

SHOALHAVEN
**BUSINESS
AWARDS
2023**



**AWARD ENTRY
PACK 2023**

**SHOALHAVEN
BUSINESS
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. 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 Business 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 sessions, 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.

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

For sponsorship enquiries and information about entering the Awards contact Amber Morrissey, Awards Manager awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au or 0407 289 584.

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



Key dates

Wednesday	27 April 2023	Awards launched and entries open
Tuesday	6 June 2023	Awards entries close @ 11.59pm
Saturday	1 July 2023	Ticket Sales Open
Friday	7 July 2023	Finalists announced and interviews begin
Wednesday	26 July 2023	Finalist interviews conclude
Wednesday	26 July 2023 (TBC)	Awards Finalists' and Sponsors Evening
Friday	4 August 2023	Ticket Sales Close
Friday	18 August 2023	Awards Gala night

Contacts

For questions about entering, please contact:

Amber Morrissey, Awards Manager awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au 0407 289 584.

For portal or password assistance, please contact

Business NSW Member Support Centre
businessawards@businessnsw.com or phone: 9466 4620

Categories

We have 17 awards this year, 14 of which you can directly enter. There are 3 bonus awards in 2023 which all finalists are eligible to enter which include Excellence in Inclusion, Southern Shoalhaven Superstar & our coveted Business of the Year award.

ALIGNED CATEGORIES

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

1. Outstanding Employee
2. Outstanding Young Business Leader
3. Outstanding Business Leader
4. Employer of Choice
5. Excellence in International Business
6. Excellence in Innovation
7. Excellence in Sustainability
8. Outstanding Community Organisation
9. Outstanding Start Up
10. Excellence in Micro Business (Less than 5 employees)
11. Excellence in Small Business (5 – 20 employees)
12. Excellence in Large Business (21 or more employees)

NON-ALIGNED CATEGORY

13. Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality
14. Excellence in Retail and Personal Services
15. Excellence in Inclusion and Diversity (for finalists)
16. Southern Shoalhaven Super Star Award (for finalists)
17. Business of the Year

How to enter

Entries are completed online using the Business NSW awards entry portal (awards force). The URL for the portal is <https://enter.businessnsw.com/register/olArjvJW>

Using the Portal:

After clicking on the above link you can:

1. Register an account (you may use the login details from last year)
2. Start your entry (save it in-progress)
3. Choose the Chapter: Shoalhaven Business Awards
4. Choose your Category
5. Entry name if either individual name for an individual entry or company name for a company entry
6. Submit your entry to be judged.

If you forget your password simply select the Forgot Password option which is located on the log in page of the awards portal.

You will need to add in the following details to set up your account:

1. Trading name:
2. Registered ABN:
3. How is your business structured (drop down box)
 - Sole Trader
 - Partnership
 - Trust
 - Company
 - Incorporated Association
4. Is your business classified as a not for profit? (drop-down box)
 - Yes
 - No
5. Main office address:
6. Business trading commencement date:
7. What is the main industry your business operates in? (drop down box)
 - Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
 - Mining
 - Manufacturing
 - Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services
 - Construction

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- Wholesale Trade
 - Retail Trade
 - Accommodation and Food Services
 - Transport, Postal and Warehousing
 - Information, Media and Telecommunications
 - Financial and Insurance Services
 - Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services
 - Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
 - Administrative and Support Services
 - Public Administration and Safety
 - Education and Training
 - Health Care and Social Assistance
 - Arts and Recreation Services
 - Other

8. Number of employees on the payroll in Australia. (drop-down box)

- 1 to 4
- 5 to 19
- 20 to 49
- 50 to 99
- 100 to 199
- 200+

9. Is your business primarily business to business or business to consumer. (drop-down box)

- Business to Business
- Business to Consumer

10. Please provide a 100-word biography for your business to be used for promotional purposes.

11. Please indicate the main reason/s you are entering into the Business Awards.

- To raise the profile of my business
- To recognise my employees and our achievements
- To build business networks
- To reflect on the goals, strategies and vision that led to the success of your business and to use those insights to drive even greater success in the future.

