

3. MAJOR FESTIVALS & EVENTS

This category recognises tourism 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.

COVID-19 Impacts (0 marks)

Please provide the judges with an understanding of your business situation resulting from national and world events during the qualifying period (1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022). E.g., COVID-19, natural disasters (fire/flood)

NOTE: These responses do not contribute to your overall score but provide a clearer picture for judges to understand what you have been able to achieve. This is factual information only, allowing you to tell your business story in your written submission.

Bullet points are recommended. These responses should be short and sharp.

Q.1 Was your festival/event disrupted by COVID19/bushfires/floods and related restrictions or closures?

Q.2 Describe what the restrictions were to your festival/event e.g., gatherings

Q.3 Describe the impact of travel restrictions to your festival/event e.g., border closures

1. Introduction (20 marks)

A. Provide an overview of the nature and history of your festival/event. 15 marks

This is where you set the story of your festival/event and give the judge insight into the visitor experience on offer. It is recommended that you begin by explaining your reason for the development of the event; how it started and why the chosen time of the year.

You should then take the judge on a journey of your festival/event, including key people or organisations involved, details of how long it has been running, any significant changes that have happened over time or how the festival or event might have evolved.

Ensure that key information on the festival or event duration and scale is included here – whether it is a single day event, weekend or longer, whether it is a daytime or evening event, number and type of venues, the capacity of the venue(s) etc.

Demonstrate why your festival/event should be considered as an award-winning tourism business by highlighting your points of difference and what sets you apart from other festivals/events. Specify amenities or facilities that enhance visitor satisfaction.

This is where the judges (and auditors) will gain an understanding of how you fit into the category; therefore it is important to clearly demonstrate your eligibility for this category as related to the descriptor to ensure there is no misunderstanding as to why you have entered this category rather than the other Festival/Event category.

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response provided. For example a map of the festival/event, images of the festival/event and any specific facilities/amenities/services you have highlighted in your response., a collage of the accreditation programs you participate in and/or any award achievements

B. How has the festival/event worked to enhance the profile and appeal of the destination it was held in and stimulated economic activity within the qualifying period? 5 marks

The judges are looking to understand the positive impact your festival/event has made to the host destination.

Demonstrate the direct benefit to the host destination by using measurable data from the qualifying period to demonstrate how the festival/event has contributed to the local economy. Consider, for example, an increase in visitor numbers, economic spend, awareness, etc. Consider also how the event has supported the destination in its recovery from national and world events.

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response provided For example, a chart demonstrating economic growth and supporting the data you have provided in the submission.

2. Event development and innovation (30 marks)

A. What innovative strategies did the festival/event develop and implement that were designed to enhance the visitor experience? 10 marks

This question seeks to understand how your festival/event has improved the visitor experience. To respond, consider what innovations and/or developments the business has implemented or enhanced. An enhancement could include, for example, a new experience/facility, updating point of sale processes or changing to ethically sourced supplies.

It is understood that festivals/events may have implemented/designed strategies outside of the qualifying period. These can be included – but the festival/event must have been held in the qualifying period.

The response should demonstrate why the innovations/developments were implemented and how this enhances the visitor experience. The judges will be looking for an understanding of what prompted the improvement e.g., was it a result of guest feedback, environmental/site considerations, change in market demand, etc.

Your response should include the research and planning that was undertaken as well as the outcome/s of these and how they align with the business' main goals and strategies.

What measures were put in place to ensure COVID-19 protocols were met whilst providing an enhanced visitor experience?

B. What strategies have you developed in the qualifying period to ensure the future sustainability of the festival/event and how are you innovating to mitigate the challenges facing your event (business risks)? 10 marks

The judges are seeking a proactive approach to planning to support the continued running of the festival/event.

Consider a range of risks impacting the sustainability of the festival/event which could include, for example, ongoing funding/sponsorship, local community support, environmental/site considerations, media backlash, guest safety, continuing or return of restrictions, etc.

Where able, detail the figures to provide a greater response e.g., how is the event is funded, and what steps have been made to manage this (e.g., secured ongoing sponsorship).

You could also consider what partnerships, sponsorship, or stakeholder engagement you have secured to assist in the continued success of the festival/event.

If your event is a one off, you should ensure this is clearly demonstrated to the judges. Then, to respond to this question, focus your response on how you mitigated the risks and challenges faced by your festival/event.

C. How is the event integrated with the local, regional, or state tourism industry? 10 marks

Provide the judges with an understanding of how your festival/event supports the growth and development of the local, regional and state tourism industry. The judges are seeking a festival/event which has been actively involved with and contributed to the tourism industry.

