



SHOALHAVEN
**BUSINESS
AWARDS**
2018

Entry Pack



CONNECT

Pronunciation: kə'nekt

Communicating and collaborating to create meaningful relationships for a sustainable, vibrant and profitable business community.

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.

It is an opportunity to engage with your team and collectively brainstorm the strategy for your entry.

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.

It is our intent to make the process of entering as easy and enjoyable as possible.

You can find help in this pack, on our website, the Awards workshop, our Facebook page and our newsletter.

Please make sure you like and follow the Chamber's Facebook page for regular and important updates.

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.

In 2017 our Awards program continued to grow and exceed expectations. The tickets to the Gala sold out in just ten days. This year we will be going above and beyond to create an unforgettable event that encompasses all that is great within the Shoalhaven region. .

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

For sponsorship enquiries and information about entering the Awards contact Julia O'Keefe, Awards Manager awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au or 0438 287 578.

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

Awards theme

Our Awards theme this year is 'Connect'.

Communicating and collaborating to create meaningful relationships for a sustainable, vibrant and profitable business community

Key dates

Monday 14 May	Awards launched and entries open
Wednesday 30 May	Awards entry workshop
Monday 9 July	Awards entries close
Friday 17 August	Awards Finalists' and Sponsors Evening
Friday 31 August	Awards Gala night

Contacts

For questions about entering, please contact:

Julia O'Keefe, Awards Manager
awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au
0438 287 578

For portal or password assistance, please contact

NSW Business Chamber Member Support Centre
1300 139 910

Categories

We have 19 awards this year, 18 of which you can directly enter.

ALIGNED CATEGORIES

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

1. Employer of Choice
2. Excellence in Workplace Inclusion
3. Excellence in Small Business
4. Excellence in Innovation
5. Start Up Superstar
6. Excellence in Business
7. Outstanding Young Employee
8. Young Entrepreneur
9. Business Leader
10. Excellence in Sustainability

NON-ALIGNED CATEGORY

1. Excellence in Workplace Safety
 2. Excellence in Community Service
 3. Excellence in Retail & Personal Services
 4. Excellence in Professional & Commercial
 5. Excellence in Social Responsibility
 6. Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality
 7. Outstanding Home-Based Business
 8. Employee of the Year
 9. Business of the Year
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How to enter

Entries are completed online using the NSW Business Chamber awards entry portal. The URL for the portal is www.businessannualawards.com.au/login?chamber=shoalhaven

Using the Portal:

After setting up your profile, if you forget your password simply select the Forgot Password option which is located on the log in page of the awards portal.

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

Every entrant into the Awards is entitled to a complimentary business diagnostic that provides you with an overview of where your business is performing well, as well as recommendations on how your business can improve to support your business growth and success.

The diagnostic takes approximately 10 minutes to complete and will be assessed by the NSW Business Chamber using international business benchmarks.

While the diagnostic is not essential, we recommend you complete and then attach the report in this section of your award entry. In addition to providing useful insights into your business, the judges highly regard those businesses that invest ten minutes of their time to undertake the diagnostic.

Learn more about the diagnostic: [https://www.businessannualawards.com.au/Award-entry/Entry-process-\(1\)](https://www.businessannualawards.com.au/Award-entry/Entry-process-(1))

Entry writing tips

- Aim to stand out from the crowd. Judges are assessing so many entries; you want yours to be different and be enjoyable to read
- Tell a story with your responses. Storytelling is one of the best ways to captivate hearts and minds and to ensure your entry is memorable
- 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.
- Download and print a PDF of your entry from within the portal, and conduct a final review before submitting.

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

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, involving and 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.



“ the best opportunity to learn more about what makes you successful

Sian Ludlow, Stella Studioz

Award Ambassadors

“ Entering is a chance to reflect...entering is rewarding, whether you win or not

Garry Wilbraham, Bomaderry Bowling Club



Awards entry workshop

Feedback from the past few years was extremely positive, and a number of the participants from the workshops have gone on to win Awards.

Participants have advised us that they want assistance with their category questions. They wanted help on how to address the entry questions, and understand whether their proposed response would be what the judges are looking for.

The workshop will be hands on and extremely informative. The purpose is to equip entrants with the education, tools and support required to produce an outstanding award entry.

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

The following people will be available at the workshop to answer all your questions:

Raj Ray - Chair of Judges

Past Judges

Julia O'Keefe - Awards Manager

More to be announced

Workshop format

- Any common questions we've received from entrants via phone or email
- Group Q&A time
- Work on actual entries, asking your own questions direct to our support team

Bring your laptop or iPad so that you can work directly on your entry in the workshop. We will arrange Wi-Fi access.