12. Website:

13. Instagram:

14. LinkedIn:

15. Facebook:

Contact Details

Entry Contact details:

First Name:

Surname:

Position:

Email:

Phone:

Mobile:

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 and 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 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 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.

Awards Entry Lunch and Learn

We will be hosting a Lunch and Learn to help guide and give tips on anyone thinking of submitting an entry. Watch out for the Shoalhaven Business Chamber newsletter for your invitation or express your interest by emailing awards@shoalhavenbusiness.com.au

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.

How many judges are there?

Two judges per category.

Steps involved

- Judges meet to eliminate conflicts of interest and sign confidentiality agreements
- Judges are assigned to categories
- Judges review and score all entries in their category online
- Judges input their interview scores and category finalists are determined
- Finalists are contacted and announced
- Interviews are undertaken
- Judges input their interview scores and winners are determined

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- Judges meet to determine Business of the Year
 - 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

Interviews will take place between 11 – 26 July. Judges may travel to your business or take place on zoom or in a neutral location. Finalists will be announced on 7 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. 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 online.

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

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- 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.

Awards Finalists' Evening

An Awards Finalists and Sponsors Evening will be held on Wednesday 26 July (TBC). 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 18 August.

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



CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS & QUESTIONS

Outstanding Employee

The Outstanding Employee Award recognises an inspirational employee who has demonstrated a passion for their role and a commitment to their workplace and the community.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their commitment over the past 12 months to their workplace, the community and to be an outstanding employee. To be eligible to enter this category, the individual must have been employed by their current employer for a minimum of 18 months.

Additional T&C's

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

- Should the entrant leave the organisation before the Regional or State Gala event, they will not be eligible to receive an award.

Award eligibility check box

- I have been employed by my current employer for at least 18 months at the time of entry.
- I am not an employee, Regional President, State Councillor or Board Member of NSW BusinessChamber Limited.
- I have not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- I am not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

Entrants' full name:

Current job title:

Name of the organisation or business you work for:

Commencement of employment date:

1. Provide a brief profile, including your current role and scope of responsibilities. Maximum word count: 200
2. Outline your employment background, including measurable career achievements and key milestones. Maximum word count: 300
3. Provide an overview of your five-year goals and how you are working towards achieving them. Maximum word count: 300
4. Detail the specific activities and initiatives you have undertaken that have demonstrated a passion for your role and a commitment to your workplace and the community. Maximum word count: 400
5. Outline the reasons why you are an outstanding employee. Maximum word count: 400

Outstanding Young Business Leader

The Outstanding Young Business Leader Award recognises an inspirational business leader aged 35 or under who has demonstrated a commitment to their workplace, industry, and the community through leadership.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their commitment over the past 12 months to creating a smarter and more inclusive future and to being an outstanding business leader. To be eligible to enter this category, the individual must have held a management position within their organisation for a minimum of 18 months at the time of entry.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ I am aged 35 years or under at the time of entry.
- ✓ I am not an employee, Regional President, State Councillor or Board Member of NSW Business Chamber Limited.
- ✓ I have not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ I am not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

Entrants' full name:

Current job title:

Date of birth:

Name of your organisation or business:

1. Provide a brief profile, including your current role and scope of responsibilities. *Maximum word count: 200*
2. Detail the specific activities and initiatives you have undertaken to reshape your workplace, industry, or community to create a smarter and more inclusive future, with examples of how you have used your leadership skills. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a young business leader and how you overcame them. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Provide an overview of your five-year goals and strategies for future business growth, detailing how you are working towards achieving them. *Maximum word count: 300*
5. Outline the reasons why you are an outstanding young business leader. *Maximum word count: 400*

