



# 2024

## QICA VIC of the Year Awards

Welcome to the 2024 VIC of the Year awards where we celebrate achievements across the network in the past year, a time that has truly tested our operations and future. We look forward to celebrating your achievements!

## 2024 Categories – by VIC mode of operation

1. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
2. VOLUNTEER RUN
3. LOCAL OR REGIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION

## Important Dates

- OPENING DATE – MONDAY 20 MAY 2024
- CLOSING DATE – FRIDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2024
- WINNERS ANNOUNCED – THURSDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2024

All Entrants must answer all questions.

Winners will be announced at the Gala Dinner at Kingaroy Town Hall, 45 Glendon Street, Kingaroy in the South Burnett.

# Judging

## Judge's Decision

- The awards will be presented at the discretion of the judging panel, based on the submissions received.
- Entrants will receive written feedback and the awarded points total following the Awards Presentation.
- The judging panel decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.
- The judge's overall decision is based on an allocation of points from the set questions. Each question is weighted and scored accordingly. The scores are added together for the total overall points.
- Entrants are required to answer all questions for the set categories. Read the questions carefully and ensure your response addresses what is being asked, you can then elaborate on your areas of excellence, your wow factor, and your reasons to win. Think about what sets your VIC apart. Finalists will be revealed from the assessment of the submissions by the judges, based on the applicant meeting the rules of entry.
- To ensure consistency and fairness in judging, the entry rules must be strictly met.

## Rules of Entry

- The 2024 VIC of the Year Awards qualifying period is 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.
- All tourism initiatives, developments and projects must be started, if not completed, during the qualifying period.
- Submissions should include details of upgrades to existing tourism facilities, developments, experiences, and projects where relevant.
- The Award winners may utilise the official Award logo, provided the year the award was won is clearly stated on any advertising, marketing and/or

promotions.

- The official award logo to be used may not be altered in any way and will be provided by QICA.
- All entrants must be a Visitor Centre operating in Queensland and current financial members of QICA.
- Submissions can be emailed to [qldvic@gmail.com](mailto:qldvic@gmail.com)
- Members of the QICA Executive Committee can enter the awards but cannot be a participant on the judging panel.

## Formatting

Submissions must be formatted as follows:

- Your completed submission must be a maximum of 20 single-sided pages in total and submitted via email: [qldvic@gmail.com](mailto:qldvic@gmail.com). Please note that a cover page and contents page are required but are not included in the 20 page allocation.
- The font to be used within the completed submission is Arial or Times New Roman at 12-point in size. Please note that no other variations such as narrow or condensed font styles are to be used.
- The format of all text should be 1.5 line spacing (Microsoft Word) with the following exceptions;
  - The text contained within a multi-column table may be single line spaced as long as tables do not represent more than 8 pages of the total submission.
  - Question text and captions may be single-line spaced.
  - Page margins are to be set at 1.5cm for the top and bottom of each page and 2cm for the left and right margins of the page.
  - All pages of the completed submission, commencing at section one (1) must be numbered.
  - Please state the question first then your answer, within the layout of

the completed submission,

- Photos, diagrams, tables, and images can be inserted into the submission and do not need to be sent separately.
- Total word count maximum = 12,500.

## The Prize

Provided by QICA:

- Complimentary Conference Registration for 2025,
- a framed certificate,
- Electronic logo for email footer and multimedia use.

## Conditions

- Share a story for the QICA Newsletter about your VIC's win.
- The winning VIC should display the award certificate in a prominent position.
- The overall winning VIC's are also encouraged to utilise the QICA logo on all stationery, signature box and for marketing and promotional purposes.

Entrants of the Awards will be required to submit their application to

[qldvic@gmail.com](mailto:qldvic@gmail.com)

A selection of up to 10 Images of your Centre, staff, volunteers, and promotional photos. Please note the Word Count is a maximum of 12,500 words in length.

Words within a table are included in the submission word count.

Please note that the photos/images will not be awarded points. It is used as verification and a supporting tool for the contents and statements made within your written submission. The photos may be used on a slide show presentation at the awards function.

# Important Dates – VIC of the Year Awards

Closing Date: Friday 1 November 2024

VIC of the Year Awards Presented: Thursday 28 November Kingaroy Town Hall 45 Glendon Street, Kingaroy in the South Burnett at the Gala Awards evening.

