

## Scottish Thistle Awards Award Categories & Criteria

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<b>Key Dates</b>	<b>Nominations close</b>	<b>Entries close</b>
Regional Categories	27 <sup>th</sup> May	10 <sup>th</sup> June
National-only Categories	19 <sup>th</sup> August	2 <sup>nd</sup> September

*N.B. word count for all categories is **100 words for Executive Summary** and **300 words per Q1, 2 & 3.***

## Regional Categories

### Best Bar or Pub

This award celebrates the key role of bars and pubs as part of the Scottish visitor experience. Our licensed trade provides visitors with a wide variety of options - from bespoke evening cocktails with succulent bar bites overlooking a vibrant cityscape, to a relaxing post walk pint served with traditional fayre by the fire.

Whether your business attracts high fashion, cutting edge musicians/DJs or offers a comforting and friendly home from home to your guests, we are celebrating the diverse bar and pub offerings and all that they contribute within the tourism sector.

#### Who Should Enter:

If you consider your main activity is a bar or pub, and pride yourself on providing exemplary customer service - this could be the category for you!

#### Questions and criteria

#### Executive Summary

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your business. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below.

**This question is not scored and is for background information only.**

- Types of services on offer
- Size and purpose of your business
- How long you have been operating

- Any other information you feel is relevant

#### **1. Please demonstrate your approach to delivering exceptional customer experiences with a proven track record during Covid-19**

How have you developed or adapted your business over the last 24 months in response to very challenging trading times and restrictions?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcomes within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- New and innovative products/services – have you adapted your business or offering? E.g. Better or different use of outdoor space
- How do you listen and make improvements based on visitor feedback – provided directly or through third party sites? Do you consult and involve staff in the process?
- Examples of collaboration and partnership working with industry
- How have you used digital and social media platforms to continue engagement with customers?
- What training or development have you provided for your team to support changes made at your bar/pub and enhance customer experience?

#### **2. What are your aspirations/ambitions for the next 12 months and how will you measure success? Tell us what you plan to do.**

In response to the past 24 months, how do you plan to safeguard your business and ‘build back better’?

You should provide **clear evidence** of future planning and how this will be **monitored / measured**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Plans for new and innovative products/services
- New collaboration and/or partnership working
- Targeting new customers or attracting back lost business
- How will you respond to current market influences?
- How will you measure the success of a newly developed product or service (TripAdvisor, customer reviews, footfall, sales, growth of a different type of customer, social media engagement etc.)?

### 3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy’s ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland’s transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
- Ensuring tourism and events in Scotland are **inclusive**
- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**

- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland’s natural and cultural heritage**

### Best Hotel Experience (over 20 rooms)

Accommodation is a vital part of the visitor journey. The hotel experience is key to creating visitors' lasting impressions of Scotland and our world-famous Scottish hospitality. This award recognises hotels that strive to provide customers with the most hospitable and comfortable experience while they enjoy their stay in Scotland.

#### Who Should Enter:

For hotels with more than 20 bedrooms demonstrating exemplary levels of customer service and satisfaction and, most importantly, offer memorable and authentic hospitality.

#### Questions and criteria

#### Executive Summary

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your hotel. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below.

**This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Size and purpose of business (including no. rooms, occupancy rate and turnover splits (£ or %))
- Types of services on offer
- How long you have been operating
- Partnership with local destination and sector organisations
- Any other information you feel is relevant

**1. Please demonstrate your approach to delivering exceptional customer experiences with a proven track record during Covid-19**

How have you developed or adapted your business over the last 24 months in response to very challenging trading times and restrictions?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- New and innovative products/services – have you adapted your business or offering?
- How do you listen and make improvements based on visitor feedback – provided directly or through third party sites? Do you consult and involve staff in the process?
- Examples of collaboration and partnership working with industry
- Ways in which you have attracted and welcomed new customers
- What training or development have you provided for your team to support changes made at your hotel and enhance customer experience?
- How have you ensured continued engagement with previous customers unable to visit due to restrictions over the past 24 months

**2. What are your aspirations/ambitions for the next 12 months and how will you measure success? Tell us what you plan to do.**

In response to the past 24 months, how do you plan to safeguard your business and ‘build back better’?

