

3. MAJOR FESTIVALS & EVENTS

This category recognises leisure festivals, events and exhibitions that enhance the profile/awareness and appeal of the destination they are held in as well as creating economic impact, increased visitation and community involvement.

This category is open to (but not limited to) sporting, arts, historical, cultural, literary, comedy, culinary and general interest festivals, events and exhibitions with local, interstate and international visitor attendance over 50,000 or recognised by the STO as a major event on their event calendar.

The festival/event must have occurred during the qualifying period. Festivals/events may be one-off or reoccurring events.

1. TOURISM EXCELLENCE (20 marks)

- a. Provide a brief overview on the nature and history of the festival/event and explain your reason for the chosen time of year. You must demonstrate your eligibility for entry in this category as outlined in the descriptor (4)
- b. Describe the program of activities you stage and the tourism experiences offered. What is your point of difference? (5)
- c. How does your event enhance the profile and appeal of your destination? (4)
- d. Detail the number and origin of visitors attracted and what methods were used to determine this data. (4)
- e. Demonstrate the economic benefit of your festival/event and the methods used to determine this data. (3)

Tips:

- a. *Refer to the ABOUT US section of your festival/event website as this may assist with this response. Judges will want to know how and when the festival/event started, who works there, where it is located (a map would be helpful) and how it has developed over the years.*
- b. *What sets you apart from other festivals/events and makes you special.*
- c. *Explain how your festival/event links to the destination that you operate within.*

- d. *Explain the techniques you use to track visitors and gather information on the people attending your festival/event. Using charts would help present this information.*
- e. *Explain how your tourism festival/event contributes to the local economy in your region, for example; local purchasing, employing local people etc. The focus should be the economic contribution (money) in dollars. What have you spent. Include calculations to show how you know the economic impacts. This may include in-kind and contra spend.*

This is ALWAYS best presented in a table, and always include some words before and/or after the table with an explanation

2. BUSINESS PLANNING (20 marks)

- a. Provide an overview of the key features of your festival/event business plan. (6)
- b. Describe your funding sources and the processes in place to secure this funding. (4)
- c. What Risks have been identified for your festival/event? Summarise in more detail the risk mitigation strategies that you have put in place to ensure the safety and security of all the attendees at your event including staff volunteers and contractors. (6)
- d. What training is in place for staff and/or volunteers and how has this improved your festival/event? (4)

Tips:

- a. *Include all business plan elements that are specific to your festival/event. Ensure that you broadly cover all areas such as financial management, human resources, operational etc.*
- b. *Provide figures to substantiate how your festival/event is funded. What systems do you have to manage this for example 3-year sponsorship commitments etc.*
- c. *Identify a broad summary of the risks involved in running your event. Follow this with a more detailed summary of the risk management approach for safety and security at the festival/event.*
- d. *Highlight volunteer orientation and induction and other training programs for onsite event staff.*

3. MARKETING (25 marks)

- a) Who are your target markets? (5)
- b) What innovative marketing and communications strategies did you use? (5)
- c) Demonstrate how these initiatives have been successful and how that success was measured. (5)
- d) How does your strategy align with local, regional or state marketing plans? (5)
- e) Summarise the media coverage received that helped to raise the profile of the region as a tourist destination. (5)

Tips:

- a) This question seeks to understand who you have aimed your marketing towards. Consider for example; who they are, where they are from, how old they are, how they purchase travel, what motivates and inspires them and how your product fits.*
- b) What have you done differently to attract your customers? Consider for example; social media, digital advertising, apps. The response needs to focus on innovative approaches to marketing your festival/event.*
- c) Detail how these new/different/unique marketing activities have been successful. Try and measure the outcomes.*
- d) Demonstrate your linkages with local, state and/or national strategies. Referencing plans will enhance your response.*
- e) Provide details on media outcomes that profiled not just your event/festival but the region/destination as well.*

4. CUSTOMER SERVICE (20 marks)

- a) Describe your customer service philosophy/values. (5)
- b) Explain how you provide for guests/visitors with specific needs. (5)
- c) Describe how you measure customer satisfaction and identify areas for improvement. (5)
- d) What processes do you have in place to respond to customers' complaints both online and offline, and manage your online reputation? (5)

Tips:

- a) *Consider the systems and procedures you have in place to deliver outstanding service. How do you make an effort to understand visitor needs, welcome them, respect them, thank them and do business with them?*
- b) *Demonstrate how you consider visitors' special and specific needs. Think about who your customers are and their specific requirements. Do you offer any accessible tourism products, experiences and services to visitors? How do you identify your customers' requirements and provide for them appropriately? Specific needs could include cultural, language, physical, intellectual, dietary and other specific needs e.g. groups, special interest etc. Provide examples of how you catered for customers with specific needs, explain the outcome or successes.*
- c) *What processes do you have in place to understand how your customer feels about your product/service? For example; feedback forms, monitoring social media, blogs, mystery shoppers etc. Consider providing a case study/example where you have implemented a change based on customer feedback.*
- d) *This is a three-part answer. It is crucial to know what your clients are saying about your business and take measures to protect your business. A sound Reputation Management strategy will outline the processes you have in place to understand how your clients see you, think of you and talk about you and how you take action when feedback is received (negative or positive). In this response you need to outline your reputation management strategy and (1) what processes you have in place to respond to positive and negative feedback (online and offline), (2) how you measure customer satisfaction and (3) what processes you have in place to monitor your online reputation.*

5. SUSTAINABILITY (15 marks)

- a) How does your festival/event involve and inspire your local community? (5)
- b) Demonstrate your commitment to environmental sustainability. (5)
- c) What plans do you have in place to ensure the future sustainability of the event? (5)

Tips:

- a. *Consider the social benefits you provide to the local community, for example, supporting local businesses, product packaging, charitable donations, engagement with community groups, working with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people etc.*

Outline how your financial contribution/spending in the local economy has benefited the community.

Select some interesting examples and tell several stories such as:

- *Employing locals and the impact their employment has had on the person*
- *Stocking and selling a local artisan's products and how business has boomed because of it for the manufacturer/producer (or something similar)*
- *Work experience opportunities that are offered*

Offering gifts for the school raffle that allowed the school to raise money for an item they wouldn't have otherwise been able to afford

- b. *Explain your commitment to environmental sustainability and detail the activities you conduct in relation to water conservation, waste management and recycling, fuel and energy reduction, carbon reduction/offset.*

Outline the activities you conduct on an ongoing basis as well as any new initiatives implemented during the qualifying period.

Demonstrate how the initiative benefited the environment and where possible include a measurement/evidence of how the activity has reduced your environmental footprint. The inclusion of actual measurement data including the amounts saved/reduced in comparison to the previous year may enhance response.

This is always best presented with a table and include some words before the table with an explanation of the table and your overall commitment to environmental sustainability.

- c) *Provide details of, for example, sponsorship programs, funding and commercial business models that will ensure your event continues in the future.*

TOTAL SCORE: _____/100