



Top Tour Guide

Category Descriptor

This category recognises the significant contribution quality tour guides make, in providing memorable experiences to visitors through interpretation of the natural and cultural environment in a responsible manner.

Eligibility includes tour guides and coach captains working in the natural, cultural and heritage environments, in either a paid or volunteer capacity. Tour guides who work on multiple tours should preferably focus on one tour but can provide examples from other tours in addressing the following criteria.

Nomination Criteria

Nomination details will include:

- Name of Nominating Business *The business must be sustainably accredited within the QTF program
- Name of nominated individual
- Introduction of individual (100 words)
- Professional images that can be used in a promotional setting
- Letter of Reference, which must include the following:
 1. Relationship
 2. Summary of the Guide's role, tour, company
 3. What you want to endorse as the Guide's strengths and skills
 4. 1-2 specific Examples
 5. Reason for nominating them

Submission Criteria

- The submission should focus on activities which took place in the 2025 calendar year.
- This submission word count should range between minimum 2,000 and maximum 5,000 words. This count excludes the overview of the tour guide – 500 words.
- Submissions will be accepted from guides operating in the private/public sectors in either paid or volunteer capacity
- The Top Tour Guide Award recognises professional and volunteer tour guides working in natural, cultural, and heritage environments.
- Entries are open to guides employed by, or contracted to, a tourism business, as well as sole traders operating under their own business name.



- **Please Note: Their business must be sustainably accredited within the QTF program**
- Tour guides who work on multiple tours should preferably focus on one tour, but can provide examples from other tours in addressing the following criteria
- Finalists will be required to have a 30-minute interview with the panel of judges in person or via videocall. *Interview questions will be supplied to the entrant prior to the interview.

Written Submission Questions (50 marks)

Overview of nominee (0 marks, 500 words Max – not included in word count)

1.1 - Provide a brief history of your career in tour guiding, highlighting your outstanding attributes that enhance your guiding.

1.2 - Include a brief description of your current employment/volunteer work.

Tour plan of nominee (15 marks, 1500 words Max)

In reference to a tour, you have *recently* delivered:

2.1 - Give details about the tour; include information such as: type of tour, group size, location, duration, frequency your involvement in its design and the involvement of other people (5 Marks)

2.2 - Give details of the objectives of the tour; what is the target audience and what messages and stories you use to create the visitor experience (10 Marks)

Tour delivery of nominee (15 marks, 1500 words Max)

3.1 - Give details of any innovations in design and presentation techniques that you use to create a special, distinctive and memorable experience for clients (7 Marks)

3.2 - Give examples of how your tour promotes sustainability, with a focus on at least two of: cultural, social, or environmental approaches (8 Marks)

Evaluation & Customer Service (15 marks, 1500 words Max)

4.1 - Explain how you evaluate and ensure a standard of quality in the customer service you, personally, provide. Provide evidence of customer satisfaction e.g. online reviews, social media comments, letters of appreciation, visitor book comments, surveys etc. (5 marks)

4.2 - Discuss the kind of changes/improvements you have made to the way you deliver the tour experience on listening to this feedback (5 marks)



4.3 - How do you identify and cater to people with specific needs? (specific needs could include language, culture, physical, cognitive, amongst others) (5 marks)

Improving skills (5 marks, 500 words Max)

5.1 - What training and development have you undertaken in the last three years to extend your skills as a guide? Can you upload any certification as proof? (5 marks)

Judging Process

A panel of three judges will review the written submission and attend the interview, providing individual scores and feedback. This will be followed by a Judges deliberation with the Chair of Judges to discuss the final outcomes and determine the overall winner.

Interview Portion (50 points)

The panel will undertake an interview with the individual with questions to be provided prior.

Annexure 1. Overview of 2026 processes

Top Tour Guide	
STATE LEVEL	
Nomination Process	This category will be run by the State / Territory with the winners in each progressing through to the national judging process for Australia's Top Tour Guide.
Nominating Organisation	A business will nominate an individual within their organisation to be considered as the Top Tour Guide for their respective State/Territory. The winners from each State/Territory will become a finalist for the national award.
Nomination Criteria	QTF Sustainable
Written Submission Criteria	The nominee will answer a series of questions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of nominee • Tour plan of nominee • Tour delivery • Evaluation and Customer Service



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career Development
Interview	An interview of the nominee will take place according to the national standards.
Judging	A panel of three judges in each state/territory will review the written submission and score individually. They will then meet (can be via teleconference) to deliberate on the winner.
Winners	<p>The following will be provided to the winner to support the promotion of their achievement</p> <p>Winner's logo Promotion and marketing generated by stakeholder/sponsorship agreements</p>
NATIONAL	
Nomination Process	This category will be run by the State/Territory with the winners in each progressing through to the national judging process for Australia's Top Tour Guide.
Nominating Organisation	The business that nominated the individual for the state/territory awards.
Nomination Criteria	Gold winner at state/territory level in same year.
Written Submission Criteria	<p>The nominee will answer a series of questions including:</p> <p>Overview of nominee Tour plan of nominee Tour delivery Evaluation and Customer Service Career Development</p>
Interview	An interview will be made with the panel of judges and nominee
Judging	Nationally, a panel of three judges will review the written submission and score individually. The ATIC Chair of Judges and ATIC representative will meet with the panel of judges to deliberate for the winner.
Winners	<p>The following will be provided to the winner to support the promotion of their achievement</p> <p>Winner's logo Promotion and marketing generated by stakeholder/sponsorship agreements</p>