Outstanding Business Leader

The Outstanding Business Leader Award recognises an inspirational business leader aged 36 years or over who has demonstrated a commitment to their workplace, industry, and the community through leadership, whilst providing mentorship to others.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their commitment over the past 12 months to creating a smarter and more inclusive future and to being an outstanding mentor and business leader. To be eligible to enter this category, the individual must have held senior management or executive level position within their organisation for a minimum of 18 months at the time of entry.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ I am aged 36 or over years at the time of entry.
- ✓ I am not an employee, Regional President, State Councillor or Board Member of NSW Business Chamber Limited.
- ✓ I have not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ I am not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

Entrants' full name:

Current job title:

Date of birth:

Name of your organisation or business:

1. Provide a brief profile, including your current role and scope of responsibilities. *Maximum word count: 200*
2. Detail the specific activities and initiatives you have undertaken to reshape your workplace, industry or community to create a smarter and more inclusive future, with examples of how you have used your leadership skills. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a business leader and how you overcame them. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Provide an overview of your five-year goals and strategies for future business growth, detailing how you are working towards achieving them. *Maximum word count: 300*
5. Outline the reasons why you are an outstanding business leader, including the ways in which you provide mentorship to others. *Maximum word count: 400*

Excellence in International Business

The Excellence in International Business Award recognises a business that exports its products or services internationally, in order to build a positive reputation for Australian products and services and to deliver opportunities for business growth and success.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their achievements over the past 12 months across the key area of export.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ The business has been exporting internationally for two years or more at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Outline your measurable export success over the past 12 months. *Maximum word count: 400*
2. Identify how your business differentiates its products or services from that of your competitors and how are you maintaining and improving this advantage. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe how you are building a positive reputation for Australian products and services in international markets. *Maximum word count: 400*
4. Summarise the key features of your international marketing strategy over the past 12 months and the role it has played in your export success. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. What are your export earnings as a proportion of total sales revenue? *Maximum word count: 200*

Employer of Choice

The Employer of Choice Award recognises a business that has developed a leading workplace culture through its commitment to inclusivity, diversity and being an employer of choice.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their achievements over the past 12 months across the key areas of employee recruitment, engagement and retention. Category criteria are based on initiatives that have had a positive impact on both employees and the business.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has 20 or fewer employees on the payroll in Australia at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. What are the initiatives you have undertaken to develop a positive workplace culture within your business? *Maximum word count: 400*
2. Describe how your business adopts inclusive practices and recognises the needs of a diverse workforce, including examples. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Excluding business growth or expansion, what percentage of staff turnover has there been in your business in the previous 12 months and what are the reasons for this turnover? *Maximum word count: 300*
4. How does your business empower its workforce to develop their skills, contribute to a positive workplace culture and deepen their engagement with the business and the community? *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Detail measurable evidence outlining how these initiatives make you an employer of choice. *Maximum word count: 400*

Excellence in Innovation

The Excellence in Innovation Award recognises a business that has implemented innovative solutions for new and existing needs through the introduction or improvement of a product, technology, or application that impacts the wider community.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their achievements over the past 12 months across the key area of innovation.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The business has been trading for a continuous period of two or more years and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Outline the innovation implemented and how it has addressed a new or existing need. *Maximum word count: 400*
2. Describe why the innovation is unique within your industry and how it differentiates your business from its competitors. *Maximum word count: 300*
3. Describe how the innovation was received by the market and external stakeholders. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Demonstrate how the innovation has or is likely to have a positive impact on the community. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Provide measurable evidence of how the innovation has improved the identified need, driven growth and contributed to the success of your business. *Maximum word count: 400*

Excellence in Sustainability

The Excellence in Sustainability Award recognises a business that has demonstrated its commitment to sustainable business practices and is working to reduce the impact of its operations on the environment.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their achievements over the past 12 months across the key area of environmental sustainability. Category criteria are based on initiatives and projects executed within the business not related to its core offering.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Outline your business sustainability goals and objectives including measurable targets. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Outline the initiatives you have implemented to achieve sustainable practices within your business. *Maximum word count: 300*
3. Describe your sustainability achievements over the past 12 months including environmental outcomes. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Describe how you involve your workforce and external stakeholders in your sustainability initiatives. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Detail measurable evidence explaining how your business sustainability practices have improved business operations, driven growth and contributed to the success of your business. *Maximum word count: 400*

