

SHOALHAVEN BUSINESS AWARDS 2016

Friday 26th August
Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre

Awards Entry Information Pack

v2

www.shoalhavenbusinesschamber.com.au/awards

CONGRATULATIONS

ON YOUR DECISION TO ENTER THE AWARDS

Just by entering the Awards you are giving yourself the opportunity to review your business operations, reconnect with your vision and strategy, and measure performance against objectives.

Many entrants see the Awards as a time for forced self-assessment, which helps keep them accountable to their goals.

You are also giving yourself the opportunity to represent the Shoalhaven in the Illawarra Awards, and as we have seen in the past, even the State Awards (if you enter an aligned category).

This pack will give you all the information you need to understand the entry process and complete your Award entry.

About the Awards

The Shoalhaven Business Awards is the region's most anticipated annual business event.

The Awards are about so much more than just winning. In addition to recognising and honouring the most outstanding businesses in the region, they provide an opportunity to celebrate the combined success of the Shoalhaven business community.

The pinnacle of the business year, the Awards provide unrivalled networking opportunities, the chance to share remarkable stories, and ongoing brand exposure to the entire region.

For entrants, the Awards provide a platform for reviewing business operations with fresh eyes, as well as the eyes and minds of experts. They put a spotlight on the region, showcasing the success stories of our most outstanding businesses, and market the Shoalhaven as an investment destination.

Several categories are aligned with the Illawarra Awards, as well as the NSW state Awards, meaning a number of Shoalhaven businesses will be given the opportunity to compete in larger award programs and bring further recognition for the Shoalhaven.

Now in its 32nd year, the Awards attract SME business owners, senior executives from the private sector and local government representatives.

Held at the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, the Awards is an accessible event.

Read more at www.shoalhavenbusinesschamber.com.au/awards

Awards theme

Our Awards theme this year is 'Synergise'. To work synergistically means to apply collaborative thinking, it means to leverage diversity and to value differences, because in the strength of working together, we find new solutions to old problems.

The Synergise theme is closely aligned with the Chamber's strategic direction. Working together as one for the greater good of all has been paramount in the success we are starting to see within the Chamber and across the membership at large.

A number of businesses in the Shoalhaven have experienced the power of collaboration. When you look beyond the bounds of your own business, are open to creative cooperation and value the wealth of difference we have in the Shoalhaven, you are creating synergy.

Key dates

Thursday 12 May	Awards launched and entries open
Monday 23 May	Awards entry workshop & information session #1
Thursday 2 June	Awards entry workshop & information session #2
Thursday 30 June	Awards entries close
Monday 11 July	Judging & interviews commence/finalists announced
Tuesday 9 August	Judging completed
Friday 26 August	Awards gala night
Friday 16 September	Winners lunch

synergy

Pronunciation: /ˈsɪnədʒi/

THE INTERACTION OR COOPERATION OF TWO OR MORE ORGANISATIONS, SUBSTANCES, OR OTHER AGENTS TO PRODUCE A COMBINED EFFECT GREATER THAN THE SUM OF THEIR SEPARATE EFFECTS

Sponsors

Our Awards sponsors play an essential role in making the Awards possible. The Shoalhaven Business Chamber would like to thank all Awards sponsors for supporting this important program.

If you are interested in sponsoring the Awards, please contact Miranda Packer, Business Awards Event Manager, awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au or 0418885550.

Event partner

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Category sponsors

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Berry Bowling Club

Bomaderry RSL Club

Workshop sponsor

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Categories

We have 19 awards this year, 16 of which you can directly enter.

What does this mean?

This year, in addition to Business of the Year, we have two further awards that cannot be directly entered – 'Excellence in Inclusion' and 'Excellence in Social Responsibility'. Refer to page 8 and 9 for more information on these Awards.

Similarly to how we select Business of the Year, finalists for these two categories will be garnered from each of the 'open' categories. Two additional questions exist in each business-oriented category (i.e. excludes Business Leader, Young Entrepreneur and Young Business Executive) and the responses to these questions will be assessed to determine finalists for interviews.

Aligned categories

The winners of these categories will go on to represent the Shoalhaven and compete in the Illawarra Business Awards.

- Business Leader
- Young Business Executive
- Young Entrepreneur
- Excellence in Business
- Employer of Choice
- Excellence in Innovation
- Excellence in Export
- Excellence in Small Business
- Excellence in Sustainability

Non-aligned categories

These categories are specific to the Shoalhaven Awards, and are not included in the aligned Illawarra or NSW Awards.

- Excellence in Production
- Excellence in Professional & Commercial
- Excellence in Retail & Personal Services
- Outstanding Home Based Business
- Excellence in Community Service
- Outstanding New Business
- Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality
- Excellence in Inclusion
- Excellence in Social Responsibility
- Business of The Year

Important note

If you win a category at the Shoalhaven Business Awards and wish to enter the Illawarra Business Awards, you will be required to be become a NSW Business Chamber Member as per the terms and conditions set by the Illawarra Business Chamber, as only a member can enter their Awards.

