



## **THE NORFOLK ISLAND TOURISM AWARDS 2010**

### **YOUR ENTRY GUIDE**

**Some helpful hints to answering  
those questions!**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

There are five [5] topics each requiring several questions to be answered.

These are defined in The Entry Format document for the Awards

This Entry Guide document works through those questions, with hints and suggestions on what you might include.

The organisers are confident that this can be a process which – while challenging - is helpful to your business, and an enjoyable rewarding experience.

Please consult  
**THE ENTRY MANUAL**  
for full information about the Awards  
and  
**THE ENTRY FORMAT**  
for the required forms and templates

# NORFOLK ISLAND TOURISM AWARDS 2010

## PREPARING YOUR SUBMISSION

### GENERAL GUIDANCE AND HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

#### THE GOAL

To prepare an “exciting” document which profiles every aspect of your business by addressing questions under five [5] topics, focussing on the previous financial year:

#### YOUR OBJECTIVES

- To do your homework and research on the contents for your entry
- To highlight the strengths of your operation
- To prepare an attractive, readable winning entry
- To convince the judges that you deserve an award!!

#### BEFORE YOU START

It is a good idea to read through **The Entry Manual** and **The Entry Format** documents to get the full picture of the Awards and its forms. You should pay particular attention to the Entry Specifications for presenting your entry [Section 16 of the Entry Manual].

#### THE CONTENT OF YOUR ENTRY

The length of your submission should be within the 20-page limit set. Your data needs to be honest, relevant, succinct and clear. Write each question at the start of each topic or answer. The weighting and space you give to each topic and answer is a matter for your judgement within the maximum allowance. Note that there are differences to last year’s questions.

#### THE QUESTIONS

The questions are designed to define the important aspects of a top operation. You are required to answer all questions, or points will be deducted. If you do not think an aspect is relevant, perhaps there is a gap in your planning, or you should explain why it is not part of your business.

#### THE LAY-OUT

While a basic entry template is suggested for you in **The Entry Format**, this is not to limit your imagination in using headings, templates, graphs, charts “dot” points, colour and your own creativeness [within of course the defined specifications].

#### PHOTOS

Photographs can be used throughout to lift your presentation [if you have the space available]. Make sure they are good quality and have captions. It helps to use photos of your business and people, and keep the pics relevant to the text on that page.



The Kingston Waterfront and Emily Bay

## LAY-OUT HINTS

These are several mechanisms available in computer programs to assist attractive, orderly and communicative lay-outs. Here are three suggestions:

- The use of “dot” points, bullets or numbering, as this paragraph illustrates
- The use of sub-headings, as seen in this chapter
- The use of tables [also called boxes and templates] - with a sample below:

	Topic	Strategies	When	Notes
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				

## CROSS-REFERENCING

Answers in your entry may be inter-related under other Topics, so make good use of cross-referencing word it in a different context, rather than repeating sections of text.

## ENTRY DETAIL

Ensure that you have answered the specific question. You need to demonstrate three things clearly:

- What you do.
- How you do it. This is as important as “What”. [Generalisations do not earn points].
- The steps you take to maintain best practice and continuous improvement.

## SOME SUGGESTIONS

A few thoughts towards a top submission:

- Design your entry first, then the words
- Work on a good lay-out
- Keep your answers relevant and concise
- Be passionate but not gushy/mushy
- Keep to the facts – don’t exaggerate or present opinions
- Be able to justify any claims you make
- Don’t “bag” your competitors
- Use relevant photos [with captions if necessary]
- Use charts and graphs to illustrate the points made in the text
- Ensure that you have not omitted important facts about your product, the scope of marketing activities, your full involvement in, and contribution to, the tourism industry.

## THE COVER

The design and appearance of your cover page can be a good reflection of the standard of your business. The use of colour and photography can enhance this presentation. Make sure that your business name and the category number and name are included. This page is not counted in your 20-page allowance.

## THE INDEX PAGE

This should include the requested 100-word summary of your business, together with an Index of where to find each topic [and other points of you think they are important]. A template for this is in **The Entry Format**. This page is not counted in your 20-page allowance.

## APPENDIX

You also have the opportunity to include an appendix with up to 5 supporting sets of information which provide a more complete profile and presentation of your operation. Choose these carefully. Refer to them where appropriate in your main submission. You have a choice, but might consider documents, brochures, maps, photographs, rate cards, menus, extracts from procedures and operating manuals, your website, previous awards, testimonials.

## FOOTNOTE

We appreciate that some of the questions can be difficult for some [such as festivals and events], but they are designed to help businesses and organisations improve their planning and management.

## THE SUBMISSION QUESTIONS

### OVERALL COMMENTS

These are advisory notes only and are not instructions of what detail to include, but may be idea starters.

Plan your lay-out to achieve the maximum of 20 A4 pages. Ensure you meet the lay-out specifications.

You will note that Topics 1 and 2 attract high points, to reflect their importance in the judging. A question not answered receives 0 points.

Take care to avoid providing information under the wrong question.

