



2019 IMB BANK

ILLAWARRA BUSINESS AWARDS

ENTRY HANDBOOK

CATEGORIES

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Congratulations on your decision to enter the Illawarra Business Awards!

Just by entering the Awards you are providing yourself and your business with an unparalleled opportunity to:

- Gain recognition at a regional and state level
- Raise the profile of your business and showcase your business to a region-wide audience
- Build a reputation for excellence inside and outside of your industry
- Benchmark your business year-on-year and against other businesses in your local area and industry
- Improve employee engagement by involving your employees in the entry process
- Boost staff morale through the recognition of successes and wins in your business
- Review your business operations, reconnect with your vision and strategy, and measure performance against objectives

Many entrants see the Awards as a time for forced self-assessment, which helps keep them accountable in their goals. You are also giving yourself the opportunity to represent the Illawarra in the State Awards (if you enter an aligned category).

This handbook will give you all the information you need to understand the entry process and complete your online award entry.

ABOUT THE ILLAWARRA BUSINESS AWARDS

The Illawarra Business Awards is the region's most prestigious and anticipated annual business awards event.

In addition to recognising and honouring the most outstanding businesses in the region, the Awards provides an opportunity to celebrate the combined successes of the Illawarra Business community.

The highlight of the business year, the Awards provides unrivalled networking opportunities, the chance to share remarkable stories and ongoing brand exposure to the entire region.

For entrants, the Awards provides a platform for reviewing business operations with fresh eyes, as well as the eyes and minds of experts. They put a spotlight on the region, showcasing the success stories of our most outstanding businesses and marketing the Illawarra region.

Thirteen (13) of the eighteen (18) categories are aligned with the NSW State Awards, which allows the winners these aligned categories to compete at state level and bring further recognition and exposure to their business and the region.

Now in its 25th year, the Awards attracts attendance of SME business owners, senior executives from the private sector as well as local Government representatives.

For sponsorship enquiries and information about entering the Awards, contact us via events@illawarrabusiness.com.au or call (02) 4223 0308.

Read more at <http://businessannualawards.com.au/regions/Illawarra>

KEY DATES

Tuesday, 25 June

Awards launch and entries open

Monday, 29 July*

*This date is not to be extended

Awards entries close 5.00pm sharp

Thursday, 8 August

Judging of written entries commences

Friday, 6 September

Finalists announced

Monday, 9 September

Finalist interviews commence

Thursday, 10 October

Judging completed

Friday, 18 October

Gala Awards Ceremony

SPONSORS

Our Sponsors play an essential role in making the Awards possible. The Illawarra Business Chamber would like to thank all Awards Sponsors for supporting this important event.

Principal Sponsor 2019

IMB Bank

Category Sponsors 2019

Access Law Group	South32
BlueScope	Peoplecare
CareSuper	University of Wollongong
Dapto Leagues Club	Venues NSW
Department of Family and Community Services	NSW Ports
Department of Industry	WIN Network
IOH	Wollongong City Council
IRT Foundation	

Presenting Partner 2019

Illawarra Mercury



CATEGORIES

This year features nineteen (19) award categories, eighteen (18) of which you can directly enter through the online entry portal.

Aligned Categories

The winners of aligned categories will go on to represent the Illawarra and compete at the NSW Business Chamber State Awards:

- Outstanding Young Employee (Age 18-30)
- Outstanding Young Entrepreneur (Age 18-30)
- Outstanding Business Leader (Age 31+)
- Excellence in Micro Business (1-4 employees)
- Excellence in Small Business (5-20 employees)
- Excellence in Business (Over 20 employees)
- Excellence in Social Enterprise
- Start Up Superstar
- Excellence in Innovation
- Excellence in Sustainability
- Excellence in Export
- Outstanding Employer of Choice
- Local Chamber of Commerce

Illawarra Only Categories

Specific to the Illawarra Business Awards, winners do not progress through to the NSW State Awards:

- Excellence in Tourism
- Excellence in Retail & Hospitality
- Excellence in Customer Service
- Wollongong City Centre Business Excellence
- Excellence in Workplace Inclusion
- 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business of the Year*

**The 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business of the Year takes into account all Illawarra Business Award categories (excluding Local Chamber of Commerce, Business Leader, Young Entrepreneur and Young Employee) and is awarded to a category winner who is considered to be an "all-rounder", with superior performance in all aspects. Please note that entrants cannot directly nominate for this award category.*

HOW TO ENTER

Using the portal

Entries are completed online using the NSW Business Chamber awards entry portal, <http://businessannualawards.com.au/regions/Illawarra>.

The login screen will advise that 'You will need to create a new login for 2019', so even if you have entered the Awards in previous years, please create a new username and password as instructed.

If you have any questions regarding the entry process including using the portal, please don't hesitate to call (02) 4229 4722 for assistance.

