

VIC TRAINING ACADEMY

For Australian Visitor Information
Centre staff, volunteers and managers



Photo credit: Tourism & Events Queensland

*Practical training for everyday Visitor Information
Centre Operations.
As of January 2023*

Prepared By :

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Photo credit: Tourism & Events Queensland

FOREWORD

Visitor Centres play an integral part in the social fabric of any local community looking to attract visitors. They act as both the in-person ambassador and the touch point location that showcases all there is to see and do in your region. They also have joint investment by many stakeholders including local businesses, residents, council and of course visitors who have expectations of the services and facilities they will receive when calling into a Visitor Centre.

Visitor Centres play a multi-faceted role including (1) the distribution of all types of information, (2) telling the unique story of your region, (3) promoting and selling local tourism products and merchandise, (4) assisting with all enquiries for your region including residential relocations and (5) being positioned both physically and online as the single most important touchpoint for stakeholders when engaging with your region.

A well-run, relevant and efficient Visitor Centre will assist in generating economic benefits for any region.

As we enter the third decade of the 21st century we see a strong network of around 400 accredited Visitor Centres throughout Australia and whilst digital devices and applications have made their way into our daily lives, the need and desire to speak with another human being when deciding on fundamental and important decisions that will affect us personally has never been stronger. This also applies to decisions regarding our leisure time and how we spend it and what we do; and Visitor Centres are the key to making sure your region benefits from this stream of economic income that may just as well pass you by if you fail to catch their attention.

Welcome to the Visitor Information Centre Training Academy where we know that the depth of information found in these programs will ensure your region's best chance of benefiting both socially and economically from visitors and tourism in general for many years to come.

Any Visitor Centre regardless of whether they are accredited or not may apply to join this program as the knowledge and skills learnt will equally serve our visitors well, no matter where they travel throughout this great country of ours.

The Tourism Group 2022



1.0 Introduction

The VIC Training Academy is for existing and new Visitor Information Centre Managers, Customer Service Consultants and Volunteers who are aiming to better their skills in areas such as day to day operations, industry engagement, promotions, leadership, recruitment and quality customer service. Whilst the training program is primarily aimed at those working within an Accredited Visitor Information Centre, the Academy invites interested parties from non-accredited Visitor Centres and local tourism committees to utilise this training program to improve their delivery of visitor services to all stakeholders.

2.0 Delivery - Practical experience from seasoned industry experts

The VIC Training Academy is a business unit of The Tourism Group, a well-known and respected contributor to the tourism industry that proudly embraces and specialises in the visitor services sector. The new VIC Training Academy builds on quality management, industry development and stakeholder advice demonstrated by the Company through a series of visitor service engagements since 2002 including but not limited to:











- 
 The operation of the Brisbane International Airport and Brisbane Domestic Airport accredited visitor information centres along with the award-winning Brisbane Airport Ambassador Program since 2002.
- 
 Operation of the Western Australia Visitor Centre in Perth central business district since 2018.
- 
 Accreditation Program Manager on behalf of Tourism & Events Queensland for the Queensland Visitor Information Centre network since 2010.
- 
 Accreditation Program Manager on behalf of Destination New South Wales for the New South Wales Visitor Information Centre network since 2016.
- 
 Delivery of Storytelling Workshops to all Queensland accredited Visitor Information Centres.
- 
 In depth consultancy reports for Local Government Authorities on improving their visitor services.



Photo credit: Tourism Australia

3.0 Relevance & Suitability of the VIC Training Academy

The Tourism Group has the current expertise and ability to deliver relevant training programs that will:

- 
 Assist to build an effective Visitor Information Centre (VIC) network and introduce consistency in VIC professionalism nationally through staff training as recommended in [A National Perspective on Visitor Information Servicing](#).
- 
 Enhance the skills, confidence and training of volunteers, staff and managers within an industry that research has revealed is overly deficient.
- 
 Assist with succession planning and career pathways.
- 
 Provide direction to VICs that will ultimately invigorate their direct local and regional tourism economy.
- 
 Build capacity, enhance collaborative learning and develop industry networks.
- 
 Strengthen the value, worth and integrity of the nationally recognised trademarked network of accredited VICs.
- 
 Investigate digital innovations to understand they are not a competitor or replacement for physical visitor services.
- 
 Upskill an industry sector for an industry that in 2018/19 contributed \$122 billion from domestic and international tourism spend to the Australian economy (Tourism Australia, 2020).
- 
 Highlight the value of tourism to the local economy.
- 
 Provide expertise in training using practical knowledge from 20+ years of operating accredited Visitor Information Centres.