Entrants in the “New Business” category [11] will need to address some questions slightly differently - eg concentrating on the concept, planning, establishment and “why” viewpoints.

Retail and service businesses should keep your answers focussed on the tourist and visitor aspects.

### 1. PRODUCT

20 points

- I. **Demonstrate your eligibility to enter this particular category ★**
- II. **Provide a general overview of the nature and history of your business/event/service.**
- III. **Describe your product, service and facilities.**
- IV. **Explain how you enhance the tourism experience offered**
  - ★ **New Businesses should outline the philosophies and rationale behind your development.**

### TOPIC 1 HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- Include reference to why you are eligible for entry in this category.
- Provide a general overview of the nature of your operation and its history/background, capturing the “feel” of your product in an exciting way.
- Do not use too much space on history at the expense of “today”.
- Consider mentioning how long the business has been in operation, and how it has changed over the time you have owned it
- Consider stating where you are located - perhaps include a map.
- Include some vital statistics eg the number of units, the annual number of visitors, your range of products, and who your business targets.
- Concentrate on the detail of “how” you enhance the tourism experience. Note any additional or special advantages you offer the visitor.
- You might note for example, why you selected your range of products, type of tour, attraction, event, service, location.
- Note innovations during the past year, and enlarge under Topic 5.
- Avoid mention of future plans, as you are being judged over the past year.
- Ensure that important basic information is not left out – don’t assume that the judges know your business.

### 2. BUSINESS PLAN

20 Points

- I. **Describe your business vision and objectives**
- II. **Explain what research you have undertaken, eg a SWOT analysis**
- III. **Summarise the key features of your Business Plan eg annual Goals, Strategies and Outcomes ★**
- IV. **Describe the risk issues you have identified and the mitigation strategies you have in place.**
- V. **Demonstrate your financial viability, with explanations.**
- VI. **Demonstrate your involvement in and contribution to the tourism industry.**
  - ★ **New Businesses should outline the strategies behind the new development.**

## TOPIC 2 HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- Your business vision and objectives can be concise overall statements as “the big picture”
- Explain your business research. This might include a SWOT analysis. For example  
HOW are you going to protect your key Strengths?  
WHAT are you going to do to minimise the major Weaknesses?  
HOW are you going to make real the key Opportunities?  
HOW are you going to negate the major Threats?
- Business Plan answers must be clearly laid out according to the specifics sought – notably, goals, strategies and outcomes.
- The use of tables can greatly facilitate your presentation here.
- Your answers need to reflect a thorough approach to planning, management, operations and maintenance. The judges want to see what plans you made to ensure the continuity of your business.
- Explain what you are trying to achieve i.e. your business vision, how you went about it and the related outcomes.
- Your reference to Risk Management should relate to all parts of your business including risks to the visiting public, specific business-related risks, and workplace safety, and how you assess and deal with each. The scope is quite wide – eg weather, loss of power, theft.
- You might consider including examples of how your Risk Management strategy works. For instance:

RISK	STRATEGY	OUTCOME

- On the financial questions, your presentation would benefit from the inclusion of graphs illustrating your results and trends. They can be presented as a percentage or dollar value.
- The judges do not require confidential and sensitive financial data you are uncomfortable with presenting. However, they need a clear overview/analysis of significant financial trends, comparisons and profit margins.
- You might explain the appropriate financial recording system you have to monitor budgets, income, costs and expenses, cash flow, breakeven points.
- Demonstrate the involvement in, and support for, the tourism industry at all levels by your business, you personally and your staff. Do not under-rate the many interests you probably have. Examples could include cooperation with local and wider tourism authorities, tourism accreditation, active membership of industry associations, leadership in industry forums, participation in special campaigns, and involvement in trade shows and media visits.

### 3. MARKETING

15 Points

- I. Who are your target markets and how did you identify them?
- II. Describe your marketing strategies for each target market, detail how they have been implemented and list their success/outcomes.
- III. What is your product's distinctive difference/s and how do you promote it/them to attract each of your target markets?
- IV. Demonstrate how you provide potential visitors with an accurate and responsible depiction of what to expect from your experience/product/service?

## TOPIC 3 HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- Your objective should be to demonstrate a clear plan, supported by market research and the results achieved.
- Define your separate target markets clearly. For example: Who are they? What are they here for? What are their expectations?
- Present a clearly laid-out, innovative and well-implemented Marketing Plan, with the emphasis very much on the detail of “how”. The use of a table can be helpful here.

- Define the markets you are working to attract, what strategies you have implemented for each. Comment on how successful they have been, including your repeat business strategy and new/developing markets.
- Consider all your marketing. For example, sales, advertising, listings, public relations, e-marketing, website, word-of-mouth, special offers, signage, shopfront, cooperative campaigns and the others you know about.
- Question 4 relates to your marketing material – flyers, advertising, website etc. – and keeping them current. You might choose to include a sample as an Appendix item.