Supported browsers for using the portal include:

- Firefox 34 and higher
- Internet Explorer 9 and higher
- Chrome 39 and higher
- Safari (Mac only) 7.1 and higher
- Opera 26 and higher

Entry writing tips

- Re-read each question as you are answering it. Are you addressing precisely what is being asked? This is critical to judges in assessing and scoring your entry.
- Use clear, concise language. Short, succinct sentences are much easier to read than long wordy ones.
- Check your spelling and grammar – get someone else to review your entry, ideally someone with great attention to detail as well as a strong grasp of the English language.
- Work within the minimum and maximum word limits.
- Reference evidence – awards, testimonials, etc. You cannot attach documents in the portal, however you can reference them and if required, bring them to your interview should you become a Finalist.
- Put your judge's hat on. If you were judging your entry, would it stand out to you? What questions would you have?
- Conduct a final review of your answers before submitting. Re-read the description of the category. Have you clearly demonstrated what the category seeks to recognise?
- All entries will be based on the success of you or your business over the previous 12-24 months only.

BENEFITS OF ENTERING

Review your business

The benefits of entering the Awards extend well beyond winning and glory. By entering the Awards, you will have the opportunity to review your business operations, reconnect with your vision and strategy, and measure your performance against objectives. Many entrants see the Awards as a time for forced self-assessment, which helps keep them accountable to their goals.

Celebrate success

Your business is successful because of the people you have in your team. Entering the Awards is a great way to review the previous 12-24 months, recognising those who have contributed to the success of your business.

Rewards and recognition

Bringing your staff to the Awards gala is a great opportunity to recognise and reward your team for the role they play in making your business a success. The format of the night is also a great opportunity for you and your staff to network with other IBC businesses in the Illawarra.

A sense of pride for your team

Working for a recognised or awarded business is great for your team. Who doesn't like working for a business that is considered to be amongst the best? Our finalists all gain recognition as part of the Awards program, both pre and post event.

Identify areas for development

Participating in the Awards is a great way to see what your peers and your competition are doing and consider areas for improvement in your own business.

Put a spotlight on passion

There are many businesses that are doing something outstanding, valuable, or unique, and often it goes unnoticed. Entering the Awards is an opportunity to bring awareness to your achievements and may have benefits that you never imagined.

Represent the Illawarra

Winners of the aligned category Awards will go on to the NSW Business Chamber State Awards, an extremely prestigious opportunity. Representing your business and the Illawarra at State level is a great way to gain exposure for your business.

JUDGING PROCESS

All entries will be assessed by an independent expert Judging Panel.

This panel is made up of business owners, business professionals and government representatives from the Illawarra and surrounding regions.

There are two (2) judges assigned to each award category, with the entire judging process overseen by independent auditor, KPMG.

Finalists are determined by the quality of their online written entries. Final winners for each category will be determined by combining 50% written (online) responses and 50% face to face interview scores.

Who is the Ambassador of Judges?

Professor Paul Wellings CBE, Vice Chancellor of University of Wollongong.

Who is the Auditor of Judges?

Mr Warwick Shanks, Managing Partner of Wollongong, KPMG.

How are Judges appointed?

The Illawarra Business Chamber and the Auditor of Judges, Warwick Shanks, jointly appoint the judging panel.

How many judges are there?

Two judges per category.

Steps involved

- Judges meet to eliminate conflicts of interest and sign confidentiality agreements
- Judges are assigned to categories
- Judges review and score all entries in their categories
- Judges determine their category finalists
- Finalists are announced and contacted for interviews
- Interviews are undertaken
- Judges determine their category winner
- Judges meet to determine the 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business of the Year
- Winner's names are provided to the Illawarra Business Chamber for announcement at the gala awards ceremony on Friday, 18 October 2019.

What are judges looking for in your written entry?

The judges are initially looking for the questions to be answered. Providing information that is not related to the questions is not helpful. Your responses must clearly demonstrate excellence by your business.

Face-to-face interviews

Interviews will take place between Monday, 9 September and Friday 4 October, and will typically take place at an agreed location such as at the judge's office. Interviews take between 30 and 60 minutes. Finalists will be confirmed on Friday, 6 September after which judges will be able to contact finalists to set up interviews.

What are the judges looking for during an interview?

The judges will be looking for entrants to clearly reinforce information provided in their written entry. They will also ask questions that are not part of the written submission.

How are finalists selected?

Finalists are selected based on the score from their online written entry.

How are finalists announced?

Finalists in each award category will be notified by phone and email, as well as published on the Illawarra Business Chamber website, social media platforms and in the Illawarra Mercury.

How are winners selected?

Final winners of each category will be determined by combining 50% written (online) entry and 50% face-to-face interview score.

How are winners announced?

Winners will be announced at the 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business Awards gala awards ceremony on Friday, 18 October 2019 at the WIN Entertainment Centre.

How is Business of the Year selected?

This award takes into account all Illawarra Business Award Categories and is awarded to a business considered an "all-rounder" with superior performance in all aspects. Entrants cannot directly nominate for this award. It is selected from the winners of each category (with the exception of Business Leader, Young Entrepreneur and Young Employee) and voted by the judging panel.

How does the audit process work?

The judging process is overseen by the Auditor of Judges. In the event of a dispute, the Ambassador of Judges has the casting vote on the winning submission.

Receiving feedback on your entry and interview

We are unable to provide individual feedback for entrants who are unsuccessful in making it through as a finalist. Finalists however can request feedback after the gala awards ceremony by emailing Awards@illawarrabusiness.com.au.

Conditions of entry

Judging panel decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into. Winners will not be notified prior to the Awards Ceremony to be held Friday, 18 October 2019. Entrants must be willing to participate in Awards related publicity organised by the IBC and agree to be contacted by media partners before and after entry to the Awards and the event.

