

03. MAJOR FESTIVALS & EVENTS

CATEGORY QUESTIONS

DESCRIPTOR

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, inter-state and international visitor attendance over 50,000 or recognised by the STO as a major event on their event calendar.

WORD COUNT

Word Count: Minimum of 4000 words, maximum of 7500 words

IMAGE COUNT

Maximum of 30 images.

SCORE SUMMARY

Submission Score	80 points
Digital Review Score	20 points
Consumer Review	0 points
Site Visit	0 points
TOTAL	100 points

SUBMISSION SCORE BREAKDOWN

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF FESTIVAL OR EVENT	15 POINTS
• Question 1.1	(5 points)
• Question 1.2	(10 points)
SECTION 2. EVENT DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION	20 POINTS
• Question 2.1	(10 points)
• Question 2.2	(10 points)

SECTION 3. EXCELLENCE IN MARKETING

15 POINTS

- Question 3.1 (5 points)
- Question 3.2 (10 points)

SECTION 4. EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

15 POINTS

- Question 4.1 (10 points)
- Question 4.2 (5 points)

SECTION 5. EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABLE & RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

15 POINTS

- Responsible Tourism and Sustainability Achievements. (5 points)
- Question 5.1 (10 points)

SECTION 6. FINAL REMARKS

- Final Remarks

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF FESTIVAL OR EVENT

- Question 1.1 A. Provide an overview of the festival/event.
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.
- Question 1.2 A. How does the event integrate with the local, regional, or
 state tourism industry to stimulate economic activity?
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 2. EVENT DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

- Question 2.1 A. What improvements were made to the festival/event during
 the qualifying period?
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.
- Question 2.2. A. What strategies were developed in the qualifying period to
 mitigate business risks and ensure the future sustainability of
 the festival/event?
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 3. EXCELLENCE IN MARKETING

- Question 3.1. A. Provide an overview of the festival/events target markets.

Question 3.2. B. Provide 3–5 examples of marketing strategies used to promote the festival/event during the qualifying period, along with their outcomes.

SECTION 4. EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

Question 4.1 A. What initiatives has the festival/event put in place during the qualifying period to ensure high attendee satisfaction levels throughout the visitor journey?

B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

Question 4.2. A. How has the festival/event made improvements to be more inclusive throughout the qualifying period?

B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 5. EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABLE & RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS PRACTICES

Responsible Tourism and Sustainability Achievements.

Question 5.1. A. What efforts have been made in the qualifying period towards responsible and sustainable business practices?

B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 6. FINAL REMARKS

Final Remarks

RESPONSE GUIDE

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF FESTIVAL OR EVENT **5 POINTS**

Question 1.1 **5 points**

Question 1.1.A Provide an overview of the festival/event.

(text box response)

Response Guidance

This is where you set the story of the festival/event and give the judges insight into the visitor experience on offer. It is recommended that you begin by explaining the reason for the development of the festival/event, how it started and why the chosen time of the year, and who it is targeted towards. What is the purpose/goal/objective of the festival/event?

You should then take the judges on a journey of the 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 the festival/event should be considered as an award-winning tourism festival/event by highlighting the points of difference and what sets it 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 it fits into the category; 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.

Question 1.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q1.1.A Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- Images of the festival/event, staff, experiences, etc.
- Map of location of festival/event, route etc.
- Up to 1 video of the festival/event.

Do not include any documents (plans, procedures, policies etc.).

Question 1.2

10 points

Question 1.2.A How does the event integrate with the local, regional, or state tourism industry to stimulate economic activity?

Destination:	Select one - Local, Regional, State
How does the festival/event support the profile and appeal of the destination?	
How does the festival/event align with destination tourism strategies?	
How does the festival/event stimulate economic activity for the destination?	

Response Guidance

Provide 2–3 examples.

(?) Profile and appeal of Destination

Provide examples of the positive impact the festival/event has on the destination’s appeal to visitors.

(?) Alignment with Destination Strategies

Provide an insight into how the festival/event supports and aligns with destination tourism strategies e.g., local government economic development plans, destination management plan.