Outstanding Community Organisation

The Outstanding Community Organisation Award recognises an organisation that works to improve the social, cultural, or environmental wellbeing of the community.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their commitment over the past 12 months to being an outstanding community organisation. This category is open to social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations that have been trading for a period of over 24 months.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two or more years and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ The organisation has not entered the categories of Outstanding Start-up, Excellence in Micro Business, Excellence in Small Business or Excellence in Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Explain the social purpose of your organisation and how it contributes to the social, cultural, or environmental wellbeing of the community. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Provide an overview of your organisation, including the product or service you deliver within the community. *Maximum word count: 200*
3. Provide an overview of the key features of your business development strategy and projected outcomes for the future. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Demonstrate how your organisation contributes to the local economy in your region. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Outline the key challenges your organisation has faced over the past 12 months and explain how you have managed the impact of these challenges. *Maximum word count: 400*

Outstanding Start-Up

The Outstanding Start-up Award recognises a start-up business that has effectively driven growth and is able to demonstrate the potential to achieve future success.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their commitment over the past 12 months to being an outstanding start-up. This category is open to new businesses trading for a period of less than 24 months.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a period of less than two years and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has not been purchased or acquired and is not part of a franchise.
- ✓ The business has not entered the categories of Outstanding Community Organisation, Excellence in Micro Business, Excellence in Small Business or Excellence in Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Provide an overview of your start-up business including the product or service delivered to the market, how you identified it as a market need and who your target customer is. *Maximum word count: 200*
2. Provide an overview of the key features of your business development strategy and projected outcomes for the future. *Maximum word count: 300*
3. Describe why your product or service offering is unique within your industry and differentiates your business from competitors. *Maximum word count: 300*
4. Detail the measurable growth and key milestones you have achieved since launching your business. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Describe the key challenges your business has faced as a start-up and how you overcame them. *Maximum word count: 400*

Excellence in Micro Business

The Excellence in Micro Business Award recognises a business that has effectively driven growth and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies implemented to achieve business success and/or resilience.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their achievements over the past 12 months across the key area of business excellence. This category is open to businesses with less than 5 employees at the time of entry, who have been trading for a period of over 24 months.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has less than 5 employees on the payroll in Australia at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has not entered the categories of Outstanding Community Organisation, Outstanding Start-up, Excellence in Small Business or Excellence in Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Detail what your business goals and key milestones were for the previous 12 months and how you achieved all or part of them. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, innovations, strategies, projected outcomes for the future. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe why your product or service offering is unique within your industry and how it differentiates your business from its competitors. *Maximum word count: 400*
4. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the local economy in your region. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Outline the key challenges your business has faced over the past 12 months and explain how you have managed the impact of these challenges on your workforce and external stakeholders, as well as the impact they have had on your strategic direction. *Maximum word count: 400*

Excellence in Small Business

The Excellence in Small Business Award recognises a business that has effectively driven growth and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies implemented to achieve business success and/or resilience.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their achievements over the past 12 months across the key area of business excellence. This category is open to businesses with 5 to 20 employees at the time of entry, who have been trading for a period of over 24 months.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has 5 to 20 employees on the payroll in Australia at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has not entered the categories of Outstanding Community Organisation, Outstanding Start-up, Excellence in Micro Business or Excellence in Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Detail what your business goals and key milestones were for the previous 12 months and how you achieved all or part of them. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, innovations, strategies, projected outcomes for the future. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe why your product or service offering is unique within your industry and differentiates your business from competitors. *Maximum word count: 400*
4. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the local economy in your region. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Outline the key challenges your business has faced over the past 12 months and explain how you have managed the impact of these challenges on your workforce and external stakeholders, as well as the impact they have had on your strategic direction. *Maximum word count: 400*

Excellence in Large Business

The Excellence in Large Business Award recognises a business that has effectively driven growth and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies implemented to achieve business success and/or resilience.