Excellence in Inclusion

This category recognises individuals or businesses that address the needs of a diverse community, including seniors and people with disability. An inclusive society facilitates the needs of all its members, and encourages participation by all in everyday activities. For example, for people with disability, there are are multiple elements of inclusion that go beyond regulatory compliance to create a functional and welcoming environment: These elements include:

1. Physical e.g. ramps, grab rails, wider doors, larger print and/or audio or braille menus
2. Functional. Does it perform the way it is intended e.g. Can wheelchair users see over the counter? Are there obstacles that could impede vision-impaired visitors? Does your business play potentially overwhelming music?
3. Social. Do your customers, their family and friends feel welcome? Do you and your staff understand the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability)?

To be eligible for this award, you must enter one other award category, AND answer the below stated question (this is the second last question in each category).

"How does your business adopt inclusive practices and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?"

Please note that you cannot directly enter this award. Judges will select finalists from the responses to this question as it appears in each of the 16 categories.

If the judges for this category select you as a finalist, you will be required to have an interview specific to the Excellence in Inclusion award.

Excellence in Social Responsibility

This category recognises individuals, businesses or organisations that demonstrate a commitment to going beyond their core business activities to create a better place for others either through benevolent activities or involvement in bettering the wider community.

To be eligible for this award, you must enter one other award category, AND answer the below stated question (this is the last question in each other category).

"Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

1. specific examples;
2. outcomes;
3. the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
4. reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment process."

Please note that you cannot directly enter this award. Judges will select finalists from the responses to this question as it appears in each of the 16 categories.

If the judges for this category select you as a finalist, you will be required to have an interview specific to the Excellence in Social Responsibility award.

How to enter

Using the portal

Entries are completed online using the NSW Business Chamber awards entry portal. The URL for the portal is http://awards.nswbc.com.au/login/shoalhaven.

The login screen will say 'Please login with your NSWBC membership login details'. If you are not a NSWBC member please don't worry, anyone can enter the Awards. This is just to simplify things in the event you win and progress to the Illawarra Awards.

If you entered the Awards last year, you will need to use the same login details (email address and password). If you've forgotten your password, you can have it reset. If you've never entered before, you can create a new profile for yourself using your email address. Supported browsers for using the portal include:

Firefox 34 and higher
Internet Explorer 9 and higher
Chrome 39 and higher
Safari (Mac only) 7.1 and higher
Opera 26 and higher

You will notice that some of the questions in the portal look quite long and have odd formatting. This is due to the limitations of the portal and unfortunately there is nothing we can do about it. Once you have selected the question you wish to answer, the formatting improves a little.

Entry writing tips

- Re-read the question as you are answering it. Are you addressing precisely what is being asked? This is critical to judges in assessing and scoring your entry.
- Use clear, concise language. Short, succinct sentences are much easier to read than long wordy ones.
- Check your spelling and grammar – get someone else to review your entry, ideally someone with great attention to detail as well as a strong grasp of the English language.
- Work within the minimum and maximum word limits.
- Reference evidence – awards, testimonials etc. Although you can't attach documents in the portal, you can reference them and if required, bring them to your interview.
- Put your judge's hat on. If you were judging your entry, would it stand out to you? What questions would you have?
- Conduct a final review before submitting. Re-read the description of the category. Have you clearly demonstrated what the category seeks to recognise?

Please note: as stated in the questions, all entries will be based on the success of the past 12 - 24 months only.

UOW student support

This year we have requested expressions of interest from suitably skilled UOW Marketing & Communications students to assist businesses with writing their entries. Your written entry plays a crucial role in your submission. Not only is it assessed to determine whether you become a finalist, but it also forms 50**%** of the judges' final assessment of your entry (the interview forms the other 50**%**).

Plenty of successful people have poor spelling, poor grammar, poor sentence structure, or don't know how to effectively and convincingly use the English language to their advantage. One of the most iconic entrepreneurs of our time, Richard Branson, suffers from dyslexia and is the first to admit that his spelling is far from perfect.

If any of this sounds like you, consider partnering with a UOW student to assist with the writing element of your submission. You will be giving yourself the best possible chance of creating a winning entry.

Email awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au or call Miranda Packer on 0418 885 550 to find out more.

Providing your logo

After you have submitted your entry, please email your business's logo to awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au in both JPEG and EPS formats.

Questions about entering

For questions about the entry process, including using the portal, please contact:

Miranda Packer
Business Awards Event Manager
awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au
0418 885 550

If you need your portal password reset, please contact

Danielle O'Keefe
NSW Business Chamber
Danielle.O'Keefe@nswbc.com.au
02 9458 7238

Benefits of entering

Review your business

The benefits of entering the Awards extend well beyond winning and glory. As a process of entering the Awards, you will review your business operations, reconnect with your vision and strategy, and measure performance against objectives. Many entrants see the Awards as a time for forced self-assessment, which helps keep them accountable to their goals.