(?) Economic Activity

Use measurable data from the qualifying period to demonstrate how the festival/event has contributed to the destination’s economy.

Consider, for example, an increase in visitor numbers, economic spend, awareness, job creation, new skills learned by the locals and permanent infrastructure that is a positive for the local community.

Question 1.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q1.2.B Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- Graphs demonstrating the economic impact to the destination.
- Infographic demonstrating key pillars of the destination tourism strategy.

Do not include any documents (plans, procedures, policies etc.). Ensure that any infographics or images with writing are provided context with the answer at 1.2.A.

SECTION 2. EVENT DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION **20 POINTS**

Question 2.1 **10 points**

Question 2.1.A What improvements were made to the festival/event during the qualifying period?

Provide a short overview of the festival/event’s approach towards developing its business operations and/or product offering.

<p>Improvement 1:</p> <p>-----</p> <p><i>What specific improvements has the festival/event implemented in its operations and/or the product offering during the qualifying period? Keep the response here to one line, providing a basic introduction to the improvement.</i></p>	
<p>Describe the Improvement: <i>Provide further detail on the improvement.</i></p>	
<p>Rationale: <i>What were the reasons for implementing this improvement?</i></p>	
<p>Research and Planning: <i>What research and planning did the festival/event do to drive positive outcomes from the improvement?</i></p>	
<p>Outcomes <i>What specific goals did the festival/event aim to achieve with this improvement and were they successful?</i></p>	

Response Guidance

Provide 3–5 examples.

(?) Overview

Consider what improvements the festival/event did to innovate and/or develop the festival/event within the qualifying period.

Examples of an improvement could be the enhancement or development of 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 activities outside of the qualifying period. These can be included – but the festival/event must have been held in the qualifying period.

(?) Rationale

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, growth of festival.

(?) Research and Planning

Outline what research and planning was undertaken to ensure that the improvement would meet the desired outcomes.

Provide the judge with the specific goals that the festival/event aimed to achieve with the improvement.

Some examples of specific goals could be:

- Reduce manual effort by 15%.
- Improve workflow efficiency by 30%.

(?) Outcomes

What were the measurable results of these improvements?

Provide measurable results that demonstrate to the judge the outcomes of the improvement.

Consider what learnings were made during this process, particularly if intended outcomes were not achieved.

Question 2.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Provide evidence to support your response. For example:

- *An image of the improvement*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)*
- *Before and after images of works*
- *An infographic e.g. graph, demonstrating the outcomes.*

Question 2.2. 10 points

Question 2.2.A What strategies were developed in the qualifying period to mitigate business risks and ensure the future sustainability of the festival/event?

Provide a brief overview of the festival/events approach to risk and business sustainability.

Risk Example 1. _____	
Name the risk	
Overview of Risk <i>What is the risk and its impact to the festival/event?</i>	
Outline the strategies to mitigate the risk/s. <i>What specific strategies were developed to limit the likelihood or consequence of the risk?</i>	

<p>Rationale of mitigation strategies</p> <p>What research was undertaken to understand the strategies effectiveness in mitigating the risk</p>	
<p>What were the outcomes?</p> <p>What were the measurable results of these strategies?</p>	

Response Guidance

Provide 2–5 examples.

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, attendee safety.

(?) Overview of risk

Provide the judge with an overview of the risk, including the potential impact to the festival/event.

(?) Strategies to mitigate risk

Provide the judge with an understanding of the strategies implemented within the qualifying period to mitigate the risks and challenges.

(?) Rationale

Explain why the strategies were chosen to mitigate the risk. What research was undertaken to understand its effectiveness in mitigating the risk?

(?) Outcomes

What were the measurable results of these strategies?

Provide measurable results that demonstrate to the judge how the strategy has mitigated the risk.

Consider what learnings were made during this process, particularly if intended outcomes were not achieved.

Question 2.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Provide evidence to support your response. For example:

- *An image of the risk area*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome*
- *An infographic e.g. graph, demonstrating the outcomes or funding sources*

SECTION 3. EXCELLENCE IN MARKETING **15 POINTS**

Question 3.1. **5 points**

Question 3.1.A Provide an overview of the festival/events target markets.

