



# OTIC ADVOCACY PLAN 2025-26



QUEENSLAND  
TOURISM INDUSTRY  
COUNCIL

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## Acknowledgement of Country

QTIC acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Queensland. We recognise those who shared stories, welcomed guests on Country, and were stewards of the earth for millennia before us, and their continued connection to land, waterways, and culture.

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Tourism and Events Queensland

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The QTIC Advocacy Plan 2025-26 sets out a clear, strategic roadmap to advance Queensland's visitor economy. It focuses on five key priorities: securing sustainable industry funding, tackling rising business costs, driving investment in tourism infrastructure, developing a skilled and resilient workforce, and enabling growth in ecotourism and sustainable practices.

Aligned with the Destination 2045 vision, this plan positions QTIC to help achieve Queensland's goal of \$84 billion in overnight visitor expenditure by 2045. By leveraging QTIC's strong membership framework, from Champions driving individual advocacy, to Advocates shaping statewide policy, and a broad base of sector supporters, we ensure a united, future-ready tourism industry that delivers for all of Queensland.

This Plan also reflects QTIC's four brand pillars: Unite, Elevate, Innovate, Accelerate -ensuring our advocacy is collaborative, member-driven, evidence-based, and bold in securing long-term outcomes for Queensland's visitor economy.



## Alignment with the QTIC Strategic Plan 2025-28

This Advocacy Plan is a direct delivery mechanism for the QTIC Strategic Plan 2025–28, especially under its pillar of Powerful Advocacy for Tourism and Events. It operationalises our role as Queensland's independent peak body, translating strategic objectives into clear priorities and targeted action. It also advances the Strategic Plan's goals across member engagement, workforce capability, organisational excellence, and cross-cutting themes such as sustainability, First Nations partnerships, and digital transformation.

By aligning closely with QTIC's broader strategy, this plan ensures our advocacy efforts remain coordinated, evidence-driven, and focused on long-term outcomes for the visitor economy. The Plan also recognises the Strategic Plan's cross-cutting themes – sustainability and resilience, First Nations empowerment, technology and innovation, and strategic partnerships – embedding them throughout our advocacy priorities and methods.

Elevate, Innovate, Accelerate -ensuring our advocacy is collaborative, member-driven, evidence-based, and bold in securing long-term outcomes for Queensland's visitor economy.

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# WHAT, WHY, HOW

## What:

The QTIC advocacy framework defines the scope of our advocacy, identifies key stakeholders, sets clear goals, crafts compelling messages, develops action plans, and measures impact. It also builds credibility, leverages trusted relationships, and mobilises external support, including media, to achieve outcomes.

## Why:

Advocacy is the deliberate pursuit of changes in policy, attitudes, behaviour, and decision-making in the public interest. It is part science, part art, far more than media releases, submissions, or petitions. Successful advocacy demands strategic thinking, careful preparation, and a deep understanding of stakeholders: their power, roles, motivations, frames of reference, and interrelationships.

Advocacy is the number one reason why members and corporate partners join QTIC. This central value proposition cannot be underestimated.

**Advocacy is the deliberate pursuit of changes in policy, attitudes, behaviour, and decision-making in the public interest.**

## How:

Relationships are integral. Alliances built on common interests are highly effective. Progress rarely comes from facts or business cases alone. The policy-making process is not linear; QTIC's evidence-based policies compete in a crowded arena just to reach decision-makers' agendas, let alone influence change.

A strategic approach is critical for QTIC to manage the growing number of issues our members face, focusing on key priorities. This means clearly defining issues, framing outcomes, and managing the influx of member concerns to ensure we achieve tangible results. Given

the scale of challenges confronting tourism, QTIC must proactively manage resources to remain focused on outcomes while serving members effectively.

Importantly, the Top 5 issues outlined in this strategy are not determined by QTIC in isolation, they are defined and continually refined through our members. These priorities reflect the collective voice of operators, regional tourism bodies, associations, and partners who identify the most pressing barriers and opportunities for Queensland's visitor economy. Through structured engagement such as the Champion Member network, Tourism Advocate member engagement, QTIC Pulse survey, Issues Register, advisory groups, and direct consultations, QTIC ensures that advocacy efforts stay anchored in the real-world needs and ambitions of our diverse membership.