#### 4. CUSTOMER SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

10 Points

- I. Explain how you achieve and maintain quality customer service and satisfaction throughout your organisation. Make reference to what procedures you have in place
- II. How do you identify and provide for people with special or specific needs?
- III. State the number of people working in the business and the organisation structure.
- IV. Describe your procedures for training and professional development, and the range of programmes undertaken.

#### TOPIC 4 HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- This question concentrates on the people side of your business – your customers and your employees.
- Define how quality customer service is achieved and maintained throughout your organisation – both formally and informally.
- Note your methods such as a guest survey form, and how complaints/comments are dealt with.
- There is increasing emphasis on providing for people with specific needs and it desirable to stay abreast of industry developments. Some aspects which come to mind are provision for disabilities – for example: Wheelchair access, sight and hearing impaired, special diets, language, the elderly and children.
- You might make reference here to procedures for handling guest emergency procedures should there be an incident, accident, special circumstance or unusual request.
- You are asked to outline the structure of your organisation, including owner/managers, full-time, part-time and casual employees, and volunteers.
- Include a statement [or even a chart] of your approach to induction, identifying training needs, training manuals, operations manuals, and the professional development of your people in the past year.

#### 5. SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION

10 Points

- I. Describe your commitment to environmental sustainability, and programmes to demonstrate this.
- II. Describe how your business benefits and respects Norfolk Island's community values and culture.
- III. Describe how you are aligned to the Norfolk Island Tourism Strategy.
- IV. Describe any innovations during the qualifying period to improve your business, and explain the specific benefits achieved. ★

★ Your answer to this question is the basis for the judges' assessment for the Innovation of the Year Award. Refer to the criteria for this award in Section 5 of the Entry Manual.

#### TOPIC 5 HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- Because there is increasing emphasis on conservation measures within business and industry, this question focuses on the total environment in which you operate.
- You are asked here to define your commitment to environmental sustainability, and then to define and explain the steps taken or are being introduced. Do you hold relevant permits or licences?

- These could include [but is not limited to] activities for energy savings, water conservation, building design and location, landscaping, waste management, recycling, use of safe chemicals, tree planting, wildlife care, adopting environmentally-sensitive procedures and “green” accreditation programs.
- There is great scope for listing how your business benefits and respects local community values and culture. This may include how your business relates with the island’s social culture, indigenous or historical heritage, and associations/links with the community, organisations and local services.
- Benefits to the local community could include apprenticeships, in-kind contributions, employment of local residents, and partnerships with community-based organisations. The use of local products and services could include food and beverage suppliers, service providers, tradespeople, and local building material.
- You are asked to describe your alignment with The Norfolk Island Tourism Strategy. This may be difficult to answer, but is worth some thought.
- Under this question, you could address issues like how your business will help to: grow visitor numbers; increase visitor yield; attract the baby boomer market (aged 43 to 60 years); raise service standards and cooperation across the industry; protect our environment, culture and heritage; attract special interest groups to holiday here and better target visitors and deliver on their needs and aspirations.
- The NI Strategy to 2012 was launched in mid 2007, with the following objectives:
  - Targets of 350,000 commercial visitor nights per year and a 50% average increase in per visitor expenditure to be achieved by June 30<sup>th</sup> 2012.
  - Norfolk Island’s image and experiences become more appealing and consequently a wider and increasingly a higher yielding market (the baby boomer ages 43 to 60 years) be attracted to the Island.
  - Increased unification of the tourism industry and involvement by the community in tourism leads to greater professionalism, consistency and general elevation of service standards, cooperative development of the industry and the experiences it provides.
  - Development of tourism in Norfolk Island is undertaken in a way and within limits to ensure the sustainability of the Island’s fragile and unique natural and social balance, environment and heritage.
  - Development of experiences, products and services, and marketing and distribution strategies to be undertaken in accord with and through a greater understanding of changing customer desire and aspirations.
- The innovation question [Number 4] is an important one, as it reflects the development and progressiveness of, and improvement to, your business. Please highlight first your most significant innovation.
- Under this question, there is opportunity to mention innovations during the past year to [i] Improve the environment, [ii] Enhance the visitor experience, and [iii] Introduce new infrastructure, activities or systems/procedures. Define the benefits achieved for each.
- In 2009, the Marie Bailey innovation Award was introduced for the business that, in the judges’ opinion, has implemented the most significant innovation in the qualifying period.
- The judges will review the innovations described under the response to this question with regards to originality, and benefits achieved for the business and for island tourism generally
- The criteria for this Award are listed in Section 5 of **The Entry Manual**.
- A short description [of no more than 50 words] of the innovation that can be publicly read out at the Awards Gala presentation must be provided in your response to this question, so please highlight this for the judges.

### IN CONCLUSION

These points are only thought starters, and they are designed to expand and encourage you to identify, define and explain the range of planning which you are implementing. We hope these suggestions and hints have stimulated your thinking towards a thorough and well-considered entry. Remember to consult the Checklist in The Entry Manual [Item 18] to ensure that you have complied with all matters. Please pass to the organisers any comments and suggestions for improvement in any aspect of the Awards.