Workshop date

Wednesday 30th May 2018

9.30am - 11.00am

Venue

Room LG25

University of Wollongong

Shoalhaven Campus

Glen Evans Rd

West Nowra



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

Shoalhaven

Limited places available, register early to ensure you don't miss out!

Please note there are a maximum of two places per business at the workshop.

If you want to create a winning entry, stand out from the crowd, and ensure you give yourself the best chance of winning, you need to register for our workshop.

To register, please email awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au or call Julia O'Keefe, Award Manager, on 0438 287 578

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 26th July through to the 14th August, typically at the finalists' place of business. Finalists will be announced on 26th 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.

Franchise business owners

Please note that if you are a franchise business, the judges will be looking for information that demonstrates extraordinary success in the execution of your franchise model and/or unique initiatives, strategies and other successes that are directly attributable to your local team and that set your business apart from competitors and other local organisations. This approach aims to fairly recognise a franchise's dedication to excellence while acknowledging the advantage a franchise structure offers from an operational and support service perspective.

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 are the distinguishing features of the Business of the Year?

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

- Demonstrated growth
- Industry success
- 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
- Businesses that cultivate an attitude of contribution to the Shoalhaven business community

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.

Awards Finalists' Evening

An Awards Finalists and Sponsors Evening will be held at the Nowra Golf Club on Friday 17th August.

All finalists and sponsors will be invited. One ticket per finalist organisation will be provided. Extras can be purchased, price TBC.

The purpose of this event is to recognise and congratulate our Awards finalists, providing an opportunity to be recognised and celebrated ahead of the Awards Gala on 31st August.

It is also an opportunity for us to thank our sponsors.

Post Awards eBook

Last year we created a post Awards eBook and it received extremely positive feedback. This year we will once again continue the momentum and excitement that the Awards generate, and as well as celebrate the success of our winners, through the production of 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 via email in September.

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

The Outstanding 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. Individuals entering into this category can be self-employed or employed by a business

Eligibility Requirements

" Entrant is aged 36 years and over at the time of entry.

" Entrant is not a NSW Business Chamber Staff Member, Regional Advisory Councillor, State Councillor or Board Member.

Questions

1. Entrants first name.
 2. Entrants surname.
 3. Date of birth.
 4. Current job title.
 5. Name of your organisation or business.
 6. Provide a current profile of yourself including your scope of responsibilities, details of your role, any direct reports, your budget, your financial and organisation reporting line. Maximum word count: 300
 7. Detail your achievements in business with clear measurable examples. Maximum word count: 400
 8. Outline how you have reshaped your business, organisation or industry to create a smarter and more inclusive future with examples of how you have used your leadership skills? Maximum word count: 400
 9. Provide an overview of your five year strategies for future growth and key milestones, detailing how you are working towards achieving each of them. Maximum word count: 400
 10. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a business leader and how you overcame each of them. Maximum word count: 400
 11. Describe the activities and initiatives you have undertaken to help the community (and or the business community). Maximum word count: 400
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Outstanding Young Employee

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The Outstanding Young Employee award recognises an inspirational young employee aged between 18-35 years. To enter into this award the individual must have been employed by their current employer for a minimum of 18 months at the time of entry.

Eligibility Requirements

- " Entrant must be aged between 18 -35 years at the time of entry.
- " Entrant has been employed by their current employer for at least 18 months on or prior to this entry submission.
- " Should the entrant leave the organisation before the Regional or State Gala event, their entry is ineligible.
- " Entrant is not a NSW Business Chamber Staff Member, Regional Advisory Councillor, State Councillor or Board Member.

Questions

1. Entrants first name.
 2. Entrants surname.
 3. Date of birth.
 4. Current job title.
 5. Name of the business/organisation you work for.
 6. Commencement of employment date.

 7. Outline your employment background including previous roles and responsibilities.
Maximum word count: 300

 8. Provide a current profile of yourself including current job role and scope of responsibilities including details of the role, any direct reports, your budget, your financial and organisational reporting line.
Maximum word count: 400

 9. Detail your measurable career achievements including key milestones. Maximum word count: 400

 10. Provide an overview of your five year goals/milestones and how you are working towards each of these.
Maximum word count: 300

 11. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a young employee and how you have dealt with each of these challenges, including examples. Maximum word count: 300

 12. What do you believe makes you an outstanding young employee, including examples of where you have had to use your leadership skills? Maximum word count: 450
-

Young Entrepreneur

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

Eligibility Requirements

" Entrant is aged between 18-35 years at the time of entry.