## 2024 VIC of the Year Awards Questions

All entrants are required to complete the following questions:

### **Section 1 – Customer Service (20 points)**

- a) Describe your customer service philosophy/ values. (5)
- b) Explain how your Visitor Information Service provides for guests/visitors with specific needs. (5)
- c) Describe how you measure customer satisfaction and identify areas for improvement. (5)
- d) What processes do you have in place to respond to customer complaints. (5)

### ***TIPS***

- a) *Consider the systems and procedures you have in place to deliver outstanding service. How do you make an effort to understand their needs, welcome them, respect them, thank them and do business with them?*
- b) *Demonstrate how you consider visitor's special needs. Think about who your customers are and their specific requirements.*
- c) *What processes do you have in place to understand how your customer feels about your product service? For example: feedback forms, monitoring social media, blogs, mystery shoppers etc. Consider also how you manage customer service delivery from your tourism partners.*

*d) Consider how you receive feedback. For example: telephone, email or user generated content such as blogs/ TripAdvisor. Explain how you respond to each of these different communication channels. Explain how you manage negative feedback on tourism products/services within your destination.*

## **Section 2 – Tourism Excellence (20 points)**

- a) Demonstrate your eligibility for this category as related to the descriptor above and provide a brief overview on the nature and history of the business. (6)
- b) What tourism products, experiences and services do you offer visitors? (5)
- c) Describe your commitment to tourism excellence. (4)
- d) Demonstrate your involvement in the tourism industry and describe the services you offer tourism industry stakeholders/partners. (5)

### **TIPS**

- a) Take care to ensure you have entered the right category and that your response aligns to the category descriptor. Failure to demonstrate your eligibility will be reflected in your score. Refer to the ABOUT US section of your website as this may assist with this response. Judges will want to know how and when the business started, who works in the business, where it is located and how it has developed over the years. A map will be helpful here.*
- b) The focus of this question is tourism products/experiences/services that you offer the visitor.*
- c) Explain your values, philosophy and commitment to excellence and what makes you stand out from other Visitor Information Centres.*
- d) Explain the services you offer tourism industry partners. For example: membership services etc. and how you have been actively involved with the tourism industry locally, regionally and nationally.*

## **Section 3 – Business Planning (20 points)**

- a) Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals,

strategies and outcomes with a specific focus on your Visitor Information Services. (6)

- b) Describe any innovations that have taken place during the qualifying period to enhance the experience for visitors to your destination. (6)
- c) What investment has been made in staff training and development and how has this improved the services provided to your guests/visitors? (4)
- d) Describe the main risks for your Visitor Information Centre and the risk mitigation measure you have implemented. (4)

### **TIPS**

- a) Introduce this section with your mission and/or vision statement. A three column table would be useful here to display the information. Make sure you use measurable goals and outcomes.*
- b) This is a two-part question. An innovation can be defined as “The process of introducing new or significantly improved goods or services and/or implementing new or significantly improved processes.” Be sure to include the impact the innovation had on your business and the destination overall.*
- c) Describe your commitment to training. How do you ensure you and /or your staff gain the correct knowledge and skills to carry out their job? Investment does not need to be financial.*
- d) Consider all aspects of business risk, not just workplace health and safety.*

### **Section 4 – Marketing (20 points)**

- a) Who are the target markets for your destination? (5)
- b) How do you know your destination’s products/service/experiences meet the needs of your target markets? (5)
- c) What are your destination’s unique selling points and demonstrate how you communicate these through marketing conducted by your Visitor Information Service? (5)
- d) Describe the innovative marketing strategies you have implemented to encourage new and /or repeat business and demonstrate the success of these initiatives. (5)

## **TIPS**

- a) *This question seeks to understand who you have aimed your marketing towards. 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.*
- b) *What research have you conducted or used to determine your target markets? How do you know the target markets you identified in Q 4(a) are right for you?*
- c) *What makes your destination different from your competitors? For example: size. Location, exclusivity, services, facilities. What methods do you use to communicate these to the target markets you identified?*
- d) *What have you done differently to attract your customers? For example: social media, digital advertising, apps. The response needs to focus on innovative approaches to marketing. Remember to also answer the second part of the question and expand on how these new activities have been successful.*

### **Over all tips for successful entries:**

- Ensure your answer is relevant to the question, re-read both
- Provide exactly what is asked for
- Caption photos
- Number pages and provide a contents listing page
- Have 2 or 3 people review your submission
- Allow volunteers and staff to read the submission so they know what has been said – important for site visits where applicable
- Use dots points and short sentences rather than long prose
- Make sure it is 'a good read' for the judges
- Have a folder to collect information/ press clippings/ emails/ thank yous during the year so it is easy to find when needed for award writing
- Use images and photos within your submission where it applies, so the reader can relate to it vs providing them separately
- Have fun and remember - this submission can assist you to write your business plan for the following year for your VIC.



# QICA Contacts

If you have any questions, please contact the QICA Executive team: [qldvic@gmail.com](mailto:qldvic@gmail.com)

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**VIC of the Year – Caroline O'Reilly - Malanda / Tablelands VIC**

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