Entry criteria

Entrants are required to demonstrate their achievements over the past 12 months across the key area of business excellence. This category is open to businesses with 21 or more employees at the time of entry, who have been trading for a period of over 24 months.

Award eligibility check box

- ✓ This business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has 21 or more employees on the payroll in Australia at the time of entry.
- ✓ This business has not entered the categories of Outstanding Community Organisation, Outstanding Start-up, Excellence in Micro Business or Excellence in Small Business.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Detail what your business goals and key milestones were for the previous 12 months and how you achieved all or part of them. *Maximum word count: 300*
2. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, innovations, strategies, projected outcomes for the future. *Maximum word count: 400*
3. Describe why your product or service offering is unique within your industry and differentiates your business from competitors. *Maximum word count: 400*
4. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the local economy in your region. *Maximum word count: 400*
5. Outline the key challenges your business has faced over the past 12 months and explain how you have managed the impact of these challenges on your workforce and external stakeholders, as well as the impact they have had on your strategic direction. *Maximum word count: 400*

Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality

The Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality Award 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, licensed clubs, hotels, motels, caravan and camping parks, B&B operators, conference and catering operators, restaurants and cafes.

Eligibility criteria

- ✓ Businesses eligible to enter include providers or general tourism/recreational facilities and attractions, licensed clubs, hotels, motels, caravan and camping parks, B&B operators, conference and catering operators, restaurants and cafes.
- ✓ This category is open to businesses who have been trading for a period over 24 months and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

1. Explain your business growth and achievements in the past 12-24 months. Maximum word count: 400
2. What were the strategies and plans you initiated to achieve your business growth over the past 12 – 24 months? Maximum word count: 450
3. How did you implement these strategies? Maximum word count: 400
4. Detail the measurable results you have achieved, both financial and non-financial, and how these demonstrate "excellence". Maximum word count: 400
5. Explain how you participate in and contribute to the growth and success of hospitality and tourism in the Shoalhaven region? Maximum word count: 400

Excellence in Retail and Personal

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.

Eligibility criteria

- ✓ Businesses eligible to enter include 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.
- ✓ This category is open to businesses who have been trading for a period over 24 months and is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry.
- ✓ A representative of this business has not been a judge in this category in 2022.
- ✓ A representative of this business is not a judge in the 2023 Business Awards program.

Questions

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

Terms and 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

How to Enter

1. Entry is free.
To enter the Business NSW State Business Awards (BNSW 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.
2. Business NSW reserves the right to alter or change these Terms and Conditions at any time at its discretion.
3. 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).
4. All submissions are to be lodged through the Business NSW Awards website at <https://enter.businessnsw.com/register/olArjvJW>
5. By lodging your entry you agree to be bound by these Terms and Conditions.
6. Your entry must be submitted by 11.59pm Australian Eastern Standard time on the relevant close date for your region, as published in the Key Award Dates section on the Website.
7. All entries must be submitted through either one of the aligned Local Business Chamber award programs or regional award programs. Direct entries into the NSWBC Awards will not be accepted.

Entry Eligibility

1. All businesses that submit an entry must hold a current Australian Business Number (ABN). This clause does not apply to individual entrants into the individual award categories of Outstanding Young Business Leader, Outstanding Employee and Outstanding Business Leader.
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 does not apply to entries into the Outstanding Start Up categories where entries can be made by any business that has been operating less than a period of two years at the time of entry.
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.
4. Entry into the Outstanding Young Business Leader, Outstanding Employee and Outstanding Business Leader categories are not open to Business NSW Board Members, Business