" Entrant is a current owner or part owner of a business for at least 24 months on/prior at the time of entry.

" Entrant is not a NSW Business Chamber Staff Member, Regional Advisory Councillor, State Councillor or Board Member.

Questions

1. Entrants first name.
 2. Entrants surname.
 3. Date of birth.
 4. Current Job title.
 5. Name of business organisation you own or part own.
 6. Date in which you established or took ownership of the business organisation.
 7. Number of other owners.
 8. Percentage of ownership held by you.
 9. What problem have you solved, how did you identify it as a market need and what is your target market?
Maximum word count: 200
 10. Describe your competitors and your business's competitive advantage. Maximum word count: 300
 11. Describe how you funded your business. Maximum word count: 300
 12. Provide an overview of your five year strategies for future growth and key milestones detailing how you are currently working towards achieving these. Maximum word count: 450
 13. Detail the measurable growth and key achievements in your business over the past 24 months.
Maximum word count: 450
 14. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a young entrepreneur and how you deal with these challenges. Maximum word count: 300
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Excellence in Small Business

nabbusiness



The Excellence in Small Business award recognises a business, employing less than 20 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.

(For businesses employing less than 20 employees on payroll in Australia such as contractors, casuals and labour hire staff)

Eligibility Requirements

" This business has been trading for a period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.

Questions

1. What is unique about your business and how does it demonstrate excellence?

Maximum word count: 400

2. Describe your business growth and key milestones in the previous 24 months.

Maximum word count: 400

3. What were the strategies and plans you initiated to achieve your business growth over the previous 24 months.

Maximum word count: 450

4. Explain how the strategies in Question 3 achieved their measurable outcomes and demonstrate "excellence".

Maximum word count: 450

5. Detail the key challenges your business and industry face in the future and the strategies and plans you have in place to address these challenges.

Maximum word count: 450

Excellence in Business

The 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.

Eligibility Requirements

" This business has been trading for a period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.

Questions

1. What is unique about your business and how does it demonstrate excellence?

Maximum word count: 400

2. Describe your business growth and key milestones in the previous 24 months.

Maximum word count: 400

3. What were the strategies and plans you initiated to achieve your business growth over the previous 24 months.

Maximum word count: 450

4. Explain how the strategies in Question 3 achieved their measurable outcomes and demonstrate "excellence".

Maximum word count: 450

5. Detail the key challenges your business and industry face in the future and the strategies and plans you have in place to address these challenges.

Maximum word count: 450

Start Up Superstar

Sponsored by



This category recognises a business that has been operating for less than 2 years that delivers a product/service/idea/invention with credible potential. This award recognises early-stage start ups that have a solid chance of market success, and strongly displays the entrepreneurial spirit.

Eligibility Requirements

" The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of less than 2 years, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.

" This business has not been purchased or acquired.

" This business is not part of a franchise.

Questions

1. Is this your first start up? (If no please specify other business ventures and their degree of success).

Maximum word count: 300

2. Date when you commenced trading.

3. Number of other owners.

4. What problem (or need) has your business solved? Maximum word count: 200

5. How did you identify the market need and who is your target market? Maximum word count: 400

6. Describe your competitors and your business's innovative competitive advantage? Maximum word count: 400

7. Outline your business success since its inception. Word count: Maximum 400

8. Detail and include your current research, customer marketing strategy, logistics and service delivery.

Maximum word count: 400

9. Describe how you funded your business. Maximum word count: 200

10. Detail how your business has the potential to scale and achieve financial sustainability. Maximum word count: 400

11. Provide commercial and technical evidence your team has the ability and competencies to achieve success and detail strategy and timeframe involved. Maximum word count: 500

Excellence in Innovation

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

Eligibility Requirements

" The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.

Questions

1. Provide details of the innovation or innovative approach in your business.

Maximum word count: 300

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. Maximum word count: 300

3. How well has the innovation been received by the marketplace? Provide details of the cost effectiveness, integration, risk minimisation and commercialisation.

Maximum word count: 300

4. How has innovative activity in your business helped grow or improve your business such as increased size, greater scope, productivity improvements, higher revenue, lower cost?

Maximum word count: 400

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

Word count: Maximum 400

6. Did the innovation achieve its objectives and goals? How are these improvements or impacts to the business measured?

Maximum word count: 400

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.

Eligibility Requirements

" The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.