Disclaimer

The Illawarra Business Chamber accepts no liability regarding any loss of patent rights or commercial returns arising from participation in the 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business Awards and its promotional program. Applicants are strongly advised to secure adequate protection for their intellectual property rights.



CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS & QUESTIONS

The following categories are aligned with the NSW Business Chamber State Awards. Winners will progress through to the State Awards held on Friday, 22 November 2019 at International Convention Centre, Sydney.

Following is an outline of questions from each section.

What questions will you need to answer once you start your entry? It can be helpful to prepare your answers before you start your online entry, particularly if you need to seek input from other areas within your business.

TAB ONE: Business Details

To be completed by all entrants including those entering into the individual categories of Outstanding Young Entrepreneur, Outstanding Young Employee and Outstanding Business Leader.

1. Trading name
2. Registered ABN
3. How is your business structured
(drop down box)
 - Sole Trader
 - Partnership
 - Trust
 - Company
4. Is your business classified as a not for profit?
(drop down box)
 - Yes/No
5. Main Office Address
6. Business trading commencement date
7. What industry does business operate in
(drop down box)
 - Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
 - Mining
 - Manufacturing
 - Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services
 - Construction
 - Wholesale Trade
 - Retail Trade
 - Transport, Postal and Warehousing
 - Information, Media and Telecommunications
 - Financial and Insurance Services
 - Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services
 - Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
 - Administrative and Support Services
 - Public Administration and Safety
 - Education and Training

- Health Care and Social Assistance
 - Arts and Recreation Services
 - Marketing
8. Number of employees on payroll including contractors, casuals and labor hire staff
(drop down box)
- 1 to 4
 - 5 to 19
 - 20 to 49
 - 50 to 99
 - 100 to 199
 - 200+
9. Is your business primarily business to business or business to consumer
(drop down box)
- Business to Business
 - Business to Consumer
10. Please provide a 100 word biography for your business. This biography will be used for promotional purposes.
11. Please indicate the main reason/s you are entering into the Business Awards
(drop down box)
- To raise the profile of my business
 - To recognise my staff and our achievements
 - To build business networks
 - To reflect on the goals, strategies and vision that led to the success of your business and to use those insights to drive even greater success in the future.
12. Website, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook

TAB TWO: Contact Details

To be completed by all entrants

Entry Contact Details

Name:

Position:

Email:

Phone:

Mobile:

Media Contact Details

(Tick box if same as entry contact)

Name:

Position:

Email:

Phone:

Mobile:

Outstanding Young Employee

Presented by Dapto Leagues Club



Award eligibility check box

- I am aged between 18-30 years at the time of entry
- I have been employed by my current employer for at least 18 months on or prior to this entry submission
- I am not a NSW Business Chamber Staff Member, Regional Advisory Councilor, State Councilor or Board Member

Description

The Outstanding Young Employee award recognises an inspirational young employee aged between 18-30 years. To enter into this award the individual must have been employed by their current employer for a minimum of 18 months at time of entry.

Questions

1. Entrants first name
2. Entrants surname
3. Date of birth
4. Current job title
5. Name of the business/organisation you work for
6. Commencement of employment date
7. Outline your employment background including previous roles and responsibilities. Maximum word count: 300
8. Provide a current profile of yourself including current job role and scope of responsibilities including details of the role, any direct reports, your budget, your financial and organisational reporting line. Maximum word count: 400
9. Detail your measurable career achievements including key milestones. Maximum word count: 400
10. Provide an overview of your five year goals/milestones and how you are working towards each of these. Maximum word count: 300
11. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a young employee and how you have dealt with each of these challenges, including examples. Maximum word count: 300
12. What do you believe makes you an outstanding young employee, including examples of where you have had to use your leadership skills? Maximum word count: 450

Additional T&C's

In addition to the general T&C's the following apply to this category:

- Should the entrant leave the organisation before the Regional or State Gala events, their entry is ineligible.

Outstanding Young Entrepreneur

Presented by BlueScope Steel



Award eligibility check box

- I am aged between 18-30 years at the time of entry
- I am a current owner or part owner of a business
- I am not a NSW Business Chamber Staff Member, Regional Advisory Councilor, State Councilor or Board Member

Description

The Outstanding Young Entrepreneur award recognises an inspirational young person aged between 18-30 years who, through their own commitment and passion, owns or part owns a successful business. This award acknowledges young business people who demonstrate outstanding entrepreneurial spirit, strategic direction and innovative ideas whilst providing inspiration to a new generation of upcoming young business people.

Questions

1. Entrants first name
2. Entrants surname
3. Date of birth
4. Current Job title
5. Name of business organisation you own or part own
6. Date in which you established or took ownership of the business organisation
7. Number of other owners
8. Percentage of ownership held by you
9. What problem have you solved, how did you identify it as a market need and what is your target market? Maximum word count: 200 words
10. Describe your business's innovative competitive advantage. Maximum word count: 300
11. Describe how you funded your business. Maximum word count: 300
12. Provide an overview of your five year strategies for future growth and key milestones detailing how you are currently working towards achieving these. Maximum word count: 450
13. Detail the measurable growth and key achievements in your business over the past 24 months. Maximum word count: 450
14. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a young entrepreneur and how you deal with these challenges. Maximum word count 300

Outstanding Business Leader

Presented by Access Law Group



Award eligibility check box

- I am aged 31 years and over at the time of entry
- I am not a NSW Business Chamber Staff Member, Regional Advisory Councilor, State Councilor or Board Member

Description

The Outstanding Business Leader award recognises the positive contribution made to business by business people and professionals. The award recognises those who demonstrate outstanding entrepreneurial spirit, strategic business direction and innovative ideas, whilst providing inspiration to a new generation of upcoming business leaders. Individuals entering into this category can be self-employed or employed by a business.

