

### **3. ECOTOURISM**

**This category aims to recognise ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas that foster environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation.**

*Important reminders:*

- *Entrants must ensure their answers refer specifically to the product and category they are entering.*
- *Entrants are encouraged to answer questions to highlight participation in tourism-related accreditation programs.*

*Tip for all questions:*

- *Prior to using an acronym, please state phrase or name in full followed by the acronym in brackets.*

#### **Question 1. Product (20 points)**

- a) Provide a general overview of the nature and history of your business. You must demonstrate your eligibility for entry in this category as outlined in the descriptor above.
- b) Describe your services and/or facilities and the tourism experiences offered.
- c) How do you foster a greater understanding and appreciation of ecotourism?

*TIPS: Part a) Consider stating where you are located geographically (perhaps include a map shot) and including a picture to help judges visualise your business.*

*Part c) Explain how your product meets the key principles of ecotourism. For example providing positive experiences for visitors, contributing towards conservation, building environmental and cultural awareness and respect, promoting responsible travel etc.*

#### **Question 2. Business Plans (20 points)**

- a) Describe the key features of your business plan for example goals, strategies and outcomes.
- b) Demonstrate your financial viability. If your business has not experienced growth, explain.
- c) Describe the risk issues you have identified for your business and summarise the risk mitigation strategies you have put in place.

- d) Demonstrate your involvement in, and contribution to, the tourism industry. Explain how it contributes to the success of your business and the tourism industry as a whole.

*TIPS: Part a) Explain what were you trying to achieve i.e. your business vision, how you went about it and the related outcomes.*

*Part b) would benefit from the inclusion of graphs illustrating income and expenditure and/or nett profit/loss for the qualifying period. This could be presented as a percentage or dollar value.*

*To demonstrate if your business is viable you can show:*

- *An increase in average spend*
- *Reduction in loans*
- *Amount of forward bookings compared to previous year*
- *Agents/wholesalers – 3<sup>rd</sup> party referrals*
- *A percentage increase*
- *Visitation numbers (have they increased?)*

*Judges want to see that you've got plans in place (particularly if you're a new business) to ensure the continuity of your business, that you have a pipeline. That could be:*

- *You have a relationship with a local Visitor Information Centre or other sources for referrals*
- *Repeat customers*

*You can also show that you've done research into things like the lifetime value of a customer.*

*Part c) Risk management relates to all parts of your business including risk to the visiting public, specific business related risk and Occupational Health and Safety. Consider using a practical example or detail an incident and outcome to prove how your risk management strategy works. Also consider displaying information in a matrix form and identifying levels of risk.*

*Part d) Demonstrate your involvement at local, state and/or national level. Examples could include pre and post touring, cooperative marketing, media famils, cooperation with local and state tourism authorities, tourism accreditation, active membership of industry associations, leadership in industry forums, involvement in tradeshows, other partnerships and alliances etc.*



2010 CountryLink Inland Tourism Awards – Category 03 Ecotourism

Revised 25-Mar-10 9:56 AM

© 2010 Inland Tourism Awards Inc.

### Question 3. Marketing (20 points)

- Who are your target markets and how did you identify them?
- Describe the marketing strategies used to attract each target and detail the success/outcomes of those strategies.
- What is your distinctive difference and how do you promote it to attract each of your target markets?
- Demonstrate how potential visitors are provided with an accurate and responsible depiction of what to expect from the experience/product.

*TIPS: Consider all arms of marketing (e.g. sales, advertising, public relations, word of mouth and e-marketing) where appropriate. Your objective should be to demonstrate a clear plan, supported by market research, and the results achieved.*

*Part a) Explain what research you used to identify them.*

*Part b) Consider displaying your target markets and the strategies and outcomes for each in a table format. Ideally there should be a strategy described for each target market listed in part a).*

*Part d) relates to your marketing material e.g. brochures, flyers, advertising, website etc. and keeping it up to date.*

### Question 4. Customer Service and Professional Development (20 points)

- Explain how you achieve and maintain quality customer service throughout your organisation.
- How do you identify and provide for people with specific needs?
- State the number of people working in the business and explain how you identify and determine professional development needs.
- Describe the range of training/skills development programs undertaken.

*TIPS: Part a) Consider how you stay abreast of industry developments. Other points to consider could include your repeat business strategy, feedback collection and changes implemented based on feedback.*

*Part b) Specific needs could include language, physical, intellectual, dietary and other special needs e.g. groups, special interest etc.*

*Part c) You should consider fulltime, part-time, casual and volunteers.*

*Part d) Points to consider could include the objective of staff/self training/skill development programs, how they were measured, the extent of uptake and outcomes for the business.*



2010 CountryLink Inland Tourism Awards – Category 03 Ecotourism

Revised 25-Mar-10 9:56 AM

© 2010 Inland Tourism Awards Inc.

### Question 5. Sustainability and Innovation (20 points)

- a) Describe and demonstrate your commitment to environmental sustainability.
- b) Describe how your business benefits and respects the local community values and culture.
- c) What innovations have taken place during the qualifying period to improve the nature of the visitor experience and minimise possible impacts on the environment?