Questions

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

Maximum word count: 300

2. Describe the initiatives/actions your organisation has undertaken to achieve its sustainability objectives in the previous 12- 24 months within the region you are entering the awards.

Maximum word count: 400

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

Maximum word count: 300

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

Maximum word count: 300

5. Provide measurable evidence of how the sustainability objectives your business has achieved have contributed to the business, customers, staff and suppliers such as financial outcomes, staff engagement, marketing benefits, supplier/customer loyalty. Maximum word count: 400

Employer of Choice

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.

Eligibility Requirements

" The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.

Questions

1. Outline your current staff level, retention rate and turnover. Maximum word count 200
 2. Have you had any unfair work dismissal applicants occur over the past 24 months including measures to adapt and improve. Maximum word count: 200
 3. Explain any specific HR and WHS programs and policies you have undertaken in the previous 24 months to improve workplace culture. Maximum word count: 400
 4. Why did your business embark on this project/s and/or initiatives? Maximum word count: 400
 5. 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). Maximum word count: 400
 6. Identify and describe the benefits you offer as an Employer of Choice? Maximum word count: 350
 7. How does your business adopt inclusive practices and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including people with disability and seniors)? Maximum word count: 350
-

Sponsored by

Excellence in Community Service

EVERYDAY

CareSouth

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? Word count: Maximum 400

2. What are the key challenges of operating a Community Service organisation in the Shoalhaven? Max Word count: Maximum 400

3. How does your organisation ensure financial sustainability? Word count: Maximum 400

4. Detail the measurable results you achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence". Word count: Maximum 400

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Excellence in Professional & Commercial

The logo for G.J. Gardner. HOMES features the text "G.J. Gardner." in a bold, black, sans-serif font, followed by "HOMES" in a smaller, red, sans-serif font. A thin red horizontal line is positioned above the word "HOMES".

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. Max 400
 2. What were the strategies and plans you initiated to achieve your business growth over the past 12-24 months?
Word count: Maximum 450
 3. How did you implement these strategies? Word count: Maximum 400
 4. Detail the measurable results you achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence". Word count: Maximum 400
 5. How do ensure you are up to date with relevant industry and regulatory changes in your industry? Word count: Maximum 400
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Outstanding Home Based Business

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 the equivalent of 5 or less FTE (excludes any contractors or subcontractors).

Questions

1. Explain your business growth and achievements in the past 12-24 months. Word count: Maximum 400
 2. What are the key challenges of operating a business from home and how have you overcome them? Word count: Maximum 400
 3. What are the benefits of operating your business from home and how do you use these to your advantage? Word count: Maximum 400
 4. What is your point of difference / how do you differentiate yourself from your competitors? Word count: Maximum 400
 5. Detail the measurable results you achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence". Word count: Maximum 400
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Sponsored by

Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality



This category is open to providers of tourism, entertainment, commercial tourist accommodation and hospitality services. Businesses eligible to enter include providers of general tourism/recreational facilities and attractions, licensed 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. Word count: Maximum 400
 2. What were the strategies and plans you initiated to achieve your business growth over the past 12-24 months? Word count: Maximum 450
 3. How did you implement these strategies? Word count: Maximum 400
 4. Detail the measurable results you have achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence". Word count: Maximum 400
 5. Explain how you participate in and contribute to the growth and success of hospitality and tourism in the Shoalhaven region? Word count: Maximum 400
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Sponsored by

Excellence in Retail & Personal Services

Proudly supported by Nowra &
District **Community Bank**[®] Branch

 **Bendigo Bank**

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. Word count: Maximum 400
 2. What were the strategies and plans you initiated to achieve your business growth over the past 12-24 months? Word count: Maximum 450
 3. How did you implement these strategies? Word count: Maximum 400
 4. Detail the measurable results you achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence". Word count: Maximum 400
 5. What is your point of difference in your service philosophy and how do you differentiate yourself from your competitors? Word count: Maximum 400
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Sponsored by

Excellence in Workplace Safety



Entries are invited from businesses of all sizes and industries that have demonstrated excellence in workplace safety. This could be from an individual's contribution, a work team or from the whole workplace. Entries for this Award may include product solution, engineering innovation, a training program, an awareness raising activity or other risk control measures that have been implemented at the workplace in the last 12-24 months that have reduced the risk of work-related injury and illness in their workplace.

Submission length: 1-2 page total

Questions

1. Describe a Health and Safety Issue in the Workplace
2. What did you do to address/control/resolve it?
3. Describe how workers were consulted to resolve the issue
4. What was the outcome? In what way is your workplace now safer? How was it good for your business?