Questions

1. Entrants first name
2. Entrants surname
3. Date of birth
4. Current job title
5. Name of your organisation or business
6. Provide a current profile of yourself including your scope of responsibilities, details of your role, any direct reports, your budget, your financial and organisation reporting line. Maximum word count: 300
7. Detail your achievements in business with clear measurable examples. Maximum word count: 400
8. Outline how you have reshaped your business, organisation or industry to create a smarter and more inclusive future with examples of how you have used your leadership skills? Maximum word count: 400
9. Provide an overview of your five year strategies for future growth and key milestones, detailing how you are working towards achieving each of them. Maximum word count: 400
10. Describe the key challenges you have faced as a business leader and how you overcame each of them. Maximum word count: 400
11. Describe the activities and initiatives you have undertaken to help the community (and or the business community). Maximum word count: 400

Excellence in Micro Business

Presented by WIN Network



Award eligibility check box

- This business has been trading for a period of two years or more, is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry
- This business has less than 5 employees on the payroll in Australia
- This business has not entered into the Excellence in Social Enterprise category, Excellence in Small Business or Excellence in Business category

Description

The Excellence in Micro Business award recognises a business with less than 5 employees that has achieved significant growth (market share, sales volume, turnover, profitability) and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies and plans implemented to achieve sustainable growth in the previous financial year.

Questions

1. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, strategies and outcomes. Maximum word count: 400
2. Define your businesses product and/or service offering/s. Maximum word count: 400
3. Define your target market/s? Maximum word count: 300
4. What is unique about your business i.e what makes it stand out from your competitors? Maximum word count: 300
5. Do you have monthly reporting of financial performance (profit and loss, cash flow and other key performance indicators)? Specify reports. Maximum word count: 300
6. Detail your business goals and key milestones achieved in the previous financial year. Maximum word count: 450
7. What were the strategies and plans you initiated to achieve your business growth over the previous financial year? Maximum word count: 300
8. Detail the key challenges and opportunities your business and industry face in the future. Maximum word count: 300
9. What strategies or plans do you have in place to address these challenges and/or opportunities? Maximum word count: 450
10. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the local economy in your region. For example employing local people, local purchasing etc) Maximum word count: 250

Excellence in Small Business

Presented by Department of Industry



Department
of Industry

Award eligibility check box

- This business has been trading for a period of two years or more, is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry
- This business has 5 to 20 employees on the payroll in Australia
- This business has not entered into the Excellence in Social Enterprise, Excellence in Micro Business or Excellence in Business category

Description

The Excellence in Small Business award recognises a business with five to twenty employees that has achieved significant growth (market share, sales volume, turnover, profitability) and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies and plans implemented to achieve sustainable growth in the previous financial year.

Questions

1. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, strategies and outcomes. Maximum word count: 400
2. Define your businesses product and/or service offering/s. Maximum word count: 400
3. Define your target market/s. Maximum word count: 300
4. What is unique about your business i.e what makes it stand out from your competitors? Maximum word count: 300
5. Do you have monthly reporting of financial performance (profit and loss, cash flow and other key performance indicators)? Specify reports. Maximum word count: 300
6. Detail your business goals and key milestones achieved in the previous financial year. Maximum word count: 450
7. What were the strategies and plans you initiated to achieve your business growth over the previous financial year? Maximum word count: 300
8. Detail the key challenges and opportunities your business and industry face in the future. Maximum word count: 300
9. What strategies or plans do you have in place to address these challenges and/or opportunities? Maximum word count: 450
10. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the local economy in your region. For example employing local people, local purchasing etc). Maximum word count: 250

Excellence in Business

Presented by University of Wollongong



Award eligibility check box

- This business has been trading for a period of two years or more, is not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry
- This business has 21 or more employees on the payroll in Australia
- This business has not entered into the Excellence in Social Enterprise category, Excellence in Micro Business or Excellence in Small Business category

Description

The Excellence in Business award recognises a business with 21 or more employees that has achieved significant growth and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies and processes implemented to achieve sustainable growth in the previous financial year.