4.0 Program Overview & Topics

The Academy will focus on the three primary roles performed by Managers, Customer Service Consultants and Volunteers with an additional Mentoring Program for those wishing to further develop their skills within the visitor services sector of the tourism industry. A tailored training program to suit specific needs can also be designed for Visitor Information Centres on request.

VIC Volunteers Program | 5 hrs over 1 day



This program is designed for those considering or currently volunteering their time within a Visitor Centre.

Volunteers have played a supporting role in Visitor Centres for many years however over time the use of Volunteers and the importance of their role has significantly increased. This is due in part to the expectation of visitors but also due to the pressure on staffing resources by Visitor Centre proprietors. This program is focused solely on the role played by Volunteers, the expectation of all stakeholders and the value gained from volunteering in a dynamic industry such as tourism.

Topics

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Understanding the Role & Value of the Visitor Centre
- ✓ What makes a good Volunteer?
- ✓ Welcoming Visitors
- ✓ Valuing your Role
- ✓ Owning your Role
- ✓ Customer Service
- ✓ Endless Possibilities
- ✓ Accreditation for Visitor Centres

VIC Customer Service Consultant Program | 6 hrs over 1 day



Photo credit: Tourism Australia

This program is suitable for those considering or already working within a Visitor Centre. This includes any employee on a casual, part-time or full-time basis that is a general staff member and does not hold a management role.

The daily operations of a Visitor Centre are exciting and rewarding with each day bringing new challenges and surprises. The expectation of visitors and other Stakeholders involved in this sector of the tourism industry can be demanding and this program will assist with understanding tourism in your region, what to expect in a Visitor Centre work environment and how to satisfy your customers.

Topics

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Understanding the Role & Value of the Visitor Centre
- ✓ Who is your Customer and what do they want?
- ✓ Know your Product
- ✓ Storytelling
- ✓ Sales Skills & Techniques
- ✓ Technology in the Visitor Centre



Photo credit: Tourism Australia

VIC Manager Program | 19 hrs over 3 days



Photo credit: Southern Queensland Tourism

This program is suitable for those considering or already working as a Visitor Centre Manager or Supervisor or in any other role that oversees a team.

Managing a Visitor Centre is challenging yet rewarding. Assisting others, no matter what their needs is one of the greatest rewards our work life can bring. Doing this in the most efficient manner is another circumstance altogether. A Visitor Centre Manager's role is a demanding one with daily checklists, regular reports, staff and possibly even volunteers to coordinate. This extensive program will examine each of the fundamental areas of operation of a Visitor Centre to analyse how best you can achieve the requirements of this role. There will be ample opportunity to benchmark your centre against what is taught throughout this program.



Photo credit: Tourism Australia

Topics

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ The Business
 - ▶ Understand the Tourism Industry including the Distribution System.
 - ▶ Understand the role and value of the Visitor Centre .
 - ▶ Marketing, Communications and Operations 101 .
- ✓ Staff & Volunteers
 - ▶ How to Run the Day-to-Day Operations of Staff & Volunteers.
 - ▶ What Makes Your Staff & Volunteers Stay?
 - ▶ How to Effectively Manage a Team of Staff & Volunteers .
 - ▶ Sales skills & techniques .
 - ▶ Technology in the VIC .
 - ▶ We are all Storytellers .
- ✓ The Customer
 - ▶ Visitors - Who is your Customer & what do they want .
 - ▶ Local Business .
 - ▶ Residents.
 - ▶ Associations and Organisations.
- ✓ The Experience
 - ▶ Differentiate your region from other regions.
 - ▶ Understand the Consumers' perceptions of your region .
 - ▶ Learn how to develop your regional experiences for the visitor.
- ✓ Visitor Centre Mentoring Session
 - ▶ Business Planning, Marketing, communications, Work Place Policies, Finances, Visitor Centre design .

VIC Individual Staff Mentor Program | 7.5 hrs over 5 sessions



Photo credit: Tourism & Events Queensland.

VIC Managers and Staff who complete each of these programs may wish to pursue further advice and training by considering the "VIC Individual Staff Mentor Program". This five-session one-on-one mentoring program aims to enhance professional development for those who have identified needs for improvement. The program is tailored to suit the needs of the attendee and is facilitated by one of our company Directors who not only have long-term hands-on experience within the tourism industry but are also graduates of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

The sole objective of the Individual Staff Mentor Program is to assist with your personal development within the visitor services sector including your involvement within a Visitor Centre. The delivery of this program is flexible to suit personal circumstances and may consist of one-on-one meetings in person or online for about 1.5 hours each month. The program draws on experience gained over many years in the tourism industry by key company personnel in the areas of sales, operations and administration as well as direct involvement in the operation of Visitor Information Centres. Our Mentors are experienced Visitor Centre practitioners keen to spend time sharing with you, teaching and encouraging you, and helping you to learn from shared past experiences.

