

STATE / TERRITORY AND NATIONAL CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

1. MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

This category recognises natural or built attractions that people visit for pleasure and interest. Entrants in this category attract amongst the highest visitor numbers during the qualifying period for their State/Territory.

Major Tourist Attractions would see over 100,001 annual visitors to the attraction.

2. TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

This category recognises natural or built attractions that people visit for pleasure and interest. Entrants in this category attract significant visitor numbers during the qualifying period for their State/Territory.

Tourist Attractions would see under 100,000 annual visitors to the attraction.

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.

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

5. ECOTOURISM

This category recognises ecologically sustainable tourism businesses with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas. Entrants in this category foster environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation.

6. CULTURAL TOURISM

This category recognises tourism businesses that foster a greater understanding and appreciation of authentic culture, history, heritage and/or the arts.

7. ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER TOURISM EXPERIENCES

This category recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism businesses that demonstrate authenticity and cultivate a greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, history and traditions.

8. TOURISM RETAIL, HIRE & SERVICES

This category recognises businesses that sell/provide goods or hire services which contribute to the tourism industry. The contribution made to the tourism industry can be economical (e.g. retail, galleries), experience based (traditionally non-tourism specific experiences e.g. shopping precincts) or service based (e.g. digital solutions for travellers or tourism businesses).

9. VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES

This category recognises the consistent delivery of high quality and face to face information services to the visitor. This category is open to Visitor Information Centres/Tourist Offices, Local Tourist Associations and Regional Tourism Organisations.

10. BUSINESS EVENT VENUES

This category recognises venues who provide high quality facilities specifically designed for business visitors e.g. meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions.

11. MAJOR TOUR & TRANSPORT OPERATORS

This category recognises a business who makes a major contribution in the combined provision of touring and transport services. This category is open to businesses with 15 or more annual full-time equivalent employees.

12. TOUR & TRANSPORT OPERATORS

This category recognises a business who makes a major contribution in the combined provision of touring and transport services. This category is open to businesses with fewer than 15 annual full-time equivalent employees.

13. ADVENTURE TOURISM

This category recognises outdoor adventure tourism experiences that involve visitor participation and a personal challenge.

14. TOURISM MARKETING & CAMPAIGNS

This category recognises creativity and innovation in the promotion of tourism products, services and/or destinations. The focus can be for a specific singular or ongoing campaign or ongoing integrated marketing approach delivering innovative marketing/campaigns that supports the promotion of the tourism industry.

This category is open to digital enterprises, Regional Tourism Organisations, Local Tourist Associations, Visitor Information Centres, Online Travel Agents, local government and marketing alliances. This is not for individual tourism products.

15. TOURISM RESTAURANTS & CATERING SERVICES

This category recognises all restaurants and catering services offering a tourism experience and/or servicing the tourism industry. It is not a food award but does recognise a significant contribution to tourism through the provision of food and beverage. This category is open to hotel or stand-alone restaurants, event caterers, pubs and cafés.

16. TOURISM WINERIES, DISTILLERIES & BREWERIES

This category recognises wineries, distilleries and boutique breweries that offer a cellar door experience and create a significant contribution to tourism.

17. CARAVAN & HOLIDAY PARKS

This category recognises tourism excellence in a caravan or holiday park. The focus of this award is on both the facilities and services that enhance the tourism experience.

This category is open to caravan or holiday parks that offer cabin and tenting accommodation and must meet a 3 - 5 Caravan & Holiday Park Star Rating Standard.

18. HOSTED ACCOMMODATION

This category recognises hosted accommodation that offers a bed & breakfast, farm stay, cottage or other intimate accommodation experience and must meet a 3-5 Hosted Accommodation Star Rating Standard.

Serviced apartments, hotels and resorts should consider entry into one of categories 21-24 which best fit their product. For companies that are managing multiple self-contained properties they should focus on one of their properties.

19. UNIQUE ACCOMMODATION

This category recognises tourism excellence in accommodation providing a unique tourism experience that includes an overnight accommodation experience with an included activity. The focus of this award is on the uniqueness of the tourism experience.

This category is open to properties developed around unconventional accommodation infrastructure that includes an activity (passive or active). Entry is open – but not limited to – tented holidays, houseboats, tree houses, underground accommodation and yacht charters.

20. SELF-CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION

This category recognises tourism excellence in accommodation providing guests with non-serviced accommodation and the freedom of self-sufficiency. The focus of this award is on both the facilities and services that enhance the tourism experience.

This category is open to accommodation that offers a self-catered accommodation experience and meets a 3-5 Self Catering Accommodation Star Rating Standard.

For companies that are managing multiple self-contained properties - they should focus on one of their properties.

21. 3-3.5 STAR ACCOMMODATION

This category recognises serviced accommodation that meets the 3-3.5 Star Rating standard (pre-assessment or final rating). The focus of this award is on both the facilities and services that enhance the tourism experience.

This category is open to accommodation experiences that meets a 3 to 3.5 Star Rating Standard in any Star Rating category.

22. 4-4.5 STAR DELUXE ACCOMMODATION

This category recognises serviced accommodation that meets the 4 or 4.5 Star Rating Standard (pre-assessment or final rating). The focus of this award is on both the facilities and services that enhance the tourism experience.

This category is open to accommodation experiences that meets a 4 or 4.5 Star Rating Standard in any Star Rating category.

23. 5 STAR LUXURY ACCOMMODATION

This category recognises serviced accommodation that meets the 5 Star Rating Standard (pre-assessment or final rating). The focus of this award is on both the facilities and services that enhance the tourism experience.

This category is open to accommodation experiences that meets a 5 Star Rating Standard in any Star Rating category.

24. NEW TOURISM BUSINESS

This category recognises new tourism businesses that have commenced trading, visitation, or service delivery during the qualifying period. This award recognises excellence in the planning and development of new tourism infrastructure and/or services.

Existing tourism businesses that have commenced a new product or opened new infrastructure need to enter another category most applicable to the business.

25. EXCELLENCE IN FOOD TOURISM

This category is open to food producers, providores, tour operators, cooking schools, food attractions, farm gate experiences, farmers markets, trails and other food tourism experiences in the State/Territory, featuring the State/Territory produce as the core component.

26. EXCELLENCE IN ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

This award recognises businesses that provide a tourism product, experience or service that goes above and beyond to accommodate and cater for people with disabilities and/or specific needs e.g. mobility, vision, and/or hearing impairment, neurodiversity, or other access needs.

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION BY AN INDIVIDUAL

This award recognises the outstanding contribution by an individual to the State/Territory tourism industry.