Questions

1. Provide an overview of the key features of your business plan including goals, strategies and outcomes. Maximum word count: 400
2. Define your businesses product and/or service offering/s. Maximum word count: 400
3. Define your target market/s. Maximum word count: 300
4. What is unique about your business i.e what makes it stand out from your competitors? Maximum word count: 300
5. Do you have monthly reporting of financial performance (profit and loss, cash flow and other key performance indicators)? Specify reports. Maximum word count: 300
6. Detail your business goals and key milestones achieved in the previous financial year. Maximum word count: 450
7. What were the strategies and plans you initiated to achieve your business growth over the previous financial year? Maximum word count: 300
8. Detail the key challenges and opportunities your business and industry face in the future. Maximum word count: 300
9. What strategies or plans do you have in place to address these challenges and/or opportunities? Maximum word count: 450
10. Demonstrate how your business contributes to the local economy in your region. For example employing local people, local purchasing etc). Maximum word count: 250

Excellence in Social Enterprise

Presented by IRT Foundation



Award eligibility check box

- The majority (at least 50%) of profits are used to work towards your social mission
- The majority of the organisation's income is from trade, NOT donations or grants
- The organisation has not entered into the categories of Excellence in Micro Business, Excellence in Small Business and Excellence in Business category
- The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry

Description

The Excellence in Social Enterprise Award recognises an organisation that **trades** to tackle social problems, be it social, environmental cultural or economic.

Questions

1. Explain the social purpose of your organisation. Maximum word count: 300
2. Explain how your purpose contributes to the community, cultural and/or environment. Maximum word count: 400
3. Outline the product/s and/or services you trade to fund your organisation's social purpose. Maximum word count: 400
4. Detail each of the strategies and actions undertaken to achieve your organisation's social purpose. Maximum word count: 400
5. Detail measurable evidence of how each of these strategies and actions is contributing to the achievement of the social purpose goals for your organisation. Maximum word count: 400
6. Provide an overview of your five year strategy for future growth, sustainability and key milestones detailing how you are working towards achieving them. Maximum word count: 400

Start Up Superstar

Award eligibility check box

- The business has been trading for a **continuous** period of 12 months and less than 24 months, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry
- This business has not been purchased or acquired
- This business is not part of a franchise
- This business is not a new product or service line

Description

The Start Up Superstar award recognises a business that has been trading for at least 12 months and less than 24 months. This business delivers a product/service/idea/invention with credible potential and strongly displays an entrepreneurial spirit.

Questions

- 1.** Is this your first start up? (If no please specify other business ventures and their degree of success). Maximum word count: 300
- 2.** Date when you commenced trading.
- 3.** Number of owners.
- 4.** What problem (or need) has your business solved? Maximum word count: 250
- 5.** How did you identify the market need? Maximum word count: 400
- 6.** Describe your product service or offering. Maximum word count: 400
- 7.** Who is your target market? Maximum word count: 250
- 8.** Describe your business's innovative competitive advantage. Maximum word count: 400
- 9.** Outline your business success since its inception. Maximum word count: 400
- 10.** Detail and include your current research, customer marketing strategy, logistics and service delivery. Maximum word count: 350
- 11.** Describe how you funded your business. Maximum word count: 200
- 12.** Detail how your business has the potential to scale and achieve financial sustainability. Maximum word count: 400
- 13.** Provide commercial and technical evidence your team has the ability and competencies to achieve success and detail strategy and timeframe involved. Maximum word count: 500

Excellence in Innovation

Presented by Wollongong City Council



Award eligibility check box

- The business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry

Description

The Excellence in Innovation award recognises businesses that have made significant contributions to their industry through the introduction or improvement of an idea, method, technology, process or application.

Questions

- 1.** Provide details of the innovation or innovative approach in your business. Maximum word count: 300
- 2.** Explain how your business monitors and reacts to changes in the market including how your business acquires an understanding of emerging customer needs and market developments. Maximum word count: 300
- 3.** How well has the innovation been received by the marketplace? Provide details of the cost effectiveness, integration, risk minimisation and commercialisation. Maximum word count: 300
- 4.** How has innovative activity in your business helped grow or improve your business such as increased size, greater scope, productivity improvements, higher revenue, lower cost? Maximum word count: 400
- 5.** Demonstrate how the innovation has or is likely to have a positive impact beyond your business (i.e. to your industry, to the community). Maximum word count: 400
- 6.** Did the innovation achieve its objectives and goals? How are these improvements or impacts to the business measured? Maximum word count: 400

Excellence in Sustainability

Presented by South32



(Where sustainability is your core business, you must enter this category based on sustainable initiatives and projects within your business, not related to your core offering).

Award eligibility check box

- The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry

Description

The Excellence in Sustainability award recognises businesses that are working to reduce the impact of their operations on the environment and/or provide products and services that have positive environmental outcomes.

Questions

1. Describe your business environmental sustainability goals. Note that these must be quantifiable targets. Maximum word count: 300
2. Describe the initiatives/actions your organisation has undertaken to achieve its sustainability objectives in the previous 12- 24 months within the region you are entering the awards. Maximum word count: 400
3. Describe your sustainability achievements over the last 12–24 months. Maximum word count: 300
4. Describe how you involve staff in your environmental initiatives. Maximum word count: 300
5. Provide measurable evidence of how the sustainability objectives your business has achieved have contributed to the business, customers, staff and suppliers such as financial outcomes, staff engagement, marketing benefits, supplier/customer loyalty. Maximum word count: 400

Excellence in Export

Presented by NSW Ports



Award eligibility check box

- The business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry
- The business has been exporting for two years or more

Description

The Excellence in Export award recognises leading examples of businesses that are exporting their products internationally and are forging a strong reputation for Australian products and services in international markets. This applies to businesses that are exporting directly or through a third party.

