cultural, literary, humorous, culinary and general interest festivals, events and exhibitions.

## **COVID-19 Impacts (0 marks)**

Please provide the judges with an understanding of your businesses 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, 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.

Short answers are sufficient

Q.1 Was your festival/event disrupted by COVID19/Bushfires and related restrictions or closures?

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

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

## **1. Introduction (20 marks)**

### **A. Please provide an overview of the nature and history of your festival/event. 15 marks**

*Response Guidance* This is where you set the story of your festival/event and give the judge insight into the visitor experience on offer. It is recommended that you begin by explaining your reason for the development of the event/how it started and why the chosen time of the year.

You should then take the judge on a journey of your festival/event, including key people or organisations involved, details of how long it has been running, any significant changes that have happened over time or how the festival or event might have evolved.

Ensure that key information on the festival or event duration and scale is included here – whether it is a single day event, weekend or longer, whether it is a daytime or evening event, number and type of venues, the capacity of the venue(s) etc.

You should demonstrate why your festival/event should be considered as an award-winning tourism product by highlighting your points of difference/what makes you different/special. Specify amenities or facilities that enhance visitor satisfaction. What sets you apart from other festivals/events and makes you special.

You may use graphics to support and enhance your response provided. For example, a map of the festival/event, images of the festival/event and any specific facilities/amenities/services you have highlighted in your response.

## **B. How has the festival/event worked to enhance the profile and appeal of the destination it was held in. 10 marks**

*Response Guidance* The judges are looking to understand the positive impact your festival/event has made to the host destination. If the event was held prior to COVID19 disruptions you should demonstrate the direct benefit to the host destination by using measurable data from the qualifying period to demonstrate how the festival/event has contributed to the local economy.

Consider, for example, an increase in visitor numbers, economic spend, awareness, etc. If the event was held after COVID19 disruptions, consider how the event supported the destination in its recovery.

You may use graphics to support and enhance your response provided. For example, a chart demonstrating economic growth and supporting the data you have provided in the submission.

## **C. What innovative marketing and communications strategies did you use during the qualifying period to promote the festival/event, why were these strategies chosen and what was the result? 10 mark**

*Response Guidance* You should begin by outlining who your business has aimed your marketing towards and demonstrate a clear understanding of this market. Consider for example; who they are, where they are from, how old they are, how they purchase travel, what motivates and inspires them and how your product meets their expectations. Identify how the target market/s are right for your business.

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

Ensure you outline why these marketing strategies were selected and how the marketing strategy aligns with local, regional or state marketing plans. Detail how these new/different/unique marketing activities have been successful. You should consider metrics to measure the outcomes and consider media coverage, social media engagement, increased web traffic, increased bookings etc.

You may use graphics to support and enhance your response. For example, images of marketing placement (social media screen shots, website, advertisements).

### 3. Customer Experience (25 marks)

#### A. How is the event experience developed, delivered, evaluated and continually improved (for ongoing events) to ensure high attendee satisfaction levels and inclusivity? 15 marks

*Response Guidance* This question requires you to outline what practices you have put in place to ensure a high quality of customer service throughout the festival/event.

Outline how you are committed to quality customer service throughout all areas of the festival/event. This could include staff training, service principles and policies, staff reward systems, volunteer orientation and induction and other training programs for onsite event staff, etc.

Consider all points of customer engagement e.g. email, phone, guest greetings/welcome, during and after the festival/event. Your response should consider what training is in place for staff and/or volunteers and how this has improved the festival/event.

Once you have provided an overview of how customer service is delivered for high attendee satisfaction you should consider how you measure, monitor and assess customer service to ensure quality delivery, for example; feedback forms, monitoring social media, blogs, mystery shoppers etc

Consider providing a case study/example where you have implemented a change based on customer feedback.

Demonstrate how you consider visitors' special and specific needs and recognises 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 may use graphics to support and enhance your response. For example, staff communications posters, flow charts of customer service processes, reception cards encouraging feedback.

#### B. How is the event integrated with the local, regional, or state tourism industry? 10 marks

*Response Guidance* Provide the judges with an understanding of how your festival/event supports the growth and development of the local, regional and state tourism industry.

The judges are seeking a festival/event which has been actively involved with and contributed to the tourism industry. Your response should consider how your event aligns with host community tourism strategies, for example, local government economic development plans, local/regional/state tourism development strategies etc.

Once you have clearly demonstrated how they align, you should then demonstrate outcome of the contribution to tourism that is made, for example increase in visitor numbers, awareness, local tourism employment.

#### 4. Responsible Tourism (20 marks)

##### A. How has your festival/event considered and progressed its environmental, social, economic and ethical responsibilities during the qualifying period? 20 marks

*Response Guidance* This question requires you to outline how your festival/event has considered and taken action on reducing or improving (whichever applied) its overall impact within the four areas. You should break this question into the four parts, and consider using a table to assist in your answer.

**Environmental** - Consider the following: ▪ How have you considered your environmental impact ?

- What have you done to be environmentally responsible - Some examples of how you demonstrate environmental responsibility are; Water conservation, waste management/reduction/recycling, fuel and energy reduction, carbon reduction/offset, reuse initiatives in place

**Social** Outline how you have considered the impact of your business on local people and business

o Your response should consider non-monetary examples o Some examples of how you demonstrate social responsibility are; ▪ supporting local businesses, product packaging, charitable donations, sponsorship, engagement with community groups ▪ Employing locals and the impact their employment has had on the person, mentoring other businesses, speaking at schools ▪ Work experience opportunities that are offered ▪ Offering gifts for the school raffle that allowed the school to raise money for an item they wouldn't have otherwise been able to afford

• **Economic** o Detail how your festival/event supports the local economy o Some examples 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 o You should determine the percentage of total contribution. E.g. ‘75% of all our expenses were spent in X region.’

- **Ethical** o Outline how the festival/event has considered its ethical responsibilities o Some examples of how you demonstrate ethical responsibilities are; ▪ The engagement and representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people ▪ Cultural or historical representation, ▪ Animal welfare etc. Use graphics to support and enhance your response.

Submission score /100

Maximum Word Count 5000

SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY by 11pm 19<sup>th</sup> September as a PDF  
to [development@mackayregion.com](mailto:development@mackayregion.com)