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- NSW Regional Advisory Councillor and State Councillors. Business NSW Regional Advisory Councillors and State Councillors can enter their business in other BNSW Award categories.
5. Staff members of Business NSW or any of its related or controlled entities are not eligible to enter the BNSW Awards.
 6. An entry into the individual award categories (Outstanding Young Business Leader, Outstanding Employee and Outstanding Business Leader) shall be automatically disqualified if:
 - the entrant becomes bankrupt or insolvent; or
 - the entrant becomes disqualified from holding office as a director of any organization or company.
 7. Entrants into the Outstanding Young Business Leader Award category must:
 - be an owner, CEO or director of the relevant business; or
 - hold a majority shareholding or have a controlling interest in the business.
 8. Business NSW reserves the right in their sole discretion to disqualify any individual or business entry who the Business NSW 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 BNSW Awards or otherwise bring the BNSW Awards into disrepute or damage the goodwill or reputation of Business NSW.
 9. Business NSW 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 Business NSW.

Previous Year Regional and State Winner

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.
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. 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.
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.
5. To progress as a State Finalist at the BNSW Awards, Regional winners must be either:
 - a current financial member of the NSW Business Chamber or any of its related or controlled entities by 30th September in the relevant year;
 - a Local Business Chamber member that has opted in to become a member of the Business NSW by 30th September in the relevant year;
 - a client of the Australian Business Solutions Group of the Business NSW with an ABN registered in NSW

Entry requirements

1. All entries for consideration must be lodged online and include the required information.
2. Business NSW 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.
3. Your entry will be allocated to a Business NSW regional awards program, based on the street address, location and postcode of your business' premises and at Business NSW absolute discretion.

Opening Dates

1. Refer to the Key Award Dates page on the Website for entry opening dates.
2. Business NSW reserves the right to extend or vary the entry period if required, before or after the BNSW Awards entry period commences.

Closing Dates

1. Refer to the Key Award Dates page on the website for entry closing dates.
2. Business NSW reserves the right to extend or vary the entry period if required, before or after the BNSW Awards entry period commences.

Confidentiality

1. Upon their submission pursuant to these Terms and Conditions, entries become the property of Business NSW. 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 Business NSW and any of its related or controlled entities, unless otherwise specified.
2. If you are selected as a finalist in the BNSW Awards, information provided in your entry (excluding financial information) will be used for the purpose of promoting the BNSW Awards and your business.
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.
4. Business NSW, 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 by contacting the Business NSW via the following:

Business NSW

Locked Back 938

North Sydney NSW 2059

Australia

P: 13 26 96

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

Judging

1. All entries are judged by a panel of subject matter experts, selected by NSW Business Chamber from business and community leaders including previous State Category Winners and Category Sponsors. These judges may be drawn from current employees of the Business NSW or any of its related or controlled entities.
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.
3. There will only be one winner per category.
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.
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.
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.
7. Judges are required to sign a confidentiality agreement and disclose any conflict of interest.
8. The Judging Panel's decision is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.
9. In situations where there is only one entrant for a category in a Regional Award, this entry will be judged. Subject to meeting a gateway score, the entry will become an automatic State Finalist and will be awarded a State Finalist certificate and represent their region in that category at the State Gala event. They will be recognised at the Regional Awards dinner but will not be declared a Regional winner; they will be referred to as a State Finalist.
10. A representative of Business NSW or the Judging Panel may contact any entrant via telephone interview or email for further information or to verify their entry prior to selecting the final preferred winner. Conducting such interviews does not create any obligation on Business NSW or the Judging Panel to select the interviewed entrant as a winner.

Awards

The BNSW Awards comprise of the following categories:

- Outstanding Employee
- Outstanding Young Business Leader
- Outstanding Business Leader
- Employer of Choice
- Excellence in Innovation
- Excellence in Sustainability
- Outstanding Community Organisation
- Outstanding Start Up
- Excellence in Micro Business
- Excellence in Small Business
- Excellence in Large Business

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1. BNSW may, in its sole discretion (without prior notice) add or vary these award categories of both State and Regional level from time to time.
 2. Winners of the aligned categories listed in clause 9.1 from each Regional Awards program will progress to the Business NSW State Business Awards as a State Category Finalist subject to satisfying these Terms and Conditions.
 3. Business NSW may have additional Regional award categories relevant to each region. Please note these additional Regional award categories do not progress to the Business NSW State Business Awards.