Questions

- 1.** Summarise your measurable export success/es in the past 24 months. Maximum word count: 350
- 2.** What is the competitive edge of your product/service in each of your export markets? Ie how your business differentiates its product/service from the competition and how are you maintaining/improving this advantage? Maximum word count: 400
- 3.** Outline the key points of your international marketing strategy over the past 12- 24 months and what role it played in your company's success. Maximum word count: 400
- 4.** What strategies (communication/advertising/promotional/partnerships etc.) have you implemented to promote and sustain awareness of your brand/s in overseas markets in the past 12-24 months? Maximum word count: 400
- 5.** Please state your total export earnings in each of your major overseas markets. Maximum word count: 200
- 6.** What are your export earnings as a proportion of total sales revenue? Maximum word count: 200

Outstanding Employer of Choice

Presented by CareSuper



Award eligibility check box

- The business has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry

Description

The Employer of Choice award recognises organisations that put in place strategies and initiatives to create stimulating and supportive workplace environments for their employees. These strategies or initiatives must have a positive impact on both employees and the organisation as a whole.

Questions

1. What is your employee value proposition? Why would someone want to work for your business? Maximum word count: 300
2. Describe your workplace culture. Maximum word count: 250
3. How do you attract and retain the best talent? Maximum word count: 250
4. Excluding business growth or expansion, what percentage of staff turnover has there been in your business in the previous financial year? Maximum word count: 200
5. Have you had any employment related claims over the past 24 months? (YES/NO)
6. What plans or processes do you have in place to manage employment related claims? Maximum word count: 250
7. What percentage of your staff have attended at least one business, technical, personal or professional development training in the last financial year? Maximum word count: 200
8. How has investment in training and development improved the performance of your business? Maximum word count: 300
9. How would you describe an Employer of Choice? Maximum word count: 300
10. How does your business adopt inclusive practices and recognise the needs of a diverse community (including gender equality, people with intellectual and physical disability and seniors)? Maximum word count: 300
11. Outline your current staff level and diversity – include employees with disability, seniors (over 55) and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Maximum word count: 250
12. Identify and describe your positive and/ or proactive inclusive practices within the business that go beyond regulatory compliance. Maximum word count: 300

Local Chamber of Commerce Award

The Local Chamber of the Year Award recognises the achievements of a Local Chamber in supporting their members to maximise their business potential.

Award eligibility check box

- To enter into this award Category, Local Chambers must be part of the NSW Business Chamber Local Chamber Alliance program

To enter this category please use this url:

<http://www.businessannualawards.com.au/LocalChamberAwards>

Questions

1. Local Chamber of Commerce name.
2. Date Established.
3. Number of members at the time of entry.
4. Do your members pay a membership fee?
5. How would you describe your geographic area to a business person thinking of setting up a business there?
6. How do you coordinate staff and volunteers to achieve more effective results? Please outline your strategy to engaging your staff and/or volunteer workforce.
7. Please describe your chamber strategy in relation to funding chamber activities. Please describe how this was developed and how successful it has been. Please provide facts and figures to support your response.
8. Has the retention rate of members in your organisation changed or remained stable in recent years or has your organisation experienced growth in recent years (2017-2019)? Please describe the trends and the reasons for these. "Retention Rate" refers to the numbers of members who were members last year, who are still members this year. For example, if there were 100 members last year, and only 80 of those as still members this year, then your retention rate is 80".
9. Describe the tangible value you deliver to members.
10. List the 3 biggest strengths of your Chamber and outline your reasons for including each.
11. Describe your top 3 most successful member recruitment initiatives over the past year.
12. Describe your top 3 most successful member retention initiatives over the past year.
13. Thinking of a single member, describe how your Chamber has positively impacted that member in a powerfully tangible manner in the past 12 months. Outline the background of the member as well as the extent of the positive impact your Chamber has on this member (e.g. a business owner who achieved a success because of your Chamber).
14. Describe the single most powerful impact your chamber has had you your local community in the last 12 months.
15. List the top 3 most important lessons you have learned in the last 12 months. Explain how to you intend to apply these learnings?
16. Describe the single most powerful impact your chamber has had you your local community in the last 12 months.
17. Describe the single most powerful impact your chamber has had you your local community in the last 12 months.



CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS & QUESTIONS

The following categories are Illawarra Regional Awards only and winners will not progress to the State Awards.

Excellence in Workplace Inclusion

Presented by Department of Family & Community Services



Award eligibility check box

- The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry

Description

The Excellence in Inclusion award recognises businesses that address the needs of a diverse community, including seniors, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and people with disability. An inclusive business facilitates the needs of all its employees and customers. For example, for people with disability, there are multiple elements of inclusion that go beyond regulatory compliance to create a functional and welcoming environment. These strategies or initiatives must have a positive impact on employees, the organisation and the customer as a whole.

Questions

1. Outline your current staff level and diversity – include employees with disability, seniors (over 55) and people from CALD backgrounds – Maximum word count: 200
2. Identify and describe your positive and/ or proactive inclusive practices within the business that go beyond regulatory compliance – Maximum word count: 350
3. Describe your HR and employment hiring practices that demonstrate your commitment to being an inclusive employer. Maximum word count: 350
4. Identify and describe how your business has created an accessible and inclusive environment that is welcoming for customers with disability, seniors and people from CALD backgrounds. Maximum word count: 400
5. Explain why your business embarked on being more accessible and inclusive and describe what further actions you will take in the future to becoming more accessible and inclusive to employees and customers. Maximum word count: 400

Excellence in Tourism

Presented by Venues NSW



Award eligibility check box

- The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry

Description

The Excellence in Tourism award recognises and encourages tourism businesses that showcase the region and offer an exceptional tourism experience.