Celebrate success

Your business is successful because of the people you have in it. Entering the Awards is a great way to review the past 12 months, recognising those who have contributed to the success of your business.

Reward & recognition

Bringing your staff to the Awards gala is a great opportunity to recognise and reward your team for the role they play in making your business a success.

A sense of pride for your team

Working for a recognised or awarded business is great for your team. Who doesn't like working for a business that is considered to be among the best? Our finalists all gain recognition as part of the Awards lead up and follow up; think about what that might mean for your team.

Identify areas for development

Participating in the Awards is a great way to see what your peers and your competition are doing, and consider areas for improvement in your own business.

Put a spotlight on passion

There are many businesses that are doing something really outstanding, really valuable, or really unique, and often it goes unnoticed. Entering the Awards is an opportunity to bring awareness to the work you are doing, and may have benefits that you never imagined. .

Represent the Shoalhaven

Winners of the aligned category Awards will go on to the Illawarra Business Awards and compete against businesses in the Illawarra region. Winners of those Awards then go on to the NSW State Awards, an extremely prestigious opportunity. Representing your business, and the Shoalhaven, at the State Awards is a great way to earn free PR for your business.

PLUS - SPECIAL BONUS FOR 2016!

Awards major sponsor Power FM & 2ST has generously offered an extra incentive for new entries this year. Every business, or individual (Business Leader, Young Entrepreneur, Young Business Executive) that enters in 2016 and has not entered in the last three years (2015, 2014 and 2013) will be entered into a draw to win $1000 of advertising airtime donated by Power FM/2ST.

Awards entry workshops

In seeking feedback from past Award entrants, we've learned that businesses really want assistance with the entry process. So this year we are partnering with University of Wollongong and will be running two Award entry workshops/information sessions.

The purpose of the workshops is to equip entrants with the education, tools and support required to produce an outstanding award entry. Two key obstacles exist for businesses that want to enter, but don't, these are:

- Insufficient time
- Insufficient skills (or feelings of) to write a winning entry

By allocating time to attend the workshops, you will give yourself the best possible chance of producing an outstanding entry.

Topics covered at the workshops

- Categories available to enter
- Benefits of entering
- UOW student support program (to assist with entries)
- Judging (presented by Chair of Judges, Raj Ray)
    - o Criteria/how judging works
    - o The judges' role
    - o The interview process
    - o The importance of the written entry in the final decision
- Overview of the Awards entry portal
- Q&A with past judges and Chair of Judges
- Opportunity to work on Awards entry with available assistance from past judges (time permitting)

Workshop dates

Monday 23rd May
8.30am – 10.00am
&
Thursday 2nd June
12.00pm – 1.30pm

Workshop venue

Room LG25
Library Building
University of Wollongong Shoalhaven
Glen Evans Rd
West Nowra

If you want to know how to create a winning entry, you need to register for our workshops. To register, please email admin@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au or call Jeni at the SBC office on 4423 3582.

Judging process

Who are the judges?

The judges are an independent panel of business owners, business professionals and government representatives from the Shoalhaven and surrounding regions.

How are they appointed?

The Shoalhaven Business Chamber and the Chair of Judges jointly appoint the judges.

Who is the Chair of Judges?

The Chair of Judges is Raj Ray. Raj has been appointed by the Chair of the Shoalhaven Professional Business Association, Steven Bayer.

How many judges are there?

Two judges per category

Steps involved

1. Judges meet to eliminate conflicts of interest and sign confidentiality agreements
2. Judges are assigned to categories
3. Judges review and score all entries in their category
4. Judges determine their category finalists
5. Finalists are contacted and announced
6. Interviews are undertaken
7. Judges choose their category winner
8. Judges meet to determine Business of the Year
9. Winners' names are provided to the Shoalhaven Business Chamber for announcement at the Awards gala

What are judges looking for in your written entry?

The judges are initially looking for the questions to be answered. Providing information that is not related to the question is not helpful. Your responses must also clearly demonstrate excellence by your business.

Interviews/site visits

Interviews will take place between 11 July and 9 August, typically at the finalists' place of business. Finalists will be announced on 11 July so this is the earliest that judges will be able to start contacting finalists to set up interviews. Interviews take between 30 and 60 minutes.

Benefits of site visits

Having your category judge visit your business is a great opportunity for them to truly experience your business, what's different about it, and spark conversation about your culture. It will also put you in your comfort zone, which will give you the best chance of excelling at interview.

What are the judges looking for during interview?

The judges will be looking for entrants to clearly reinforce information provided in the entry. They will also ask questions that are not part of the written submission to learn Finalists are selected based on the score from their written entry.

How are finalists selected?

Finalists are selected based on the score from their written entry.

How winners are selected

Winners are selected by judges scoring the written submission as well as responses provided in the interview.