Employee of the Year

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This category is employer nominated, meaning an employee cannot directly enter. It is open to all businesses, both for profit not-for-profit, with at least one employee who is not a director or owner of the business. The Employee of the Year award seeks to recognise outstanding employees who go above and beyond in their role and who actively seek out opportunities to contribute to the overall success of your business. The employee must be directly employed by your organisation, and must have been in your employ for a minimum of 12 months as at 17 May 2017. By completing the application for this category, you certify that you have your employee's approval to enter them in this award.

Questions

1. Provide a current profile of your employee including current job role and scope of responsibilities, any direct reports, and their organisational reporting line. Word count: Maximum 250
 2. Detail your employee's achievements over the last 12-24 months. Word count: Maximum 350
 3. Explain how your employee's contribution has delivered measurable business results in the last 12-24 months. Word count: Maximum 350
 4. Describe how your employee has changed or enhanced your workplace culture, including any examples where they have inspired co-workers. Word count: Maximum 350
 5. Describe any challenges your employee has faced in their role over the last 12-24 months, and detail how they have dealt with and overcome these challenges, including examples. Word count: Maximum 350
 6. What do you believe this employee should be named as Employee of the Year? Include any other relevant examples of how this employee goes above and beyond in their role, including how they represent your business in the community. Word count: Maximum 350
-

Excellence in Workplace Inclusion



This Excellence in Inclusion award recognises businesses that address the needs of a diverse community, including seniors, people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and people with disability. An inclusive business facilitates the needs of all its employees and customers. For example, for people with disability, there are multiple elements of inclusion that go beyond regulatory compliance to create a functional and welcoming environment. These strategies or initiatives must have a positive impact on employees, the organisation and the customer as a whole.

Eligibility Requirements

The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.

Questions

1. Outline your current staff level and diversity - include employees with disability, seniors (over 55) and people from CALD backgrounds.

Maximum word count: 200

2. Identify and describe your positive and/ or proactive inclusive practices within the business that go beyond regulatory compliance.

Maximum word count: 350

3. Describe your HR and employment hiring practices that demonstrate your commitment to being an inclusive employer.

Maximum word count: 350

4. Identify and describe how your business has created an accessible and inclusive environment that is welcoming for customers with disability, seniors and people from CALD backgrounds.

Maximum word count: 400

5. Explain why your business embarked on being more accessible and inclusive and describe what further actions you will take in the future to becoming more accessible and inclusive to employees and customers.

Maximum word count: 400

Sponsored by

Excellence in Social Responsibility



Social responsibility is a voluntary commitment to be responsible towards the environment and society in which they operate. It is about taking care of the people around you and include your staff, customers, suppliers and the wider community. 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.

Describe how you or your business goes above and beyond business as usual and acts in a socially responsible manner?

" What are the social and/or environmental benefits.

" What have been the benefits to your business?

Why do you, or does your business undertake activities that demonstrate social responsibility?

Is this part of a larger business strategy? Is social responsibility included in business documentation such as your vision or mission statements.

Do you encourage others to think and act in a socially responsible way? Are your staff encouraged to volunteer, undertake charity work, support training and mentoring in and out of the workplace?

Do you encourage other businesses to follow your lead and make a difference in the community in which they operate?

Terms & conditions

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

1. HOW TO ENTER

1.1 Entry is free.

1.2 To enter the NSW Business Chamber State Business Awards (NSWBC Awards) all applicants must read and understand the terms and conditions set out in this document (Terms and Conditions) and complete the on-line entry form for your chosen category.

1.3 NSW Business Chamber reserves the right to alter or change these Terms and Conditions at any time at its discretion.

1.4 All entrants into a Regional or State Award will be notified of any change to these Terms and Conditions that has taken place before their entry is judged and will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to amend or alter their entry (should they wish to do so).

1.5 All submissions are to be lodged through the Awards Entry Portal, located on the Shoalhaven Business Chambers Website.

1.6 By lodging your entry you agree to be bound by these Terms and Conditions.

1.7 Your entry must be submitted by 11:59pm Monday 9th July 2018

2. ENTRY ELIGIBILITY

2.1 All businesses that submit an entry must hold a current Australian Business Number (ABN). This clause 2.1 does not apply to individual entrants into the individual award categories of Outstanding Young Employee, Outstanding Young Entrepreneur and Outstanding Business Leader.