Questions

1. Provide a brief overview of your business and the product/service that you offer?
Word Count: Maximum 400
2. Explain how your business draws or engages tourists to the Illawarra? Word Count: Maximum 400
3. Outline your company's point of difference or competitive advantage. What makes your business stand out from the competition? Word Count: Maximum 400
4. What are your organisation's key objectives for the future? Include your vision and strategic direction specific to your industry. Word Count: Maximum 400
5. Describe any innovations implemented to improve your tourism business and demonstrate how these innovations enhance your tourism experiences/services? Word Count: Maximum 400
6. Describe the marketing or promotional strategies you have implemented to encourage new and/or repeat business and demonstrate the success of these initiatives. Word Count: Maximum 400
7. Explain how you address the seasonal challenges and visitor fluctuations of the region in your business? Word Count: Maximum 400

Excellence in Retail & Hospitality

Presented by IOH



Award eligibility check box

- The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry

Description

The Excellence in Retail & Hospitality award celebrates excellence in customer service, business growth, innovation and competitive advantage in the area of retail and hospitality.

Questions

1. Provide a brief overview of your business and the product/service that you offer?
Word Count: Maximum 400
2. Detail the history of your business (indicate any obstacles you overcame and describe any difficulties or extenuating circumstances encountered since business commencement). Word Count: Maximum 400
3. How do you ensure a quality customer experience? Word Count: Maximum 400
4. Detail your achievements in the last 12 months. Include reference to growth of your business in terms of turnover, volume, financial improvement, staff expansion. Word Count: Maximum 400
5. Outline your company's point of difference or competitive advantage. What makes or how have you ensured your business stands out from the competition? Word Count: Maximum 400
6. What are your organisations key objectives for the future? Include your vision and strategic direction specific to your industry. Word Count: Maximum 400
7. In the changing arena of retail, how are you innovating for new markets and trends? Word Count: Maximum 400
8. How do you incorporate technology into your business ie. website, social media to interact with shoppers? Word Count: Maximum 400

Excellence in Customer Service

Presented by Peoplecare



Award eligibility check box

- The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry

Description

Awarded to the business that has proven to provide consistent exceptional service and professionalism and can demonstrate how it measures, monitors and manages customer expectations, satisfaction and retention.

Questions

- 1.** Describe your customer service strategy and how your organization implements this strategy to ensure your customers are satisfied? Word Count: Maximum 250
- 2.** Who or what are the key elements that drive the positive customer experience in your organization and why are they important to achieving your desired outcomes? Word Count: Maximum 300
- 3.** How does your business measure customer satisfaction and how has your company benefited from these outcomes? Achievements can be operational, financial or other. Word Count: Maximum 300
- 4.** Detail some of your key successes in the last 12 – 24 months. This could include; awards received, approaches to best practice or areas of operational and financial improvement resulting from improved customer satisfaction. Word Count: Maximum 400
- 5.** How does your business handle customer complaints and what are examples of how you manage this process? Word Count: Maximum 200

Wollongong City Centre Business Excellence

Presented by Wollongong City Council



Award eligibility check box

- The organisation has been trading for a continuous period of two years or more, not bankrupt or trading insolvent at the time of entry

Description

The Wollongong City Centre Business Excellence award identifies businesses within the Wollongong Central Business District who have displayed outstanding achievements.

Questions

1. Provide a brief description of your business and the services you provide.
Word count: Maximum 400
2. How do you as a Wollongong City Centre business add value to the broader Wollongong City Centre? Word count: Maximum 400
3. How do you as a business interface with the public domain? Word Count: Maximum 400
4. What are the key areas of your business which stand you apart from your competitors? Word Count: Maximum 400
5. The Wollongong City Centre is a dynamic environment that is changing. How Does your business plan for and manage such change? Word Count: Maximum 400

Additional T&C's

In addition to the general T&C's the following apply to this category:

- Eligible businesses are those located within the City Centre Special Rate Levy which is the area bound by Smith and Loftus Streets to the north, Marine Drive to the East, Bank, Ellen and Parkinson Streets to the South and Darling Street to the West.
- Businesses wishing to enter this category are NOT required to be a member of the NSW Business Chamber, Affiliated Chambers or Local Chambers.

IMB Bank Illawarra Business of the Year

Presented by IMB Bank

This category will be undertaken and decided by the judges. You cannot enter this category directly.



TERMS & CONDITIONS

It is important that you read the complete Terms and Conditions before submitting your entry. These Terms and Conditions are also available on the IBC website at: <http://www.businessannualawards.com.au/Award-entry/Terms-and-conditions>

NSW Business Chamber members:

Entry to the NSW Business Chamber Regional Business Awards is open to:

- All financial members of NSW Business Chamber (including Australian Business Defense Industry Unit members and the Tourism Industry Division members).*
- For direct entry into Regional awards, the business or individual will only be able to enter into one NSW Business Regional Awards Program across the State. This will be identified by the ABN.