How Business of the Year is selected

Outstanding business category winners that also meet the additional criteria for Business of the Year will be put forward as a finalist. Each judge presents their case as to why they feel the business they are putting forward deserves to win. Once the shortlist is determined, judges vote by secret ballot.

What is the criteria for Business of the Year?

In addition to being a standout business when compared with the other category winners, judges will also be looking for:

- Financial sustainability and solvency
- Strong examples of inclusive initiatives that go beyond basic compliance
- Strong examples of social responsibility
- Businesses that demonstrate contribution to the Shoalhaven business community
- Collaborative work that demonstrates synergistic outcomes

How does the audit process work?

The judging process is overseen by an independent team of auditors from the Shoalhaven Professional Business Association.

Receiving feedback on your entry and interview

If you would like feedback to be provided on your entry and your interview, please contact your judge directly.

Winners' Lunch

A winners' lunch will be held at the Bomaderry Bowling Club on Friday 16 September. All winners and sponsors will be invited.

The purpose of this event is to recognise and congratulate our Awards winners, and to connect category sponsors with their winners.

The Shoalhaven Business Chamber thanks the Bomaderry Bowling Club for their generosity in sponsoring this event.

Post Awards eBook

To continue the momentum and excitement that the Awards generate, and to celebrate the success of our winners, this year we are creating an ebook. The ebook will also better connect our sponsors with their respective category winners, and provide better visibility as to the alignment between sponsors and categories.

The eBook will ensure that stories of success are captured, our winners celebrated, and our sponsors and supporters further recognised after the Awards period.

Award winner interviews

After the Awards, each winner will be interviewed to garner content for the ebook. Interviews can be conducted at your place of business, or offsite at the winners' discretion. Interviews will be conducted in October/November, and will take around an hour.

eBook distribution

The ebook will be distributed to all Awards entrants, all gala attendees, and all Shoalhaven Business Chamber members. It will also be posted on the Chamber website and Facebook page.

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS & QUESTIONS

Business Leader

Sponsored by



The Business Leader award recognises the positive contribution made to business by business people and professionals. The award recognises those who demonstrate outstanding entrepreneurial spirit, strategic business direction and innovative ideas, whilst providing inspiration to a new generation of upcoming business leaders.

Questions

1. Provide a current profile of yourself including your title, current business role, scope of responsibilities.

2. Why do you believe you should be considered as a business leader?

3. Provide an overview of your 5 year goals /milestones.

4. Detail your achievements in business in the previous 5 years.

5. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a business leader in the past 5 years and how you overcame them.

6. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems.

Additional T&Cs

In addition to the general T&C's the following apply to this category:

- If you are applying on behalf of someone else you must have their permission to enter this award category.
- NSW Business Chamber State and Regional Councillors are ineligible to enter into this category.
- NSW Business Chamber Business Award program judges are ineligible to enter into this category the current year and consecutive year following the year in which they judged.

Young Business Executive

Sponsored by

This category is available to sponsor

The Young Business Executive award recognises an inspirational young professional aged between 18-35 years who has built a successful career with an organisation.

Questions

1. Provide a current profile including current job role and scope of responsibilities.

2. What is your employment background?

3. Provide an overview of your 5 year goals/milestones and how you are working towards these.

4. Detail your measurable career achievements.

5. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a young business professional and how you deal with these challenges.

6. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

• specific examples;
• outcomes;
• the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
• reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

8. What do you believe makes you a good leader?

Additional T&C's - In addition to the general T&C's the following apply to this category:

- If you are applying on behalf of someone else you must have their permission to enter this award category.
- Entrant must be employed by the organisation for a period of 2 years at the time of entry submission.
- Should the entrant leave the organisation before the Regional or State Gala event, their entry is ineligible.
- NSW Business Chamber State and Regional Councillors are ineligible to enter into this category.
- NSW Business Chamber Business Award program judges are ineligible to enter into this category for the current year and the consecutive year following the year in which they judged

Young Entrepreneur

Sponsored by

The Young Entrepreneur award recognises an inspirational young person aged between 18-35 years who, through their own commitment and passion, has built and operates a successful business. This award recognises young business leaders who demonstrate outstanding entrepreneurial spirit, strategic direction and innovative ideas whilst providing inspiration to a new generation of upcoming young business people.

Questions

1. Please detail the measurable achievements in your business.

2. Provide an overview of your 5 year goals/milestones for your business and how you are working towards these.

3. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a young entrepreneur and how you deal with these challenges.

4. How do you demonstrate inspiration to other young entrepreneurial people?

5. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

6. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

• specific examples;
• outcomes;
• the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
• reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

7. Why do you believe you should win this award?

Additional T&C's

In addition to the general T&Cs the following apply to this category:-

- If you are applying on behalf of someone else you must have their permission to enter this award category.
- Entrants must have ownership and/or have been operating their business for a minimum of 2 years at the time of entry submission.
- NSW Business Chamber State and Regional Councillors are ineligible to enter into this category.
- NSW Business Chamber Business Award program judges are ineligible to enter into this category for the current year and consecutive year following the year in which they judged.