2.2 Entries can be submitted by any business that has been continuously operating in NSW for a minimum period of two years at the time of entry as published in the Key Award Dates section on the Website. This clause 2.2 does not apply to entries into the Start-Up Superstar category where entries can be made by any business that has been operating less than a period of two years at the time of entry.

2.3 Entry into the NSWBC Awards is not open to Board Members of the NSW Business Chamber or any of its related or controlled entities.

2.4 Entry into the Outstanding Young Employee, Outstanding Young Entrepreneur and Outstanding Business Leader categories are not open to NSW Business Chamber Board Members, NSW Business Chamber Regional Advisory Councillor and State Councillors. NSW Business Chamber Regional Advisory Councillors and State Councillors can enter their business other NSWBC Award categories.

2.5 Staff members of NSW Business Chamber or any of its related or controlled entities are not eligible to enter the NSWBC Awards.

2.6 An entry into the individual award categories (Outstanding Young Employee, Outstanding Young Entrepreneur and Outstanding Business Leader) shall be automatically disqualified if:

2.6.1 the entrant becomes bankrupt or insolvent; or

2.6.2 the entrant becomes disqualified from holding office as a director of any organisation or company.

2.7 Entrants into the Outstanding Young Entrepreneur Award category must:

2.7.1 be an owner, CEO or director of the relevant business; or

2.7.2 hold a majority shareholding or have a controlling interest in the business.

2.8 The NSW Business Chamber reserves the right in their sole discretion to disqualify any individual or business entry who the NSW Business Chamber has reason to believe has breached any of these Terms and Conditions, or engaged in any unlawful, fraudulent, misleading, deceptive or other improper misconduct that may jeopardise the fair and proper conduct of the NSWBC Awards or otherwise bring the NSWBC Awards into disrepute or damage the goodwill or reputation of the NSW Business Chamber.

2.9 NSW Business Chamber accepts no responsibility for any entries lost in transit or not received by the closing time due to technical disruptions or any other reason beyond the control of the NSW Business Chamber.

3. PREVIOUS YEAR REGIONAL AND STATE WINNER

3.1 Regional and State Winners are eligible to enter the same category in the subsequent year that they have won, up to a maximum of three consecutive years.

3.2 If the same organisation or person wins the same category at either the Regional or State awards three years in a row, they will be placed in the "Hall of Fame" for that category.

3.3 The organisation or person who is placed in the "Hall of Fame" shall then be excluded from entry into that category at both the State and Regional Awards for the next two consecutive years.

3.4 Subject to clause 3.3, State and Regional winners, including members of the Hall of Fame, may enter any other category in the subsequent year of their announced win.

3.5 To progress as a State Finalist at the NSWBC Awards, Regional winners must be either:

3.5.1 a current financial member of the NSW Business Chamber or any of its related or controlled entities by 30th September in the relevant year;

3.5.2 a Local Business Chamber member that has opted in to become a member of the NSW Business Chamber by 30th September in the relevant year;

3.5.3 a client of the Australian Business Solutions Group of the NSW Business Chamber with an ABN registered in NSW; or

3.5.4 for individual categories, be an employee of one of the above organisations.

4. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

4.1 All entries for consideration must be lodged online and include the required information.

4.2 NSW Business Chamber reserves the right to declare any entry ineligible, if at any time during or after the term of the award process your entry form is found to be incomplete, deficient, false or misleading in any way.

4.3 Your entry will be allocated to a NSW Business Chamber regional awards program, based on the street address, location and postcode of your business' premises and at NSW Business Chamber's absolute discretion.

5. OPENING DATES

5.1 Shoalhaven Business Awards will launch from Monday 14th May 2018

5.2 NSW Business Chamber reserves the right to extend or vary the entry period if required, before or after the NSWBC Awards entry period commences.

6. CLOSING DATES

6.1 Shoalhaven Business Award entry period will close on Monday 9th July 2018

6.2 NSW Business Chamber reserves the right to extend or vary the entry period if required, before or after the NSWBC Awards entry period commences.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

7.1 Upon their submission pursuant to these Terms and Conditions, entries become the property of NSW Business Chamber. 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 NSW Business Chamber and any of its related or controlled entities, unless otherwise specified.

7.2 If you are selected as a finalist in the Shoalhaven Business Awards, information provided in your entry (excluding financial information) will be used for the purpose of promoting the Shoalhaven Business Awards and your business.

7.3 Contact information provided in your entry form will be disclosed to sponsors for the purpose of direct opportunities for promotion through sponsor partners. You can refuse the disclosure of contact information to sponsors by advising 13 26 96 or navigation@nswbc.com.au in writing.