Provide a brief introduction to the festival/events target markets and how they were identified.

EXAMPLE

Name of Target Market:

<p>What stage is the target market in for the festival/event?</p> <p><i>Identify if this is Primary Market, Secondary Market, Growth Market or Emerging Market.</i></p>	<p>(tick box)</p>
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<p>Target market characteristics Describe the target market i.e. who are they, where are they from, age, behaviours and motivations.</p>	
<p>How does the festival/event meet the expectations of this target market? Demonstrate how the festival/event have tailored the festival/event to the target market.</p>	
<p>What research have you undertaken to confirm this target market is right for the festival/event? Describe the research or analysis undertaken to determine that this target market and their characteristics are suitable to the festival/event.</p>	

Response Guidance

Provide between 2-3 markets.

A **target market** is a specific group of potential customers that a festival/event directs its marketing efforts and products towards.

Identify the various characteristics such as demographics, psychographics, geographic location, and buying behaviour of the selected target market.

Demonstrate how the festival/event tailors its products/service/visitor experience to effectively reach and engage the target market.

(?) Target Market Characteristics

For the target market characteristics, consider the following:

- **Geographic – Where they are:** Where the people live or visit
- **Demographic – Who they are:** Their age, family size, income, or lifestyle, such as families, retirees, or holidaymakers.
- **Psychographic – What they care about:** What they enjoy, believe in, or value, like being active, spending time outdoors, or supporting local businesses.

- **Behavioural – What they do, how they act.** e.g. like hiring bikes, exploring the area, or looking for fun activities.
- **Motivations – What drives them, why they do things:** e.g. like wanting to have family adventures, stay healthy, or trying something new.

(?) Meeting the expectations of a target market

Demonstrate the festival’s/event’s understanding of the target market’s needs, preferences, and behaviours, and how the festival/event has tailored its products, services or experiences to meet these needs.

(?) Research

Outline how the festival/event has determined that this target market is suitable for the festival/event. What research was undertaken, and what was concluded from this research.

3.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Provide evidence to support your response. For example:

- *An image of the target market*
- *An infographic e.g. graph, demonstrating the market characteristics*

Question 3.2 **10 points**

Question 3.2.A Provide 3–5 examples of marketing strategies used to promote the festival/event during the qualifying period, along with their outcomes.

Provide a short overview of the festivals/events approach towards developing its marketing strategies.

EXAMPLE

Marketing Strategy 1: <i>What was the marketing strategy? E.g. was it a campaign, an exhibition, an event, a partnership, or other marketing initiative?</i>	
Objective:	<i>Provide quantifiable objectives for the strategy.</i>
Target Market:	<i>As per market/s identified in Q3.1</i>
Concept:	<i>Provide greater detail of the strategy.</i>
Rationale and Research:	<i>Describe the research and analysis undertaken to determine that this strategy will achieve the objectives and reach the intended target market.</i>
Activity/Tactics:	<i>Describe the activities or tactics used in the strategy.</i>
How does this strategy align with local, regional or state marketing plans?	<i>Detail how the local, regional or state marketing plans were considered in the development of the strategy.</i>
What were the outcomes?	<i>E.g. an increase to website traffic by 21% which generated an increase in online bookings by 30%</i>

Response Guidance

Provide between 3-5 examples.

It is recommended that you include examples that differ to any of the improvements you have included in question 2.1.

(?) Objectives

Provide details on the festival/events marketing objective.

Objectives or goals can include, but are not limited to:

- Improve brand awareness*
- Increase sales*
- Higher number of leads*

- *Attract new / increase attendees*
- *Retention of attendees*
- *Increase online engagement*
- *Expand into new markets*
- *Optimise ROI*
- *Highlight new features/experiences*

Be sure to provide some quantifiable objectives e.g. increase leads from website by 10%.

(?) Target Market

Begin by outlining who the festival/event has aimed its 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.

Demonstrate how the target market/s are suitable for the festival/event.

(?) Concept

This is where you can provide an overview of the strategy outlining its key highlights.