Excellence in Business

Sponsored by



for businesses employing 20 or more employees*

Excellence in Business award recognises a business that has attained significant growth and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies and processes implemented to achieve sustainable growth over the previous 24 months.

*This includes all employees on payroll in Australia such as contractors, casuals and labour hire staff.

Questions

1. Explain your business growth in the previous 24 months.

2. Explain the strategies and plans to achieve your business growth over the previous 24 months.

3. How did you implement these strategies?

4. Detail the measurable results you achieved both financial and non-financial and how these demonstrate "excellence".

5. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

6. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Employer of Choice

Sponsored by

This category is available to sponsor

The Employer of Choice award recognises organisations that put in place strategies and initiatives to create stimulating and supportive workplace environments for their employees. These strategies or initiatives must have a positive impact on both employees and the organisation as a whole.

Questions

1. Number of full time employees includes all employees on payroll in Australia.(This is for context only and will not be scored).

2. Explain any specific HR and WHS programs and policies you have undertaken in the previous 24 months.

3. Why did your business embark on this project/s and/or initiatives?

4. What measurable results have been achieved and how have they positively contributed to workplace productivity and employee satisfaction? (i.e. reduction in voluntary staff turnover, absenteeism, training and development hours, employee satisfaction measures).

5. Identify and describe the benefits you offer as an Employer of Choice?

6. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Excellence in Innovation

Sponsored by

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Recognises businesses that have made significant contributions to their industry through the introduction or improvement of an idea, method, technology, process or application.

Questions

1. Is this a new innovation or an innovative approach to an existing practice or problem? Please explain.

2. Explain how your business monitors and reacts to changes in the market including how your business acquires an understanding of emerging customer needs and market developments.

3. Provide evidence of how your business is innovative, with specific examples over the previous 24 months including cost effectiveness, integration and risk minimisation.

4. Provide details of the commercialisation, adoption or take up of the innovation and its sustainability over time.

5. Provide measurable evidence of how innovative activity in your business in the previous 12 - 24 months has helped grow or improve your business.

6. Demonstrate the extent to which your business innovation has or is likely to have a positive impact beyond your business (i.e. to your industry, to the community).

7. How are these improvements or impacts to the business measured?

8. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

9. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Excellence in Export

Sponsored by



The Excellence in Export recognises leading examples of businesses that are forging a strong reputation for Australian products and services in international markets.

Questions

1. Summarise your measurable export success/es in the past 24 months.

2. Outline the key points of your international marketing strategy over the past 12- 24 months and what role it played in your company's success.

3. What strategies (communication/advertising/promotional/partnerships etc.) have you implemented to promote and sustain awareness of your brand/s in overseas markets in the past 12-24 months?

4. Briefly explain how your company differentiates its product/service from the competition and how are you maintaining/improving this advantage.

5. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

6. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Excellence in Small Business

Sponsored by



for businesses employing less than 20 employees*

The Excellence in Small Business award recognises a business (employing less than 20 employees*) that has attained significant growth and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies and processes implemented to achieve sustainable growth in the previous 24 months.

*This includes all employees on payroll in Australia such as contractors, casuals and labour hire staff.

Questions

1. Explain your business growth in the previous 24 months.

2. Explain the strategies and plans to achieve your business growth over the previous 24 months.

3. How did you implement these strategies?

4. Detail the measurable results you achieved both financial and non-financial and how these demonstrate "excellence".

5. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

6. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Excellence in Sustainability

Sponsored by



The Excellence in Sustainability award recognises businesses that are working to reduce the impact of their operations on the environment and/or provide products and services that have positive environmental outcomes.

Questions

1. Describe your business environmental sustainability goals. Please note that these must be quantifiable targets.

2. Describe the initiatives/actions your organisation has undertaken to achieve its sustainability objectives in the previous 12- 24 months.

3. Describe your sustainability achievements over the last 12 months.

4. Describe how you involve staff in your environmental initiatives.

5. Provide measurable evidence of how the sustainability objectives your business has achieved have contributed to the business, it's customers, staff and suppliers such as financial outcomes, staff engagement, marketing benefits, supplier/customer loyalty.

6. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Additional T&C's applicable to this category

Where sustainability is your core business, you must enter this category based on sustainable initiatives and projects within your business, not related to your core offering.

Excellence in Production

Sponsored by



This category is open to all businesses engaged in the production or manufacturing of any product or good intended for market supply, ranging from the construction and building industry to primary production and manufacturing. Types of businesses include those engaged in building works, civil engineering, food production, farming, supply of raw materials, manufacturing of finished goods, as well as mining operations.