You should provide **clear evidence** of future planning and how this will be **monitored / measured**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Plans for new and innovative products/services
- Refurb/maintenance
- New collaboration and/or partnership working
- Targeting new customers or attracting back lost business

**3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.**

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy’s ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland’s transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
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- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland’s natural and cultural heritage**

## Best Hotel Experience (under 20 rooms)

Accommodation is a vital part of the visitor journey. The hotel experience is key to creating visitors' lasting impressions of Scotland and our world-famous Scottish hospitality. This award recognises hotels that strive to provide customers with the most hospitable and comfortable experience while they enjoy their stay in Scotland.

### Who Should Enter:

For hotels or inns with less than 20 bedrooms demonstrating exemplary levels of customer service and satisfaction and, most importantly, offer memorable and authentic hospitality.

### Questions and criteria

#### Executive Summary

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your hotel. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below.

**This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Size and purpose of business (including no. rooms, occupancy rate and turnover splits (£ or %))
- Types of services on offer
- How long you have been operating
- Partnership with local destination and sector organisations
- Any other information you feel is relevant

#### **1. Please demonstrate your approach to delivering exceptional customer experiences with a proven track record during Covid-19**

How have you developed or adapted your business over the last 24 months in response to very challenging trading times and restrictions?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- New and innovative products/services – have you adapted your business or offering?
- How do you listen and make improvements based on visitor feedback – provided directly or through third party sites? Do you consult and involve staff in the process?
- Examples of collaboration and partnership working with industry
- Ways in which you have attracted and welcomed new customers
- What training or development have you provided for your team to support changes made at your hotel and enhance customer experience?
- How have you ensured continued engagement with previous customers affected by restrictions over the past 24 months

#### **2. What are your aspirations/ambitions for the next 12 months and how will you measure success? Tell us what you plan to do.**

In response to the past 24 months, how do you plan to safeguard your business and 'build back better'?

You should provide **clear evidence** of future planning and how this will be **monitored / measured**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Plans for new and innovative products/services
- Refurb/maintenance

- New collaboration and/or partnership working
- Targeting new customers or attracting back lost business

### **3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.**

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy's ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland's transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
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## Food Tourism Award

*“Food tourism includes any tourism experience in which a person learns about and/or consumes food and drink that reflects the local cuisine, heritage, or culture of a place, including the active pursuit of unique and memorable eating, drinking, and agritourism experiences”* - National Food Tourism Board

This category is designed to recognise and celebrate those businesses providing visitors with a unique and memorable tourism experience centred around food and drink.

Unique tasting experiences, from food tours and markets, to glamping with a strong food offering, agritourism enterprises, cookery schools, distilleries and breweries, farm shops and more, Scotland has an abundance of businesses delivering high-quality, memorable food and drink experiences.

### **Who should enter?**

Any business that considers their main activity to be providing customers with a unique, memorable experience centred around Scottish food and drink.

### Questions and criteria

#### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your day to day business. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Size of business and length of operation
- Concept and format of food tourism experience on offer
- Target market(s)
- Any other information you feel is relevant

**1. Please explain how your business exemplifies a ‘taste of place’ through your food & drink sourcing and storytelling?**

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period **May 2020 — May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Examples of local food & drink producers you source from and how you tell the story of these businesses
- How storytelling is used to attract customers (e.g. through social media or your website)
- Tell us about the storytelling experience your customers receive and the customer journey from arrival to departure and beyond

**2. Please demonstrate your approach to adapting and preserving your food tourism business in response to Covid-19 and ‘building back better’?**

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period from **May 2020 — May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- New and innovative products/services – what have you done differently to adapt to changing customer demand?
- How you have changed the way you work with/supported local food and drink suppliers
- Ways in which you have attracted and welcomed new customers/supporters (e.g. implementing a new communications plan)
- How you have ensured that ‘taste of place’ and your food & drink philosophy remain at the core of your business

- How have the changes you’ve made helped to safeguard the future of your business? Which of these changes do you anticipate continuing with going forward?