*TIPS: Part a) could include energy and water conservation, building design and location, waste management, recycling, tree planting, engaging environmentally sensitive procedures and accreditation programs.*

*Part b) Benefits to the local community could include apprenticeships, in-kind contributions, employment of local residents, partnerships with community-based organisations etc. The use of local products and services could include food and beverage suppliers, service providers, tradespeople, and local building material. If local products and services are not available, briefly explain.*

*Part c) Include innovations that have taken place to improve your visitor experience, infrastructure development, new marketing ideas or sales activities. Innovations do not include routine repairs and maintenance.*

**Total score: 100 points. Site Inspection further 20 points.**

---

### 23. Inland Tourism Energy Efficiency Award



*Please note entering the Inland Tourism Energy Efficiency Award does not attract an entry fee. We encourage you to enter the inaugural Inland Tourism Energy Efficiency Award brought to you by NSW Government Department Environment, Climate Change and Water.*

Please see below the 2 questions for this. The entry requirements for this are open with the only restriction being a maximum of 5 pages. This award will be judged separately by the Department who will also receive a copy of your Q1.

Please click this link for more assistance in completing this application  
<http://www.savepower.nsw.gov.au/awards.aspx>



2010 CountryLink Inland Tourism Awards – Category 03 Ecotourism

Revised 25-Mar-10 9:56 AM

© 2010 Inland Tourism Awards Inc.

## Question 1: (20 points)

- a) What changes have you made to improve the environmental performance of your business? (e.g. reducing water and energy use, minimising volume and toxicity of waste, more efficient use of materials, staff policies and training etc.)
- b) What role (if any) have your staff, customers and suppliers played?

### Criteria

*Part a) What changes have they made to improve the environmental performance of the business? (e.g. reducing water and energy use, minimising volume and toxicity of waste, more efficient use of materials, staff policies and training etc.)*

*Part b) What role (if any) have their staff, customers and suppliers played? (e.g. engaging staff in developing and implementing environmental plans for the business, understanding customer attitudes to environmental issues and gaining feedback on any changes made, identifying ways to improve the environmental practices of suppliers etc.)*

### Explanation for guidelines

*Part a) What changes have you made to improve the environmental performance of your business?*

*This may include:*

- *Reducing your water and energy use*
- *Improving your recycling practices such as paper, plastic etc.*
- *Minimising volume and toxicity of your waste*
- *More efficient use of materials*
- *Working with suppliers to find products that have a reduced environmental impact and/or encouraging suppliers to improve their own environmental performance*

*Where possible, highlight the results of your environmental improvements (e.g. the amount of water or material savings)*

*Part b) What role (if any) have your staff, customers and suppliers played?*

*This may include:*

- *engaging staff in developing and implementing environmental plans for the business*
- *understanding customer attitudes to environmental issues and gaining feedback on any changes made*
- *identifying ways to improve the environmental practices of suppliers*



2010 CountryLink Inland Tourism Awards – Category 03 Ecotourism

Revised 25-Mar-10 9:56 AM

© 2010 Inland Tourism Awards Inc.

## Question 2: (20 points)

- a) Describe in more detail what changes (if any) you have made to save energy in your business in the past year.
- b) Do you have any evidence to support your claims?

### **Explanation for Guidelines**

*Part a) What have you implemented to make your business more energy efficient? This may include:*

- *No or low cost changes in behaviour such as educating staff to turn off lights, electrical equipment etc. when not in use, regular defrosting of fridges, checking thermostats on air conditioning so they are not unnecessarily low etc.*
- *Replacing existing equipment with more energy efficient equipment (e.g. with a 5 star rating) such as lighting (including skylights), heating, ventilation and air conditioning, insulation, electric motors, air compressors, commercial refrigeration and boilers*

*Businesses will be rewarded for engagement with the Energy Efficiency for Small Business Program. Registration will earn a bonus 0.5 of a point; completion of an assessment a further 0.5 of a point and completion of actions and a receipt of a Program rebate a further 1 point.*

*Part b) Evidence to support your claims could include:*

- *Receipts from the purchase of energy efficient equipment*
- *Energy bills that demonstrate a reduction in your energy use from these changes*
- *Information or documentation used to improve staff practices*
- *Energy efficiency/sustainability/environmental action plan*

### **Criteria Question**

*Part a) Have they made any changes to save energy in the past year? (i.e. no/low cost behaviour changes, replacing existing equipment with more energy efficient equipment etc.)*

*Part b) What evidence do they have to support their claims? (e.g. receipts from the purchase of energy efficient equipment, energy bills that demonstrate a reduction in your energy use from these changes, information or documentation used to improve staff practices, energy efficiency/sustainability/environmental action plan etc.)*



2010 CountryLink Inland Tourism Awards – Category 03 Ecotourism

Revised 25-Mar-10 9:56 AM

© 2010 Inland Tourism Awards Inc.