Questions

1. Explain your business growth and achievements in the past 12-24 months.

2. What were the strategies and plans to achieve your business growth over the past 12-24 months?

3. How did you implement these strategies?

4. Detail the measurable results you achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence".

5. Explain any specific HR and WHS programs and policies you have undertaken to ensure the engagement, wellbeing and safety of your employees and contractors.

6. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Excellence in Professional & Commercial

Sponsored by



This category is open to providers of specialist services such as medical, legal, consultants, business and personal development, business to business, accredited training, architects, draughts people, interior designers, surveyors and marketing/advertising agencies.

Questions

1. Explain your business growth and achievements in the past 12-24 months.

2. What were the strategies and plans to achieve your business growth over the past 12-24 months?

3. How did you implement these strategies?

4. Detail the measurable results you achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence".

5. How do ensure you are up to date with relevant industry and regulatory changes in your industry?

6. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Excellence in Retail & Personal Services

Sponsored by



This category applies to all retail businesses ranging from smaller sole trader operations to large department stores, motor vehicle operations and sales, and a wide range of health, fitness, beauty and personal services, including allied health providers.

Questions

1. Explain your business growth and achievements in the past 12-24 months.

2. What were the strategies and plans to achieve your business growth over the past 12-24 months?

3. How did you implement these strategies?

4. Detail the measurable results you achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence".

5. What is your point of difference in your service philosophy and how do you differentiate yourself from your competitors?

6. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Outstanding Home-based Business

Sponsored by



This award acknowledges the high growth in home-based businesses and their importance to our business economy. A home based business is defined as a business with no other fixed address other than the business owner's home, although business activity may or may not occur at that location and employs less than 5 people.

Questions

1. Explain your business growth and achievements in the past 12-24 months.

2. What are the key challenges of operating a business from home and how have you overcome them?

3. What are the benefits of operating your business from home and how do you use these to your advantage?

4. What is your point of difference and how do you differentiate yourself from your competitors?

5. Detail the measurable results you achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence".

6. How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)? NOTE: If you believe this question does not apply to your home-based business, please clearly state why.

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Excellence in Community Service (not-for-profit)

Sponsored by

This category is available to sponsor

This award recognises not-for-profit organisations that are positively contributing to the Shoalhaven community through projects, services and/or through other long term initiatives.

Questions

1. How do you engage with the community to encourage their support and partnership?

2. What are the key challenges of operating a Community Service organisation in the Shoalhaven?

3. How does your organisation ensure financial sustainability?

4. Detail the measurable results you achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence".

5. How does your organisation adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

6. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Sponsored by

Outstanding New Business

This category recognises a new `fledgling' business that has been operating for at least six months and less than two years - and is open to entrants from all industries. Businesses that have had a complete change in ownership and a proven new direction in operations within this timeframe will also be eligible.

Questions

1. Explain your business growth and achievements since you commenced your business.

2. What are your strategies and plans for growth over the next 12 months?

3. How will you implement these strategies?

4. Detail the measurable results you achieved both financial and non-financial and how these demonstrate "excellence".

5. What have been your key business challenges in the past twelve months and how have you overcome these?

6. How does your organisation adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality

Sponsored by

integrity® real estate

This category is open to providers of tourism, entertainment, commercial tourist accommodation and hospitality services. Businesses eligible to enter include providers or general tourism/recreational facilities and attractions, licenced clubs, hotels, motels, caravan and camping parks, B&B operators, conference and catering operators, restaurants and cafes.

Questions

1. Explain your business growth and achievements in the past 12-24 months.

2. What were the strategies and plans to achieve your business growth over the past 12-24 months?

3. How did you implement these strategies?

4. Detail the measurable results you have achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence".

5. Explain how you participate in and contribute to the growth and success of hospitality and tourism in the Shoalhaven region?

6. How does your organisation adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)?

7. Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:

- specific examples;
- outcomes;
- the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
- reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment.

Excellence in Inclusion

Sponsored by



This category recognises individuals or businesses that address the needs of a diverse community, including seniors and people with disability. An inclusive society facilitates the needs of all its members, and encourages participation by all in everyday activities. For example, for people with disability, there are are multiple elements of inclusion that go beyond regulatory compliance to create a functional and welcoming environment:

These elements include:
1. Physical e.g. ramps, grab rails, wider doors, larger print and/or audio or braille menus
2. Functional. Does it perform the way it is intended e.g. Can wheelchair users see over the counter? Are there obstacles that could impede vision-impaired visitors? Does your business play potentially overwhelming music?
3. Social. Do your customers, their family and friends feel welcome? Do you and your staff understand the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability)?

To be eligible for this award, you must enter one other award category, AND answer the below stated question.

Question (this is the second last question in each other category)

How does your business adopt inclusive practice and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability, and seniors)? Visit www.shoalhavenbusiness.com.au/awards/categories to read more about this question and how it relates to the Inclusion Award.

Please note that you cannot directly enter this award. Judges will select finalists from the responses to this question as it appears in each of the 16 categories.