**3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.**

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy’s ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland’s transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
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## Best Eatery Experience

In Scotland there are eateries to suit every occasion and budget. This category is designed to recognise and celebrate restaurants and eateries that provide an exceptional customer experience and a quality food and drink offering, promoting local Scottish produce. Fantastic food and hospitality are the focus!

### Who should enter?

Open to restaurants and eateries of any style, size and culinary influence to suit every occasion and budget. The award is for establishments that showcase the finest examples of Scottish produce on the menus alongside excellent service and customer experience.

### Questions and criteria

#### Executive Summary

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your day to day business. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Size of business and length of operation
- Concept and format of your eatery business
- Any other information you feel is relevant

#### 1. Please explain your food and drink sourcing policy and what you do to support Scottish producers and manufacturers

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period **May 2020 — May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Examples of Scottish suppliers you work with, and any highlights
- What do you do to promote the origin of your Scottish products to guests (e.g. on menus; social media etc)
- How do you showcase Scottish produce or producers?
- Any accreditation you may have

#### 2. Please demonstrate your approach to adapting and preserving your eatery in response to Covid-19 and ‘building back better’?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period from **May 2020 — May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- New and innovative products/services – what have you done differently to adapt to changing customer demand?
- How you have changed the way you work with/supported local food and drink suppliers
- Ways in which you have attracted and welcomed new customers/supporters, e.g. implementing a new communications plan, marketing initiative, social media use
- How have you ensured continued engagement with customers affected by restrictions, e.g. virtual experiences, use of social media?
- Collaboration and/or partnership working within the local community
- How have the changes you’ve made helped to safeguard the future of your business? Which of these changes do you anticipate continuing with going forward?



### 3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy's ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland's transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
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### Best Outdoor or Adventure Experience

Outdoor, adventure and wildlife experiences are a key part of what makes a visit to Scotland so unique and memorable. With a vast and varied landscape full of opportunity for adventure and excitement, there truly is an activity for every visitor. This category celebrates businesses that provide unforgettable, quality and authentic experiences to their visitors who engage with the landscape and local communities in a positive and environmentally sensitive way.

### Who Should Enter:

Businesses large and small that provide outdoor, adventure and wildlife experiences and have a focus on delivering real customer satisfaction.

### Questions and criteria

#### Executive Summary

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your Outdoor/Adventure experience. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Size and purpose of business/experience
- Types of activities/services on offer
- How long you have been operating
- Any other information you feel is relevant

#### 1. Please demonstrate your approach to delivering exceptional visitor experiences with a proven track record during Covid-19

How have you developed or adapted your business over the last 24 months in response to very challenging trading times and restrictions?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- New and innovative products/services – How you have adapted and developed your unique offering, to provide an exceptional visitor experience?

- How do you listen and make improvements based on visitor feedback – provided directly or through third party sites? Do you consult and involve staff in the process?
- How have you ensured continued engagement with customers affected by restrictions, e.g. virtual experiences, use of social media?
- Creative customer service
- Collaboration and/or partnership working
- How have you remained engaged with your team, both onsite and remotely? What training/development have you provided for your team to support changes made at your business and enhance visitor experience?

**2. What are your aspirations/ambitions for the next 12 months and how will you measure success?**

You should provide **clear evidence** of future planning and how this will be **monitored / measured**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Plans for new and innovative products/services
- New collaboration and/or partnership working
- Targeting new customers or attracting back lost business

**3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.**

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy’s ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland’s transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
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- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland’s natural and cultural heritage**

**Best Self-Catering Accommodation Experience**

This category celebrates businesses that provide fantastic and genuine emotional engagement with the visitor, whether online or in person, and an exceptional service. This award celebrates those providing a unique and bespoke accommodation experience to suit visitors' travel style, while ensuring true Scottish hospitality is at the forefront of the offering.

**Who Should Enter:**

If you offer overnight accommodation but are not a hotel, inn, guest house or B&B – then this award is for you! Examples may include, but are not limited to: self-catering or serviced apartments, wigwams, campsites, caravan parks, campervan hire.