# QTIC TOP 5 ADVOCACY PRIORITIES



1. **Sustainable Visitor Economy Funding:** Build a strong narrative for increased base funding and long-term solutions to secure the industry's future.
2. **Tackle Rising Costs for Business:** Advocate for fair outcomes for businesses facing escalating costs and explore new models to address rising insurance premiums in at-risk sectors.
3. **Boost Investment in Infrastructure:** Drive long-term commitments to attract more investment in tourism products and infrastructure from public, private, and philanthropic sources.
4. **Grow the Visitor Economy Workforce:** Champion QTICs delivery of sustainable workforce programs to provide solutions to workforce challenges and expand the industry's capacity to meet demands, including those of the 2032 Games.
5. **Enable Growth in Ecotourism & Sustainable Practices:** Position Queensland as a national leader by supporting industry capability, advocating for low-impact development, and partnering with government and First Nations communities to advance responsible tourism.

## Strategic Alignment: Destination 2045 Pillars

Achieving the bold vision of Destination 2045 requires strong collaboration between QTIC, the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, and the broader industry. As the state's peak body, QTIC translates policy into practice, aligns strategic efforts, and ensures industry priorities shape government programs and investments. Together, we can maximise collective impact across all six Destination 2045 pillars, driving growth, lifting capability, and unlocking new opportunities. This partnership makes the \$84 billion overnight visitor expenditure target by 2045 both ambitious and achievable.

<b>Destination 2045 Priority</b>	<b>How QTIC Contributes</b>
<b>Ecotourism</b>	Advocate for eco-tourism infrastructure and sustainable permitting; support proponents for Indigenous partnerships and nature-based experiences.
<b>Events</b>	Campaign for increased event funding and infrastructure; build industry capability in event delivery particularly in a Queensland first approach to securing procurement in the lead up to and for the Games in 2032.
<b>Connectivity</b>	Lobby for new aviation routes, regional transport improvements, and aviation access funding.
<b>Experiences</b>	Promote investment and growth for experiences such as advocating to remove impediments to support new and existing product development including eco and agritourism development.
<b>Brand</b>	Strengthen QTIC's voice in media and marketing; amplify Queensland's story nationally and internationally.
<b>Industry</b>	Drive workforce development, digital capability, resilience training, regulatory reform advocacy, and funding support.

## Priority 1: Sustainable Visitor Economy Industry Funding

Sustainable funding is critical for long-term growth, resilience, and global competitiveness. Stable government investment underpins the work of peak bodies, regional tourism organisations, and destination programs that build workforce capability, product innovation, and visitor services. Short-term grants limit strategic continuity. To meet challenges like increasing infrastructure, climate adaptation, digital transformation, and global competition, governments must prioritise stable, recurrent funding.

### Key Goals:

- Advocate for sustainable funding to revitalise Queensland's competitive position by tracking growth, economic impact, and sustainability and evidencing where there are gaps and opportunities.
- Advocate to government for continued significant grant funded opportunities for industry, and to drive investment into new products and infrastructure.
- Advocate for targeted funding, including assessing the viability of a visitor levy.

### Focus Areas:

- Track visitor growth, sustainability, and workforce development, linked to Destination 2045 actions,

**and highlight the need for consistent funding** to underwrite the growth required for the visitor economy and the Games in 2032.

- Support government efforts to secure permanent, long-term funding sources.
- Prioritise disaster preparedness and recovery, working with regions for secure funding, industry sectors on their initiatives and the media to influence their tone of reporting.
- Prosecute the concept of a visitor levy, by QTIC conducting research into the concept, including investigating global case studies and methodology.
  - Consult with industry and individual regions to gain an understanding and an overview of how Queensland views the visitor levy.
  - Review the pros and cons of a levy for Queensland.
- Partner with industry to drive funding solutions for industry.

**Key Partners:** Queensland network of Councils, Regional Tourism Organisations, State Government, Industry Associations and Peaks, QTIC Membership, Tourism and Events Queensland.



## Priority 2: Tackle Rising Costs for Business

Tourism and event operators face growing costs from wages, insurance (cost of and access to), utilities, fuel, compliance and natural disasters. These pressures reduce reinvestment, strain margins, and heighten risk, especially for regional and small operators, following economic volatility and disasters. Targeted support and policy relief are essential.