Affiliated chambers:

Entry to the NSW Business Chamber Business Awards is open to:

- Illawarra Business Chamber members that are also joint members of NSW Business Chamber through the affiliate agreement between NSW Business Chamber and Illawarra Business Chamber are eligible to enter, but must enter via the Illawarra Business Awards.*
- Illawarra Business Chamber members are also joint members of NSW Business, but must enter via the Illawarra Business Awards link on the IBC website.

Local Chamber of Commerce (LCC) members:

- Where a Local Chamber Awards program exists eg. Shoalhaven Business Awards and that LCC partner aligns all or some of their categories and criteria with the NSW Business Chamber Awards program LCC members cannot enter directly into the NSW Business Chamber Awards for those aligned categories at a regional level.*
- Where a Local Chamber Awards program does not exist, LCC members can enter directly into the NSW Business Chamber Awards at a regional level.
- A business/individual is eligible to enter into multiple local chamber awards within a region. You will be required to enter a new username per entry submission. Local Chamber Award winners are eligible to progress to the NSW Business Chamber.

*Businesses wishing to enter the category of "Wollongong City Centre Business Excellence" are not required to be a member of the NSW Business Chamber, Affiliated Chambers or Local Chambers but must be located within the Wollongong City Centre Special Rate Levy zone.

Regional Awards program as a Regional finalist subject to:

- Complying with the NSW Business Chambers Business Award program, Terms and Conditions
- The Local Chamber category winner's entry being submitted via the NSW Business Chamber Business Awards online entry system for the purposes of judging. To enter in the NSW Business Awards the business must have been operating continuously for minimum of two years at the time of entry.

EXCLUSIONS

2018 Regional Winners and State Category Winners cannot enter the same category in 2019, but are eligible to enter a different category or categories. This excludes the Local Chamber of Commerce category.

Entry into Outstanding Young Employee, Outstanding Young Entrepreneur and Outstanding Business Leader categories are not open to Board members of the NSW Business Chamber and Illawarra Business Chamber (including their businesses). These individual categories are also not open to NSW Business Chamber Regional Advisory Councilors or Illawarra Business Chamber Regional Advisory Councilors.

Please note additional T&Cs apply to certain categories.

FAQS

When are the 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business Awards?

Friday, 18 October 2019

Where will the 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business Awards be held?

WIN Entertainment Centre, Corner Crown and Harbour Streets, Wollongong NSW 2500

What is the dress code for the 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business Awards?

Black Tie (tuxedo for men and formal wear for ladies).

What date do the Awards open?

9:00am Tuesday, 25 June 2019.

What date do the Awards close?

5:00pm Monday, 29 July 2019.

*This date will not be extended.

What is the portal address?

<http://businessannualawards.com.au/regions/Illawarra>

How do I log into the portal?

Entries are completed online using the NSW Business Chamber awards entry portal. The login screen will say 'You will need to create a new login for 2019 even if you have entered the awards in previous years.' Therefore, please create a new username and password to enter. If you have any questions regarding the entry process including using the portal you can give us a call on 4229 4722.

Do I need to be an Illawarra Business Chamber member to enter the Awards?

Yes, entry to the 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business Awards is open to:

- All financial members of the Illawarra Business Chamber.
- All Local Chamber of Commerce members in the Illawarra Region.

*The only category open to non-members is "Wollongong City Centre Business Excellence."

Can I enter a category that I won last year?

No, but you can enter a different category.

Why not?

This is a condition set by NSW Business Chamber. As the Illawarra Business Awards aligns with the NSW Business Chamber State Awards, we must abide by their Terms & Conditions.

Is there a minimum operating period?

Yes, to enter the Illawarra and NSW Business Awards the business must have been operating continuously for a minimum of two years at the time of entry, (with the exception of the Start Up Superstar Award).

How many categories can I enter?

Entrants can enter a maximum of FOUR categories, however winners of 2018 awards cannot enter the same category in which they won in 2018.

Can I get someone else to complete my entry?

Yes. The business owner does not have to complete the entry, you may delegate this internally or externally. Many businesses decide to do this to eliminate time constraints being a barrier to entry. It is important that you work with the person writing the entry to ensure it is in line with your expectations and to ensure you are clear on what is in your entry should you make it to interview.

Isn't that 'cheating'/giving an unfair advantage?

Excellent business leaders are not necessarily skilled at crafting compelling business writing. It is completely feasible to run an exceptional business, but have poor spelling, poor grammar, poor sentence structure, or not know how to effectively and convincingly use the English language to your advantage. If this sounds like you, by outsourcing the writing element of your submission, you are giving yourself the best possible chance of creating a winning entry.

Does my written entry count towards my final assessment?

Yes it does. The final selection of a category winner is 50% written entry and 50% interview.

Can I enter the Awards if I am sponsoring?

Yes you may. You cannot enter the category that you are sponsoring, but you may enter any other category.

Can I enter the Awards if I am judging?

No, you cannot enter if you are judging. This is because each judge plays a role in selecting Business of the Year, which would create a conflict of interest.

Will the sponsor of my category see my entry?

No, the sponsors provide funds to make the Awards possible, but there is no relationship between sponsor of a category and the judge of that category.

GOOD LUCK!

We look forward to receiving your Award entry.

Thank you for participating in the 2019 IMB Bank Illawarra Business Awards.