Questions and criteria

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your accommodation offering. Although not an exhaustive

list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Size (number of units, turnover, employees and occupancy) and purpose of business/experience
- Types of services on offer
- How long you have been operating
- Demonstration of business sustainability/resilience
- Any other information you feel is relevant

**1. Please demonstrate your approach to delivering exceptional customer experiences with a proven track record during Covid-19**

How have you developed or adapted your business over the last 24 months in response to very challenging trading times and restrictions?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- New and innovative products/services – have you adapted your business or offering?
- How do you listen and make improvements based on visitor feedback – provided directly or through third party sites? Do you consult and involve staff in the process?
- Examples of collaboration and partnership working with industry
- If applicable, what training or development have you provided for your team to support changes made at your self-catering accommodation and enhance customer experience?

- Ways in which you have attracted and welcomed new customers and/or ensured continued engagement with previous customers affected by restrictions over the past 24 months

**2. What are your aspirations/ambitions for the next 12 months and how will you measure success? Tell us what you plan to do.**

In response to the past 24 months, how do you plan to safeguard your business and ‘build back better’?

You should provide **clear evidence** of future planning and how this will be **monitored / measured**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Plans for new and innovative products/services
- Refurb/maintenance
- New collaboration and/or partnership working
- Targeting new customers or attracting back lost business

**3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.**

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy’s ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland's transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
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- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland's natural and cultural heritage**

## Best Visitor Attraction Experience

Scotland has a wealth of unique and fascinating visitor attractions, from castles and palaces to nuclear bunkers and famous pandas! This category celebrates the variety of opportunity provided to Scotland's visitors, and the attractions which provide world class service with a distinctive Scottish twist.

Regional winners in the Best Visitor Attraction Experience category will be announced at the five regional awards ceremonies. These regional winners will then be in the running to receive the Great Days Out Award at the National Final. The national winner will be voted for by readers of the Scottish Sun in an online poll.

### Who Should Enter:

For visitor attractions that demonstrate exemplary levels of customer service, customer satisfaction and a business commitment to hospitality. This category is open to visitor attractions of all types and sizes.

## Questions and criteria

### Executive Summary

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your Visitor Attraction. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Size and purpose of business/experience
- Types of activities/services on offer
- How long you have been operating
- Demonstration of business sustainability/resilience
- Any other information you feel is relevant

### **1. Please demonstrate your approach to delivering exceptional visitor experiences with a proven track record during Covid-19**

How have you developed or adapted your business over the last 24 months in response to very challenging trading times and restrictions?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant. Below are some aspects you may wish to include:

- New and innovative products/services – how have you adapted your attraction or offering?
- What measures have you put in place to help re-build income streams or create new ones?
- How have you ensured continued engagement with consumers affected by restrictions, e.g. virtual experiences, use of social media?

- How have you remained engaged with your team, both onsite and remotely? What training/development have you provided for your team to support changes made at your attraction and enhance visitor experience?
- How do you listen and make improvements based on visitor feedback – provided directly or through third party sites? Do you consult and involve staff in the process?

**2. What are your aspirations/ambitions for the next 12 months and how will you measure success? Tell us what you plan to do.**

In response to the past 24 months, how do you plan to safeguard your business and ‘build back better’?

You should provide **clear evidence** of future planning and how this will be **monitored / measured**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- What changes are you implementing to ensure business recovery while continuing to deliver exceptional experiences?
- Plans for new and innovative products/services
- New collaboration and/or partnership working
- Targeting new customers or attracting back lost business

**3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.**

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy’s ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland’s transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
- Ensuring tourism and events in Scotland are **inclusive**
- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland’s natural and cultural heritage**

**Best B&B or Guest House Experience**

B&Bs and guest houses are at the front line of Scotland’s hospitality reputation and can provide a personal and memorable experience for every guest. This category celebrates going the extra mile to demonstrate heart-warming levels of customer service to every guest who steps through the door.

**Who Should Enter:**

Any business that considers itself a guest house or B&B and offers authentic and warm hospitality.