### Key Goals:

- Secure affordable access to essential services and financial protection. Advocate for reforms that lower insurance premiums, improve coverage and reduce state insurance duties; push for relief on energy and utilities charges; and ensure small operators have access to finance and working capital programs.
- Drive productivity and efficiency through innovation and risk management. Promote digital transformation, energy efficiency upgrades and best practice risk management so businesses can do more with less.
- Advocate for structural and regulatory reforms. Work with state and federal governments to simplify compliance, reduce red tape and deliver targeted tax relief. Reforms should prioritise small and regional operators so the industry remains competitive and can meet Destination 2045 targets.
- Strengthen disaster resilience and recovery. Push for insurance products and government assistance that recognise revenue loss as well as physical damage, and support operators with disaster preparedness training and contingency planning.

### Focus Areas:

- Investigate alternative insurance options for industry by collaborating with the insurance industry, APRA and state/federal treasuries to design pooled risk schemes or government backed underwriting for tourism sectors where coverage has become unaffordable. QTIC's call for member case studies will provide evidence of the crisis.
- Flexible industrial relations and wage support: Work with the Fair Work Commission, the

Department of Employment and industry bodies (e.g., Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry) to secure apprenticeship subsidies, flexible award provisions and wage support measures tailored to tourism.

- Simplified compliance and red tape reduction: Engage state and federal regulators to streamline licensing, reporting and permit requirements for small tourism businesses.
- Disaster recovery funding and tax concessions: Advocate for targeted disaster assistance that addresses revenue loss, not just physical damage, and seek tax offsets for businesses investing in resilience measures.

**Key Partners:** Australian Chamber of Commerce, Australian Tourism Council, Queensland Department of Customer Services, Open Data and Small and Family Business, Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, Industry Associations and Peaks, Insurance Council of Australia, media.



### Priority 3: Boost Investment in Infrastructure

Investing in new and existing tourism and event infrastructure is vital to meet future demand, grow regional dispersal, and keep Queensland globally competitive. This means advocating for streamlined planning, cutting red tape, and creating clear investment pathways without impediments.

#### Key Goals:

- Champion integrated connectivity and transport upgrades to improve access across Queensland's vast regions. Destination 2045 pledges to connect the state by road, rail, air and sea. QTIC Advocacy will prioritise integrated transport planning, digital connectivity and utilities that enable visitors to move easily and support regional economies.
- Streamline planning and regulatory processes to remove impediments and encourage development. The tourism strategy highlights the need to empower operators by cutting red tape and boosting capability and QTIC will push for single window approvals and risk based permitting to accelerate delivery of new and refurbished accommodation, attractions and event venues.
- Ensure investment benefits regional communities and workforces by advocating for accompanying affordable housing and community facilities. The state's infrastructure strategy emphasises that generational infrastructure should give Queenslanders better access to jobs, housing and services. QTIC will leverage this to secure workforce accommodation and amenities that support tourism growth.

- Support investors in helping identify opportunities and connect to government agencies to advance infrastructure development, including a focus on a lead up to the 2032 Games.

#### Focus Areas & Initiatives:

- Work with governments and councils to collaborate on attaining the Destination 2045 outcomes, including tracking against targets to ensure pathway to 2045 goals are being achieved.
- Prioritise aviation and transport advocacy through the Connecting Queensland fund and lobbying for improved regional airports. QTIC can work with airlines, airports and local councils to ensure appropriate growth.
- QTIC will work with potential and current investors to identify opportunities, provide guidance and connect investors with councils, state agencies and Traditional Owner groups.

**Key Partners:** Queensland Property Council, Trade and Investment Queensland, Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games, Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Queensland Treasury, Brisbane 2032, Games Independent Infrastructure Authority, Industry Associations and Peaks, Insurance Council of Australia, media, Queensland Councils, investors, developers and industry.



**Champion integrated connectivity and transport upgrades to improve access across Queensland's vast regions.**



## Priority 4: Workforce Development & Industry Capability

A skilled, adaptable workforce is essential. Addressing shortages requires attracting, retaining, and upskilling staff, improving pathways, and supporting participation through housing, transport, and visas. It also means fostering leadership, innovation, and digital skills.

### Key Goals:

- Build a resilient, diverse and future ready workforce by advocating for funded programs to develop talent pipelines that attract and retain workers from school through to leadership roles. QTIC will tackle shortages with attraction and retention strategies ensuring continued effort into critical programs that grow workforce.
- Strengthen skills and innovation through continuous learning. Secure ongoing funding for apprenticeships, micro credentials and leadership programs, and embed digital literacy and sustainability into all training.
- Align migration and visa settings with industry demand. Work with government to ensure skilled migration, student and working holiday visas address tourism shortages and support Destination 2045 growth targets.
- Advocate for targeted skilled migration streams, collaborate with ATIC, ACCI and government to push for tourism specific visas, faster processing and regional sponsorship schemes that match Destination 2045 labour needs.