7.4 NSW Business Chamber, in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) may collect, use and disclose personal information in accordance with its Privacy Policy which can be viewed online at:

<https://www.nswbusinesschamber.com.au/About/Privacy-Policy> or by contacting the company secretary via the following:

NSW Business Chamber

Locked Back 938

North Sydney NSW 2059

Australia

P: 02 9458 7481

E: company.secretary@nswbc.com.au

7.5 NSW Business Chamber's Privacy Policy is deemed to be incorporated into these Terms and Conditions and by entering the Awards, you are taken to consent to NSW Business Chamber's Privacy Policy. The Privacy Policy may be replaced or varied at the discretion of NSW Business Chamber from time to time, and as replaced or varied it is incorporated into these Terms and Conditions.

8. JUDGING

8.1 All entries are judged by a panel of subject matter experts, selected by Shoalhaven Business Chamber from business and community leaders including previous Category Winners and Category Sponsors.

8.2 Judges will allocate scores to each question asked, and these scores will be multiplied by a weighting to reach an overall score for each entry.

8.3 There will only be one winner per category.

8.4 Where there are two or more entries with the same highest score a count back will be conducted to determine which entrant scored higher on the most category questions.

8.5 If after the count back there is still two or more entries with the same highest score, the judging panel will be reconvened for determination of the winner.

8.6 State Category Winners may be eligible to form part of the immediate subsequent year's Regional Awards Judging Panel for their winning category, if they are not entering that category in the year they are judging or the year immediately following their role as a judge.

8.7 Judges are required to sign a confidentiality agreement and disclose any conflict of interest.

8.8 The Judging Panel's decision is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

9. AWARDS

9.1 The NSWBC Awards comprise of the following categories:

9.1.1 Excellence in Small Business (for businesses employing less than 20 employees*);

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

9.1.2. Excellence in Business (for businesses employing 20 or more employees*);

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

9.1.3. Outstanding Young Employee (Age 18-35);

9.1.4. Outstanding Young Entrepreneur (Age 18-35);

9.1.5. Outstanding Business Leader (Age 36+);

9.1.6. Outstanding Employer of Choice;

9.1.8. Excellence in Innovation;

9.1.9. Excellence in Sustainability;

9.1.11. Start-Up Superstar;

9.1.12. Excellence in Workplace Inclusion;

9.2 NSWBC may, in its sole discretion (without prior notice) add or vary these award categories of both State and Regional level from time to time.

9.3 Winners of the aligned categories listed in clause 9.1 will progress to the Regional Awards program (Illawarra Business Awards). Regional Award winners will progress to the NSW Business Chamber State Business Awards as a State Category Finalist subject to satisfying these Terms and Conditions.

9.4 NSW Business Chamber may have additional Regional award categories relevant to each region. Please note these additional Regional award categories do not progress to the NSW Business Chamber State Business Awards.

9.5 Each Regional NSW State Finalist is eligible for one return flight from Regional NSW to Sydney and one night's designated accommodation in Sydney's CBD. Flights and accommodation are to be arranged by the NSW Business Chamber.

9.6 All State Category Finalists will receive one complimentary ticket per business to the NSW Business Chamber State Business Awards Gala (State Gala Event) event in Sydney to be conducted on or around late November in each year irrespective of the number of categories in which the business is a State Finalist.

10. GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

10.1 NSW Business Chamber provides the online entry and judging engine for other Local Business Chamber and Regional awards which are aligned with the NSWBC Awards program. Those Local and Regional awards may have different terms and conditions.

10.2 Shoalhaven specific Awards, do not progress to Illawarra and NSW Business Chamber Business Awards.

The Local Award categories comprise of the following:

10.2.1 Employer Workplace Safety

10.2.2 Excellence in Community Service (not for profit)

10.2.3 Excellence in Professional & Commercial

10.2.4 Outstanding Home Based Business

10.2.5 Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality

10.2.6 Excellence in Retail & Personal Services

10.2.7 Employee of the Year #

10.2.8 Excellence in Social Responsibility

10.2.9 Business of The Year ^

10.3 ^ Award categories that cannot be directly entered. The finalists for these awards will be selected by the judges.

10.4 # This category is employer nominated and is open to all organisations, both profit and not-for-profit and who have at least one employee who is not a director, owner or part owner of the organisation. Employers may nominate up to three of their employees in this category. Employees must be a direct employee of the employer's organisation and must have been employed for 12 months or more as at 14 May 2018.