For example;

- *A digital campaign to highlight the unique selling proposition of the festival/event*
- *A PR campaign to highlight how the festival/event fulfils specific visitor needs*
- *Improved website content to create an emotional connection with visitors*
- *Targeted email campaign conveying key festival/event ethics/commitments e.g. sustainability or accessibility*
- *Social campaign demonstrating how the festival/event aligns with target markets values, preferences etc.*

(?) Rationale

Demonstrate how these marketing strategies were formulated by outlining the research undertaken and how the strategies align with the target market's attributes.

Why did the festival/event execute this strategy?

And what research was used to support the development of this strategy, e.g. visitor feedback, ticket sales, digital analytics etc.

(?) Activity/Tactics

Describe the activities or tactics used in the strategy

Different channels can include, but are not limited to;

- *Digital Advertising*
- *Emails*
- *Events*
- *Influencer marketing*
- *Search Engine Optimisation*
- *Social Media*
- *Traditional Marketing*

(?) Align with local, regional or state marketing plans

Demonstrate how the festival/event’s marketing strategy aligns with local, regional or state marketing plans.

(?) Outcomes

Detail how these marketing activities assisted or raised the profile of the area or community associated with the festival.

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

If providing a snapshot of data within your image allocation, ensure you provide an analysis and/or interpretation of this in your written response, rather than leaving it to the judges to decipher.

If the anticipated outcomes were not reached, acknowledge this, and provide the judge with insight as to why. How did the festival/event respond?

If the outcomes are still pending, provide what data is available and what the forecasted results may be.

3.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Provide visual evidence demonstrating the marketing activity.

Videos can be included, however do not produce a video for the specific purpose to respond to this question, it must have been produced as part of the activity.

Examples of images/video evidence can include:

- *Instagram Reel*
- *TikTok*
- *Video segment on TV*
- *TV Commercial*

SECTION 4. EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE 15 POINTS

Question 4.1 10 points

Question 4.1.A What initiatives has the festival/event put in place during the qualifying period to ensure high attendee satisfaction levels throughout the visitor journey?

Provide a brief overview of the festival/events customer service philosophy.

EXAMPLE

Customer Service Initiative 1.	
Describe the initiative that enhances the festival/events customer service:	
At what stage of the visitor journey does this impact? <i>(Pre, During, Post, All)</i>	(checkbox with multiple choice option)
What influenced the development of this initiative?	
What investment has been made in this aspect of the visitor experience?	
What outcomes have come from this initiative?	

Response Guidance

Provide the top 3 to 5 enhancements.

Focus on the initiatives that have specifically related to customer service and provide examples that have not been included in question 2.1.

Ensure that you include activity that is new in the qualifying period.

This could include, but is not limited to:

- *Staff training and development*
- *Attendee feedback and post stay surveys*
- *Improved entry and/or ticketing processes*
- *Improved service delivery on arrival at the festival/event*
- *Improved access to programming or other festival/event information*
- *Additional services e.g. partnerships with tourism attractions and accommodation*

(?) Describe the initiative

Consider the various touchpoints of visitor engagement and how these have been enhanced, specifically for the customer experience.

(?) Stage of the visitor journey

Specify at what point the initiative takes place within the visitor journey – pre, during, post or at all points.

(?) Influence of Initiative

Consider why the festival/event focused on improving this specific attendee experience.

This could be, but is not limited to examples such as;

- *Customer / attendee feedback*
- *Staff input*
- *Competitive landscape*
- *Data/survey insights*
- *Shift in customer / attendee demands or expectations*

(?) Investment

Consider all resources put towards the initiative. This could be financial, time investment in staff, technologies, supply chain etc.

(?) Outcomes

Provide examples of what outcomes were achieved because of the initiative. For example, increased online ratings by XX%, return visitation etc.

You could include testimonials here to demonstrate an improved visitor experience.

4.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q4.1.A Examples of the type of evidence you could include are:

- *Staff initiatives*
- *Customer initiatives in place*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)*

Question 4.2.

5 points

Question 4.2.A How has the festival/event made improvements to be more inclusive throughout the qualifying period?