### Focus Areas & Initiatives:

- Advocate for continued government funding to support current and new programs to drive workforce to the tourism and event industry, particularly to ensure workforce for the 2032 Games.
- Provide transparent reporting on labour shortages, training uptake and employment outcomes to guide government and industry investment. Use data to drive awareness and advocate for operator capability programs.
- Policy submissions and representation to

government on industry needs.

**Key Partners:** Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, Department of Education, Department of Trade, Employment and Training, Brisbane 2032, Regional Tourism Organisations, Local Tourism Organisations, Tafe Queensland, Universities, Austrade, media, Queensland Schools and Apprenticeships, Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Department of Home Affairs





## Priority 5: Enabling Growth in Ecotourism & Sustainable Practices

Driving ecotourism and embedding sustainability protects Queensland's assets and meets expectations of conscious travellers. This includes low-impact developments, partnerships with Traditional Owners, and broad adoption of green practices.

### Key Goals:

- Promote climate resilient, inclusive and culturally respectful infrastructure by encouraging investment in renewable energy, universal design and projects that partner with First Nations communities. This aligns with Destination 2045's commitment to ecotourism and will ensure developments respect natural assets and cultural heritage.
- Assist industry and government to make Queensland Australia's ecotourism leader and achieve the 45 by 2045 new ecotourism products.
- Promote sustainable business operations and prepare the tourism and events industry for emissions compliance.

### Focus Areas & Initiatives:

- Advocate for dedicated eco-infrastructure funds and remove impediments for developments.
- Support members to ensure permits for national parks are long term and future focused to allow for businesses to plan for the future.

- Push for incentives on green technology and ECG education and reporting.
- Advance First Nations businesses and help drive outcomes from the First Nations Tourism Strategy 2025 - 2032.
- Work with investors and industry to drive improvements on Queensland's island infrastructure and resorts.
- Continue to be an active partner in the Queensland Tourism & Conservation Alliance, whilst demonstrating to government the opportunity to partner on ecotourism initiatives.

**Key Partners:** Queensland Tourism and Conservation Alliance, Ecotourism Australia, Conservation groups, First Nations Traditional Owners, Tourism and Events Queensland, Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, Industry Associations and Peaks, media, Queensland Councils, Agritourism operators, investors, developers and industry.



# SUPPORTING INDUSTRY ADVOCACY THROUGH MEMBERSHIP

QTIC membership is the foundation of our advocacy efforts, providing the collective strength and industry voice needed to influence government policy and secure meaningful outcomes for Queensland's tourism sector. With a diverse and representative membership base spanning all corners of the state and every facet of the visitor economy, QTIC is uniquely positioned to advocate with authority, backed by real-world insights, regional perspectives, and on-the-ground data. Member input ensures our policy positions are credible, relevant, and responsive to current challenges, enabling us to speak confidently to government on behalf of industry. Strong membership not only legitimises our advocacy—it also ensures tourism has a seat at the table when critical decisions are made.

## **Tourism Champion**

Industry leaders who partner closely with QTIC on strategic advocacy priorities.

- Receive direct support for individual advocacy issues, ensuring their specific challenges are actively progressed.
- Enjoy priority invitations to policy roundtables, consultations, and Board engagements, maximising their influence on decisions shaping the industry.
- Showcase leadership and gain heightened visibility as drivers of Queensland's tourism growth.

## **Tourism Advocate**

Businesses and groups shaping statewide policy.

- Engage with QTIC advocacy groups on issues of state and sector significance.

- Help craft balanced policy positions through participation in submissions and working groups.
- Stay closely involved in collective solutions for Queensland tourism.

## **Other Members**

Every QTIC member strengthens an independent, united peak body.

- Their support ensures tourism's voice is heard by decision-makers at all levels.
- Even without direct advocacy needs, their membership sustains collective representation, capability initiatives, and industry-wide programs that benefit the entire visitor economy.

# QTIC ADVOCACY METHODOLOGY



QTIC uses the following tools and mechanisms to deliver on its five advocacy priorities, proactively address emerging issues, and harness member insights and expertise.