Clearly demonstrate how your festival/event aligns with host community tourism strategies, for example, local government economic development plans, local/regional/state tourism development strategies, etc.

Demonstrate then the contribution to tourism that is made, for example increase in visitor numbers, awareness, local tourism employment. Where possible, use measurable data.

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response provided. For example, an image of any new products or facilities, posters promoting changes that have been implemented.

3. Marketing (10 marks)

A. What innovative marketing and communications strategies did you use during the qualifying period to promote the festival/event. Why were these strategies chosen and what was the result? 10 marks

You should begin by outlining who your festival/event has aimed your marketing towards and demonstrate a clear understanding of this market. 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 meets their expectations.

Identify how the target market/s are right for your festival/event.

You should then provide a clear overview of the innovative approaches you have taken to marketing and what you have done differently to attract your attendees within the qualifying period. Consider for example, social media, digital and interactive advertising, apps, product packaging, tactical or paid advertising campaigns, relationship marketing.

Ensure you outline why these marketing strategies were selected and how the marketing strategy aligns with local, regional or state marketing plans.

Detail how these marketing activities have been successful. You should consider metrics to measure the outcomes and consider media coverage, social media engagement, increased web traffic, increased bookings, etc.

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response provided. For example, images of marketing placement (social media screen shots, website, advertisements).

4. Customer Experience (15 marks)

A. How is the event delivered, evaluated and continually improved (for ongoing events) to ensure high attendee satisfaction levels and inclusivity? 15 marks

This question requires you to outline what practices you have put in place to ensure a high quality of customer service throughout the festival/event.

Demonstrate how you are committed to quality customer service throughout all areas of the festival/event. This could include staff training, service principles and policies, staff reward systems, volunteer orientation and induction and other training programs for onsite event staff, etc.

Consider all points of customer engagement, e.g., email, phone, guest greetings/welcome, during and after the festival/event. Your response should consider what training is in place for staff and/or volunteers and how this has improved the festival/event.

Once you have provided an overview of how customer service is delivered for high attendee satisfaction describe how you monitor and assess customer service to ensure quality delivery, 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.

Demonstrate how you consider visitors' special and specific needs and recognises the needs of a diverse community. This can include, but is not limited to, cultural, language, physical, intellectual, dietary and other specific needs e.g., groups, special interest, LGBTQ, etc.

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response provided. For example, staff communications posters, flow charts of customer service processes, reception cards encouraging feedback.

5. Responsible Tourism (15 marks)

A. How have you considered and progressed your environmental responsibilities during the qualifying period? 5 marks

*This question requires you to outline how you have considered and acted on reducing or improving (whichever applied) your overall impact on the **environment**.*

Consider the following:

- *How have you considered your environmental impact?*
- *What have you done to be environmentally responsible?*

Some examples of how you demonstrate environmental responsibility are:

- *Water conservation, waste management/reduction/recycling, fuel and energy reduction, carbon reduction/offset, reuse initiatives in place.*

The inclusion of actual measurement data including the amounts saved/reduced in comparison to the previous year (or multiple years if you have good records) will enhance the response.

B. How have you considered and progressed your social and economic responsibilities during the qualifying period? 5 marks

This question requires you to outline how you have considered and acted on supporting the local community and businesses.

For social responsibilities your response should consider non-monetary examples.

Some examples of how you demonstrate social responsibility are:

- *Supporting local businesses, product packaging, charitable donations, sponsorship, engagement with community groups*
- *Employing locals and the impact their employment has had on the person, mentoring other businesses, speaking at schools*
- *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*

For economic responsibilities, detail how you support the local economy.

Your response should include metric examples. Determine the percentage of total contribution, e.g. "75% of all our expenses were spent in X region."

Some examples of how you can demonstrate economic responsibility are:

- *Local purchasing, % of employment of local people.*
- *Operators who stock and sell a local artisan's products, or stock local produce in minibars/hampers/outlets and how the business has boomed because of it for the manufacturer/producer (or something similar)*
- *Waiving conference room fees for local not-for-profit groups to give them somewhere to meet which allows the group to keep going*

C. How have you considered and progressed your ethical responsibilities during the qualifying period? 5 marks

This question requires you to outline how you have considered and acted on your business ethical responsibilities.

Some examples of how you demonstrate ethical responsibility are:

- *The engagement and representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*
- *Cultural or historical representation,*
- *Animal welfare etc.*
- *Accessibility*

IMAGES

Attach a minimum of two graphics to support and enhance your response.

Submission score /90

Online review /10