If the judges for this category select you as a finalist, you will be required to have an interview specific to the Excellence in Inclusion award.

Excellence in Social Responsibility

Sponsored by



This category recognises individuals, businesses or organisations that demonstrate a commitment to going beyond their core business activities to create a better place for others either through benevolent activities or involvement in bettering the wider community.

To be eligible for this award, you must enter one other award category, AND answer the below stated question.

Question (this is the last question in each other category)

Demonstrate how you have helped the community (and or the business community) overcome social or environmental problems. Please elaborate, being sure to include:
1)specific examples;
2)outcomes;
3)the scale of resources (financial and in kind) applied; and
4)reference to acknowledgements or awards that will assist in the assessment process.
Visit www.shoalhavenbusiness.com.au/categories to read more about this question and how it relates to the Social Responsibility Award.

Please note that you cannot directly enter this award. Judges will select finalists from the responses to this question as it appears in each of the 16 categories.

If the judges for this category select you as a finalist, you will be required to have an interview specific to the Excellence in Social Responsibility award.

Terms & conditions

It is important that you read the complete terms and conditions before submitting your entry. These terms aren also available on the SBC website at www.shoalhavenbusinesschamber.com.au/awards/termsandconditions

1. How to enter

1.1. To enter the Shoalhaven Business Awards all applicants must read and understand the terms and conditions and complete the entry form for your chosen category/categories. 1.2. By lodging your submission, you agree to be bound by the Terms and Conditions of entry. 1.3. Entry into the Shoalhaven Business Awards is via the Awards entry portal, located at 1.4. Your entry must be submitted by 5.00pm AEST, 30 June, 2016. 1.5. Shoalhaven Business Chamber reserves the right to extend or vary the entry period if required, before or after the award entry period commences.

2. Eligibility to enter

2.1. All businesses must have been in operation for at least two years as at the closing date for entries, 30 June, 2016 (excludes 'Outstanding New Business' category). 2.2 Eligible businesses include Australian registered businesses, companies or organisations. This includes partnerships, franchises, community organisations, registered charities, commonwealth & state government departments, agencies and local government bodies. 2.3 Businesses must have commenced or be majority located in the Shoalhaven as defined by the Local Government Area. 2.4 Members of the Judging Panel (or their businesses) are not eligible to enter the 2016 Shoalhaven Business Awards. 2.5 Winners from the 2015 Shoalhaven Business Awards program cannot enter the same category in the subsequent year (2016) that they won. 2.6. Winners from 2015 are free to enter any other category in 2016 other than the category they were a winner of in 2015. 2.7 You don't need to be a Shoalhaven Business Chamber member to enter.

3. Conditions of entry

3.1. Entrants must be willing to participate in Awards related publicity organised by the Shoalhaven Business Chamber and agree to be contacted by all media sponsors before and after entry to the Awards and the event. 3.2. Entrants can only win a specific category three times. The winning business/organisation will enter the chamber's 'Hall of Fame' and be listed on the honour board in the chamber office. 3.3. By entering, you agree to be interviewed by the Shoalhaven Business Chamber, in the event that you win an Award. Every Award winner will be interviewed to garner content for a 2016 Shoalhaven Business Awards ebook. 3.4 By entering the Awards, and by answering the 'Inclusion' and 'Social Responsibility' questions in each category, you understand you are also entering the Excellence in Inclusion and/or Excellence in Social Responsibility Awards. This excludes the Business Leader category. 3.5 If you are entering the 'Outstanding Home Based Business' Award, and you do not believe the 'Inclusion' question applies to your business, you must state why in your response.

4. Confidentiality

4.1. All information provided in the entry form will be used for the purpose of judging only and will be treated as commercial-in-confidence by Shoalhaven Business Chamber. 4.2. If you are selected as a finalist, the information provided in the entry will be used for the purpose of promoting the Awards and your business.

5. Judging Panel

5.1. Applications will be assessed by independent expert Judging Panels made up of senior industry figures and members of the professions, together with a range of other key distinguished stakeholders. 5.2. There will be a separate Judging Panel comprising 2 judges for each Award Category. 5.3. The entire judging process will be overseen by independent auditors. 5.4. The Judging Panels will conduct interviews with all Finalists (to be selected by the Judges) and may undertake site visits to some entrants (if appropriate). Should your business be selected as a finalist, the interview will take place at an independent venue or on site at the discretion of the Judges. 5.5. The Judging Panels reserve the right not to issue an Award in a given category. 5.6. The weighting of the entry and interview process is 50**%** for the written entry & 50**%** for the interview. 5.7. The judges' decision is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