## Core Advocacy Tools

- **Policy submissions and regulatory reform** – QTIC prepares submissions on budget processes, policy papers, and regulatory reform.
- **Research** – QTIC partners with the University of Queensland and Griffith University to produce evidence-based insights.
- **C-Suite Boardroom lunches** – intimate events with ministers and senior officials to discuss current issues in a Chatham House rules setting.
- **Data Dashboard** – co-developed with Localis to provide a powerful analytics platform for evidence-based advocacy.
- **QTIC Advisory Groups** – themed groups of industry representatives deep diving into sector-specific issues.
- **QTIC Pulse Survey** – quarterly member surveys informing government briefings.
- **Tracking industry pressures** – monitoring key cost drivers (wages, insurance, utilities) to prioritise advocacy actions.
- **Issues Register** – recording issues by sub-sector and region.
- **Infrastructure Register** – tracking new/refurbished projects to identify impediments and guide advocacy.
- **Member communications and webinars** – regular updates on policy, regulation, disaster preparedness, insurance, and the 2032 Games.



## Partnerships and Collective Voice

- **Champion and Advocate member networks** – empowering Champions to lead individual advocacy and Advocates to shape statewide policy.
- **Queensland First Nations Tourism Plan** – QTIC leading the co-design of the 2026–2032 plan with statewide consultation.
- **Destination IQ Forum** – QTIC’s annual First Nations tourism conference fostering dialogue on nature-based and cultural tourism.
- **Destination Q Forum** – QTIC’s partnership with the department and TEQ addressing current issues and Destination 2045 actions.
- **QTIC Associations Council** – uniting diverse tourism industry associations to collaborate on shared challenges.
- **Tourism and Conservation Alliance** – a non-partisan coalition advocating for sustainable tourism and protected area investment.

## Amplification and Influence

- **Media** – ensuring the voice of tourism and events is front and centre on advocacy issues.
- **QTIC participation** – representation at workshops, events, and panels to influence policy and showcase industry perspectives.

## Performance and Accountability

QTIC will measure the impact of its advocacy using clear, transparent indicators that align with the Strategic Plan’s KPIs:

- **Policy influence and wins** – tangible advocacy outcomes secured (e.g. funding allocations, regulatory reforms, adoption of QTIC recommendations).
- **Government engagement** – number and quality of ministerial/departmental meetings, boardroom lunches, submissions, and briefings where QTIC’s positions are considered.
- **Member satisfaction and engagement** – tracked

via QTIC Pulse Survey, Net Promoter Score (NPS), and feedback on advocacy priorities.

- **Media and visibility** – frequency and reach of QTIC commentary in mainstream and industry media on advocacy issues.
- **Data and evidence use** – engagement with QTIC’s Data Dashboard and research outputs by members, government, and media as evidence in policy debates.
- **Destination 2045 alignment** – progress against the Top 5 Advocacy Priorities and their contribution to Destination 2045 targets.

Reporting on these indicators will be provided regularly to the QTIC Board and membership, ensuring accountability and demonstrating advocacy impact.



# CONCLUSION



Queensland's visitor economy is entering a pivotal decade. By 2045 the state aims to generate \$84 billion in overnight visitor expenditure, support vibrant regional communities and host world-class experiences. The QTIC Advocacy Plan 2025-26 charts a clear course towards that ambition. It distils complex challenges into five priorities – sustainable funding, managing business costs, infrastructure investment, workforce development and ecotourism – and sets tangible goals for each. Crucially, it positions advocacy as a disciplined, evidence-based practice rather than an ad-hoc reaction to issues; it clarifies how QTIC will gather intelligence, shape policy, build alliances and measure success. This disciplined approach ensures that the tourism industry's voice is heard in Cabinet rooms, on budget tables and in planning offices.

The plan also recognises that the visitor economy is more than statistics; it is people and places. It champions streamlined regulation so operators can spend more time with guests and less on paperwork; it seeks new funding models to maintain infrastructure without compromising environmental or cultural

values; and it calls for bold investment in skills, connectivity and sustainability. It is deliberately inclusive – embracing First Nations partnerships, disability access and regional communities – because tourism's future must benefit all Queenslanders. Finally, it underscores that advocacy is a collective effort. Success depends on government agencies, industry bodies, investors and thousands of small operators working in concert. By adopting this plan, QTIC members and partners commit to a unified, future-ready tourism industry that will deliver long-term economic, social and environmental dividends for Queensland. Through this Plan, QTIC unites industry voices, elevates member priorities, innovates with evidence-based tools, and accelerates outcomes that contribute directly to the goals of the QTIC Strategic Plan 2025–2028 and Destination



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