10.5 Aligned category winners will automatically enter the Illawarra Business Chamber Awards as a Regional Category Finalist.

10.6 If you wish to go on to be a Regional Finalist at the Illawarra Business Chamber Business Awards, you will be required to become a NSW Business Chamber Member as per the terms and conditions set by the Illawarra Business Chamber.

10.7 The maximum number of business categories you can enter is three.

10.8 An organisation may enter more than one individual category, however any one individual may only enter one individual category. To be eligible for Business of the Year, a business must win an aligned category.

10.9 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. Businesses must have commenced or have a significant local presence in the Shoalhaven as defined by the Local Government Area.

11. ANNOUNCING THE FINALISTS AND WINNERS

11.1 All Shoalhaven finalists will be notified by phone and email, and published on the SBC Awards Website.

11.2 Winners will be announced at the gala event on Friday in each Region, with the State Category Winners announced at the State Gala Event. The Shoalhaven Business Awards Gala evening will be held on Friday 31st August 2018

11.3 It is a condition of entry that, if requested by the NSW Business Chamber, the Regional and State Winners agree to participate in media requests, social media and other publicity requests (such as NSW Business Chamber and Regional Chamber events) conducted by and for use by the NSW Business Chamber and any of their related or controlled entities. There will be no fee payable, remuneration or other direct financial benefit to be received by the Winners (other than the marketing opportunity) as a result of the winners' participation in these activities.

12. LOCAL BUSINESS CHAMBER AND REGIONAL BUSINESS CHAMBER AWARDS PROGRAMS

12.1 These Terms and Conditions apply to entrants into all NSW Business Chamber Regional Business Awards, including entrants of Local Business Chamber awards which are aligned with the NSWBC Awards, unless otherwise agreed.

13. LOCAL BUSINESS CHAMBER AWARD ENTRANTS AND WINNERS

13.1 A business or individual is eligible to enter into multiple Local Business Chamber Awards within a Region, subject to those Chambers' applicable terms and conditions of entry. You will be required to enter a new username per entry submission if you use the NSW Business Chamber portal.

13.2 Where a Local Business Chamber Awards program does not exist, a Local Chamber Alliance member can enter directly into the NSWBC Awards at the Regional level.

13.3 Local Business Chamber Award winners are eligible to progress to the NSW Business Chamber Regional Awards program as a Regional entrant subject to:

13.4.1 complying with the NSWBC Awards Terms and Conditions;

13.4.2 the Local Business Chamber category winner's entry being submitted via the NSWBC Awards online entry system for the purpose of judging.

13.4 Category winners at a Local Business Chamber and Regional level must satisfy a gateway score that the NSW Business Chamber will set at the start of every awards program. This score will be awarded by the NSW Business Chamber State Business Awards Judging Panel.

FAQs

PORTAL

What is the portal address?

<http://www.businessannualawards.com.au/login.aspx?chamber=shoalhaven>

How do I log into the portal?

You must create a new username and password.

KEY DATES

What date do the Awards open?

Monday 14 May, 10.30am

What date do the Awards close?

Monday 9 July, 11:59pm

When do I need to be available for interviews?

Interviews are conducted between Thursday 20 July and Tuesday 8 August.

ENTERING & T&Cs

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 10.9).

Can I enter a category that I won last year?

Yes.

Are there any restrictions on categories I won prior to 2017?

No, unless you have been admitted to the Hall of Fame for winning (that same category) three times. Then, you can no longer enter that category.

Can I get someone else to complete my entry?

Yes, in fact there are business owners who already do this, and it is quite common across many award programs. If writing is not your strong suit, consider delegating it to someone else. Many businesses 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. And you may have an incredible story, but not know the best way to tell it. 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. Organisations such as Proof Communications, a Sydney-based business-to-business writing consultancy, specialise in writing business award entries. They can not only write, edit and proof your entry, they can help you uncover valuable information that will ensure you stand out from the crowd.

Do I need to answer the 'Inclusion' and 'Social Responsibility' questions in each category in order to enter that category? No, you do not. 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!

Does my written entry count towards my final assessment?

Yes it does. The final selection of a category winner is a combination of your written application and your 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 exclusions to this is the Excellence in Workplace Inclusion, the Excellence in Workplace Safety and the Excellence in Social Responsibility, where one of the judges on each of these categories will be a representative from the Sponsoring organisation.

We look forward to receiving your Award entry,
and thank you for participating in the
2018 Shoalhaven Business Awards.

GOOD LUCK