- Has undertaken or updated an Accessibility Assessment e.g. through the Accessible Tourism Program on the QTF in the qualifying period.
- Has included an Accessible Guide on the *festival/event* website
 - Please insert website page the guide is available on

(text box response)

Response Guidance

Demonstrate how the festival/event has actively considered, and where able, met the needs of a diverse community. This could include:

- *Staff training*
- *Management and leadership*
- *Business policy making*
- *Improved/modified systems/operations/facilities*

Demonstrate how the festival/event has analysed its target markets and identified any specific requirements that may need to be considered for these guests.

4.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q4.2.A Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- *Inclusive initiatives in place*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)*

SECTION 5. EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABLE & RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS PRACTICES
15 POINTS

Responsible Tourism and Sustainability Achievements.

5 POINTS

- Sustainable Tourism Accreditation
- Has undertaken an assessment of its emissions and identified measures to reduce and offset e.g. through the Tourism Emissions Reduction Program.
- Has undertaken an Accessibility Assessment e.g. through the Accessible Tourism Program on the QTF.
- Has included an Accessible Guide on the *festival/event* website

Question 5.1.

10 points

Question 5.1.A What efforts have been made in the qualifying period towards responsible and sustainable business practices?

Provide an overview of the festival/events philosophy on responsible and sustainable tourism.

EXAMPLE

	Example 1.		
	Select the type of activity	(drop down list)	
Cultural			
	<p>Provide an example of how the festival/event supports the engagement and representation of culture. <i>(E.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, heritage, religion.)</i></p>	<p>What were the outcomes? <i>(E.g. included an acknowledgment of country on 25 different banners/signs across the festival/event site.)</i></p>	<p>Supporting evidence. <i>Upload an image to support the response.</i></p>
Example			
Environmental			
	<p>Provide an example of how the festival/event minimises its impact on the environment. <i>(E.g. water conservation, waste management/reduction/recycling, fuel and energy reduction, carbon reduction/offset, refuse initiatives, noise cancellation, wildlife destruction/interruption measures in place, participation in programs such as the Tourism Emissions Reduction Program.)</i></p>	<p>What were the outcomes? <i>(e.g. the amounts saved/reduced in comparison to the previous year (or multiple years if you have good records)</i></p>	<p>Supporting evidence. <i>Upload an image to support the response.</i></p>
Example			
Social/Community			
	<p>Provide an example of how the festival/event contributes to or benefits the local community. <i>(E.g., supporting local businesses, product packaging, charitable donations, sponsorship, engagement with community groups, supporting local talent, school education and involvement, work experience,</i></p>	<p>What were the outcomes? <i>(E.g. contracted local business to source and supply all festival/event merchandise. \$10,000 spent in the local region)</i></p>	<p>Supporting evidence. <i>Upload an image to support the response.</i></p>

	support of community fundraising.)		
Example			
Economic			
	Provide an example of how the festival/event supports the local economy. (E.g., local purchasing, creating job opportunities, promotion of local businesses, support of community funding initiatives, understanding of spend by the business customers to the region/community.)	What were the outcomes? (E.g. 75% of all our expenses were spent in a particular region)	Supporting evidence. Upload an image to support the response.
Example			
Ethical			
	Provide an example of how the festival/event acts ethically throughout its development. (E.g., through animal welfare, restoration, procurement, inclusivity, human slavery etc.)	What were the outcomes? (E.g. Partnered with a local artist collective, generating \$10,000 in sales and fostering cultural engagement for the 2,345 attendees.)	Supporting evidence. Upload an image to support the response.
Example			

Response Guidance

Please provide 2 to 5 examples.

This is an opportunity to offer deeper insight into how the festival/event is achieving excellence in both business operations and tourism.

Try to include examples that have not already been identified in previous answers.

Festivals/events are encouraged to provide a response across all areas. However, it is essential to focus on their strengths to effectively showcase their unique capabilities and achievements.

SECTION 6. FINAL REMARKS

In 100 words or less, provide any final remarks as to why the festival/event should be considered as a winner in its chosen category.

(text box)

Response Guidance

Make this a personal response to close out the submission.