Topics

Session #1

- ✔ Introduction & Evaluation

Session #2

- ✔ Understanding Value, Worth and Professionalism of a Visitor Centre

Session #3

- ✔ Effective leadership within a Visitor Centre

Session #4

- ✔ Networking in the tourism industry

Session #5

- ✔ Open session & future thinking

NOTE: *This program will operate at a time to suit both the Mentee and Mentor's schedule.*

5.0 Program delivery options & schedule

Onsite in your town or city or nearby regional centre

- Duration of 1–3 days (depending on the program).
- Held in either a boardroom or other similar working space.
- Attendee numbers limited to ensure maximum opportunities for learning, better engagement and conversation. VIC Manager program capped at maximum 6 participants.
- Committed time for breaks, questions and quizzes to help maintain participants' attention and engagement.
- Supported by a VIC training handbook.
- Certificate of Participation issued

Brisbane City

- Personalised training in small classes with VIC Manager program capped at maximum number of 6 participants.
- Networking opportunities provide additional learnings.
- Supported by a VIC training handbook.
- Certificate of Participation issued.
- Enquire for further information and dates



Example of a training session held in the Greater Sydney region.

NOTE: We do not offer online training sessions except for the Individual Staff Mentor Program. Visitor servicing is mostly a one-on-one or face-to-face engagement therefore our preference for the delivery of these programs in person reflects this method of communication. Online delivery of this content will not reflect the nature of the training and in fact may be detrimental to the purposes of training in the first instance. We do however have online training resources available for reference and ongoing use.

6.0 Price Structure

VIC Training Academy Program	Duration	*Cost per attendee (Including GST)
<u>VIC Volunteer Program</u>	1 Day (5 hrs)	\$190
<u>VIC Customer Service Consultant Program</u>	1 Day (6 hrs)	\$315
<u>VIC Manager Program</u>	3 Days (19.5 hrs)	\$3,300
<u>VIC Individual Staff Mentor Program</u>	5 Sessions (7.5 hrs)	\$1,540

*Facilitator travel cost to be added for In-region training.

NOTE: Each training session will run with a minimum and at times a maximum number of persons to ensure all trainees receive the greatest tuition possible in their chosen program. Four weeks minimum booking notification is required for training conducted in Brisbane.



Glenbrook Visitor Information Centre - Photography by Ingrid Donald Architect

7.0 Certificate of Participation

After the hard work is done you will receive a Certificate of Participation indicating the topics completed in your Program. The topics are considered as being necessary and useful instruction for the successful operation of a Visitor Centre. The Tourism Group delivers practical and current processes and procedures necessary for the real-world success in the operation of a Visitor Centre.

CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE:

- ✓ VISITOR CENTRE PROGRAM IN VOLUNTEERING
- ✓ VISITOR CENTRE PROGRAM IN CUSTOMER SERVICE CONSULTANCY
- ✓ VISITOR CENTRE PROGRAM IN MANAGEMENT
- ✓ VISITOR CENTRE MENTOR PROGRAM



8.0 Booking Form

Contact Name	
Contact Organisation	
Email	
Phone	
Website	
Training Needs	
Other Comments:	
Proposed Training Dates:	

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 1 *The Tourism Group specializes in visitor services, is based in Brisbane and operates across Australia. Our Company is focused on delivering positive outcomes for tourism industry partners through our work which aligns into four key areas: 1. Visitor Information Centre Operations, 2. Tourism Accreditation, 3. Tourism Industry Support Services and 4. Tourism Consultancy and Development.*
- 2 *The Tourism Group is not a registered training organisation.*
- 3 *Prices quoted are based on a per person basis including GST and include program workbooks and handouts where applicable.*
- 4 *Prices and conditions are current at the time of publication and are valid for training conducted until 30th June 2023.*
- 5 *Prices do not include travel costs for the Trainer when conducting training In Region. These will be charged at cost only and agreed upon prior to engagement.*
- 6 *Prices do not include travel costs for Trainees to attend their Program outside their local region.*
- 7 *Option details for accommodation and transfers will be provided to Trainees for all Brisbane training events.*
- 8 *Due to the organisation required for training In Region including the booking of flights and accommodation, 50% of full payment is required 30 days prior to the date of training. The balance must be paid within 7 days of completion of training.*
- 9 *Due to the organisation for training, cancellation fees of 50% of full payment will apply for any cancellation made less than 14 days prior to training.*
- 10 *While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information included in this document no responsibility can be accepted by our Company for any changes, errors or omissions to the information included.*
- 11 *No responsibility can be accepted for any loss or inconvenience caused directly or indirectly from participation in the training program or the purchase of services available from The Tourism Group Pty Ltd.*



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