Questions and criteria

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your B&B or guest house. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Size and purpose of business (including no. rooms, occupancy rate)

- Types of activities/services on offer
- How long you have been operating
- Demonstration of business sustainability/resilience
- Any other information you feel is relevant

**1. Please demonstrate your approach to delivering exceptional customer experiences with a proven track record during Covid-19**

How have you developed or adapted your business over the last 24 months in response to very challenging trading times and restrictions?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- New and innovative products/services – have you adapted your business or offering?
- How do you listen and make improvements based on visitor feedback – provided directly or through third party sites? Do you consult and involve staff in the process?
- Examples of collaboration and partnership working with industry
- If applicable, what training or development have you provided for your team to support changes made at your B&B/guest house and enhance customer experience?
- Ways in which you have attracted and welcomed new customers and/or ensured continued engagement with previous customers affected by restrictions over the past 24 months

**2. What are your aspirations/ambitions for the next 12 months and how will you measure success? Tell us what you plan to do.**

In response to the past 24 months, how do you plan to safeguard your business and ‘build back better’?

You should provide **clear evidence** of future planning and how this will be **monitored / measured**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Plans for new and innovative products/services
- Refurb/maintenance
- New collaboration and/or partnership working
- Targeting new customers or attracting back lost business

**3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.**

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy’s ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland’s transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
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- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**



- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland's natural and cultural heritage**

## Outstanding Cultural Event or Festival

Scotland is the Perfect Stage for events. Despite being one of the most strongly impacted sectors by the Covid19 pandemic, the events and festivals sector has shown impressive resilience, innovation and has continued to deliver excellent experiences in line with ever-changing restrictions. From large scale international events to local and community festivals, Scotland has a rich annual programme of events and festivals and each makes an important contribution to our thriving communities and cities.

### Who Should Enter?

Entries are sought from events/festivals that can demonstrate exceptional resilience, innovation and the delivery of excellent live, online or hybrid experiences, in spite of the challenges encountered over the past 2 years. Eligible event editions will have been delivered between September 2020 to May 2022. For annual or recurring events, it is the most recent edition that is eligible.

### Questions and criteria

#### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your event or festival.

Your entry should focus on the most recent edition of your event/festival taking place **between Sept 2020 – May 2022**. Some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored** but it is important to set out a good overview of your event/festival for general understanding/background knowledge.

Type of event e.g. what aspect of culture did your event/festival celebrate/showcase; who is it for; what does it aim to achieve?

- Audience/spectator/participant/artist numbers and profile
- Number of years the event has been operating for
- Outline programme/Event experience
- If the event is recurring or a one-off
- Any other information you feel is relevant

#### **1. In what ways did your event demonstrate outstanding resilience and innovation despite the challenges faced by the events sector due to the covid19 pandemic?**

The judges are looking for events that still managed to deliver excellence, adapting their approach and innovating to succeed. Please cover any aspects you think are relevant. You may wish to outline aspects such as:

- If you had to change the planned creative concept and/or format of your event because of restrictions. What impact did this have and how successful was it?
- How well you managed operational planning for your event in the context of ever-changing covid restrictions and instability
- If your event was new and created specifically in response to what could be delivered within the restrictions
- How you innovated to ensure effective and safe delivery?
- Are there any key learnings from how you innovated or adapted your event that you will take forward post pandemic? Will these help you develop going forward?



**2. Please tell us what success your event achieved in terms of the event experience, programming, audience engagement and media reach (inc. print, broadcast and digital).**

This is your chance to highlight to judges what made your event/festival outstanding in terms of the experience that was delivered and how it engaged with attendees and through wider media reach. Please cover any areas you think are relevant, although we suggest you include aspects such as:

- The event experience — how did the event engage, excite or inspire its attendees/ participants, performers, etc?
- Provide an outline of visitor feedback/research/stats that evidence high customer satisfaction and engagement
- Describe what you've done to make the event as inclusive and accessible as possible and how you ensure potential attendees know what you had available e.g. disabled people, families, seniors, young people, people with additional needs, etc
- Tell us how far your event reached. Please provide detail in terms of live and/or online audience numbers, participation, media reach and engagement, etc.