6. Awards

6.1. The Awards comprise of the following categories:

- Business Leader
- Young Business Executive
- Young Entrepreneur
- Excellence in Business (20 or more FTE)
- Employer of Choice
- Excellence in Innovation
- Excellence in Export
- Excellence in Small Business (less than 20 FTE)
- Excellence in Sustainability
- Excellence in Production*
- Excellence in Professional & Commercial*
- Excellence in Retail & Personal Services*
- Outstanding Home Based Business*
- Excellence in Community Service (not for profit)*
- Outstanding New Business*
- Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality*
- Excellence in Inclusion * ^
- Excellence in Social Responsibility* ^
- Business of The Year* ^

6.1.1 *Shoalhaven specific Awards, do not progress to Illawarra and NSW Business Chamber Business Awards. 6.1.2 ^ Award categories that cannot be directly entered. The finalists for these awards will be selected by the judges. 6.2. Category winners will automatically enter the Illawarra Business Chamber Awards as a Regional Category Finalist. 6.3 If you wish to go on to be a Regional Finalist at the Illawarra Business Chamber Business Awards, you will be required to be become a NSW Business Chamber Member as per the terms and conditions set by the Illawarra Business Chamber.

7. Announcing the finalists and winners

7.1. Finalists will be notified by phone and email, and published on the Shoalhaven Business Chamber website 7.2. Winners will not be notified prior to the Awards Gala Dinner to be held on Friday, 26th August 7.3. Winners will be announced at the Awards Gala Dinner.

8. Disclaimer

8.1. The Shoalhaven Business Chamber accepts no liability regarding loss of patent or commercial returns arising from participation in the 2016 Shoalhaven Business Awards application process. 8.2. Applicants are strongly advised to secure adequate protection for their intellectual property rights.

FAQs

Do I need to be a Shoalhaven Business Chamber member to enter the Awards?
No you don't, the Awards are open to all businesses in the Shoalhaven (definition of 'business in the Shoalhaven' outlined in terms and conditions 2.3).

What is the portal address?
http://awards.nswbc.com.au/login/shoalhaven

How do I log into the portal?
Using your email address and password from last year. If you've forgotten your password, it can be reset. If you didn't enter last year, you need to create a new profile using your email address as your login.

What date do the Awards open?
Thursday 12 May, 9.00am

What date do the Awards close?
Thursday 30 June, 5.00pm

Can I enter a category that I won last year?
No, but you can enter a different category.

Why not?
This is a condition set by NSW Business Chamber. As the Shoalhaven aligns with the NSW Business Chamber, we must abide by their terms and conditions.

Can I enter a category that I won prior to 2015?
Yes, unless you have been admitted to the Hall of Fame for winning (that same category) three times.

Can I get someone else to complete my entry?
Yes. The business owner does not have to complete the entry, you may delegate this internally or externally. Many businesses decide to do this to eliminate time being a barrier to entry. It's important that you work with the person writing the entry to ensure it's in line with your expectations, and to ensure you are clear on what is in your entry, should you make it to interview.

Isn't that 'cheating'/giving an unfair advantage?
Excellent business leaders are not necessarily skilled at crafting compelling business writing. It is completely feasible to run an exceptional business, but have poor spelling, poor grammar, poor sentence structure, or not know how to effectively and convincingly use the English language to your advantage. If this sounds like you, by outsourcing the writing element of your submission, you are giving yourself the best possible chance of creating a winning entry.

Do I need to answer the 'Inclusion' and 'Social Responsibility questions in each category in order to enter that category?
Yes, you must. These questions still contribute towards your entry in your chosen category, but they will also provide you with an entry into their respective Awards. Think of it as two bites of the cherry; one Award entry actually gives you the chance to be a finalist in two awards!

Will I be interviewed if I am selected as a finalist for Excellence in Inclusion or Excellence in Social Responsibility?
Yes you will. If the judges from the Inclusion and Social Responsibility Awards select your response to be a finalist, they will need to interview you specifically to understand more about your business and how it relates to Inclusion and/or Social Responsibility.

Can't I just enter the Excellence in Inclusion or Social Responsibility categories?
The only way to enter and be a finalist in these categories is to enter another category. Why is this? We feel that these are important considerations for all businesses. We want to generate awareness about the need for inclusiveness and social responsibility in all business operations.

Does my written entry count towards my final assessment?
Yes it does. The final selection of a category winner is 50**%** written entry/50**%** interview.

Can I enter the Awards if I am sponsoring?
Yes you may. You cannot enter the category that you are sponsoring, but you may enter any other category.

Can I enter the Awards if I am judging?
No, you cannot enter if you are also judging. This is because each judge plays a role in selecting Business of the Year, which would create a conflict of interest.

Will the sponsor of my category see my entry?
No, the sponsors provide funds to make the Awards possible, but there is no relationship between sponsor of a category and the judge of that category. The only exclusion to this is the Excellence in Inclusion category, which is sponsored by Hansa Sailing and where one of the judges will be Jackie Kay (from Hansa Sailing).

GOOD LUCK

We look forward to receiving your Award entry, and thank you for participating in the 2016 Shoalhaven Business Awards.

www.shoalhavenbusinesschamber.com.au/awards