Geographic coverage

1. Business NSW provides the online entry and judging engine for other Local Business Chamber and Regional awards which are aligned with the BNSW Awards program. Those Local and Regional awards may have different terms and conditions.
2. Shoalhaven specific Awards do not progress to Illawarra and Business NSW Business Awards. The Local Award categories comprise of the following:
 - Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality
 - Excellence in Retail and Personal
 - Excellence in Inclusion^
 - Southern Shoalhaven Superstar^
 - Business of the Year^

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

1. Aligned category winners will automatically enter the Business Illawarra Awards as a Regional Category Finalist.
2. If you wish to go on to be a Regional Finalist at the Business Illawarra Awards, you will be required to become a Business NSW Member as per the terms and conditions set by the Business Illawarra.
3. The maximum number of business categories you can enter is three.
4. 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 have won a category.
5. 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.

Announcing the finalists and winners

1. All State Finalists will be notified by phone and email and published on the BNSW Awards Website.
2. Winners will be announced at the gala event in each Region, with the State Category Winners announced at the State Gala Event. In a Region where there is no gala event, winners will be notified and awarded their Regional Winner trophy in person.
3. It is a condition of entry that, if requested by the Business NSW, the Regional and State Winners agree to participate in media requests, social media and other publicity requests (such as Business NSW and Regional Chamber events) conducted by and for use by the Business NSW 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) because of the winners' participation in these activities.

Local Business Chamber and Regional Business Chamber Awards programs

1. These T&C's apply to entrants into all Business NSW Regional Business Awards, including entrants of Local Business Chamber awards which are aligned with the BNSW Awards, unless otherwise agreed.
2. Please note that additional terms and conditions may also be applied by the Local Business Chamber or Regional Business Chamber running such awards. Please check the relevant Local Business Chamber or Regional Business Chamber Awards website for their terms and conditions.

Local Business Chamber Award entrants and winners

1. Where a Local Business Chamber Awards program exists and that Local Business Chamber aligns all or some of their categories and criteria with the Business NSW Awards Program, Local Chamber Alliance members can only enter those aligned categories via the Local Business Chamber Awards program. Where a Local Business Chamber Awards program exists but they have not chosen to align with Business NSW State Business Award Categories, Local Chamber Alliance members may directly enter those categories at a Regional level.
2. A business or individual is eligible to enter 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 Business NSW portal.
3. Where a Local Business Chamber Awards program does not exist, a Local Chamber Alliance member can enter directly into the BNSW Awards at the Regional level.
4. Local Business Chamber Award winners are eligible to progress to the Business NSW Regional Awards program as a Regional entrant subject to:
 - complying with the BNSW Awards Terms and Conditions;
 - the Local Business Chamber category winner's entry being submitted via the Business NSW Awards online entry system for the purpose of judging.
5. Category winners at a Local Business Chamber and Regional level must satisfy a gateway score that the Business NSW will set at the start of every awards program. This score will be awarded by the Business NSW State Business Awards Judging Panel

ENTERING FAQ's

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 above). If you win at the Shoalhaven level and progress to Illawarra, you will need to join the Shoalhaven Business Chamber to proceed.

Can I enter a category that I won last year (2022)?

Yes.

Are there any restrictions on categories I won prior to 2022?

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 use the English language effectively and convincingly 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.

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 exclusion to this is the Outstanding Community Organisation, where one of the judges on each of these categories may be a representative from the Sponsoring organisation.

We look forward to receiving your Award entry,
and thank you for participating in the
2023 Shoalhaven Business Awards.

GOOD LUCK

www.shoalhavenbusinesschamber.com.au/awards