**3. Please demonstrate how your event incorporated responsible planning and delivery**

Responsible event delivery is an essential criterion for excellence and should be core to all event planning. The judges are looking for you to demonstrate that responsible event planning and delivery was central to your approach and that you excelled in this respect. Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide clear evidence in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or

environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy's ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland's transition to a low carbon economy and environmental sustainability
- Ensuring tourism and events in Scotland are inclusive
- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to thriving communities
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of Scotland's natural and cultural heritage

### Regional Ambassador

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted just how resilient, resourceful and united our industry is.

People are the essence of the tourism and hospitality sector and we all have a responsibility in shaping the future of our industry. People, with their commitment and passion for the industry, have been the critical success factor in seeing through the last 24 months.

This award is looking to recognise these qualities in an individual who has dedicated their time and energy to advocate for their sector or local area/community during this unprecedented time with a clear passion for the future of the industry.

### Who should enter?

Entrants for this award should fit the following criteria:

- A tourism industry professional employed anywhere within/relating to the Scottish tourism or hospitality industry
- An advocate for industry – this could be in a variety of ways; examples may include raising government awareness, lobbying or by way of community engagement
- Has shown leadership during Covid-19 – within and outwith their business/employment
- Has dedicated time and energy to benefiting/supporting their local area and local community during Covid-19

If you know someone who deserves to be recognised for their contribution to the industry, nominate them now!

#### Questions and criteria

#### **Nominee Profile**

***Please note: self-entry is not permitted for this category.***

The purpose of the Nominee Profile is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your nominee. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Current role and organisation
- Relevant previous or external roles
- Working groups, committees etc they sit on and their role within the group(s)
- Accolades won that are linked to the tourism industry
- Any other information you feel is relevant

#### **1. How has this person, over and above their daily role, driven activity to promote or advocate for their region during Covid-19?**

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- What has the nominee achieved to be worthy of this award – how has the work they develop/deliver contributed to the wider Scottish tourism industry?
- Outstanding contributions to tourism in their local area through advocacy and leadership
- What partnerships have they identified and brought together to enhance the region’s tourism offering?
- Innovative projects devised and delivered out-with their day job

#### **2. Please provide real examples which demonstrate how this person has shown initiative in driving tourism forward for their region/sector during Covid-19**

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as: Outstanding contributions to tourism in their local area through advocacy and leadership

- How have they supported local businesses/community during Covid-19?
- Futureproofing industry - Have they supported the industry/sector to ‘build back better’ in response to the last 24 months?
- Innovative ideas to develop and enhance the region/sector/visitor experience, incl. measurable results and impacts of their innovations

- Have they established a new group, committee etc in response to Covid-19? What's their role within the group(s) and results of their involvement?

### 3. How do they inspire or motivate others?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity within the time period from **May 2020 – May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Work outwith their day-to-day role and results of such work
- Engagement with different or new groups, partnerships etc
- How your nominee is leading the way in developing relationships and/or products that are inspiring visitors, staff, peers and/or the local community
- Demonstrating commitment to delivering for and promoting responsible tourism
- Additional training undertaken

### Tourism & Hospitality Hero

The Covid-19 pandemic has meant big changes in the way businesses and individuals are working, with resilience, resourcefulness and kindness being seen at the forefront of the Scottish tourism and hospitality industry over the past 24 months.

For many, 'work' no longer referred to their daily role and tasks as they once knew it to and instead took on another meaning, through voluntary work in the community for example; for others, the way in which they carried out their work was very different, and saw them faced with new challenges and processes, yet embraced it all.

This award aims to highlight and celebrate those individuals – Scotland's unsung heroes. It celebrates those on the front line of the customer service experience who

have gone that extra mile for the benefit of others during an unprecedented time, whether that be customers, colleagues or the local community/area.

### Who should enter?

This category is open to anyone employed on the frontline of the Scottish tourism and hospitality industry – from housekeeping staff and receptionists, to front of house staff, tour guides and drivers – who has gone above and beyond, striving to make their workplace, community and/or local area a better place for everyone, even if their contribution took place whilst they were away from the frontline (while on furlough for example).

If you know someone who deserves to be recognised for their contribution to the industry, nominate them now!

### Questions and criteria

#### **Nominee Profile**

***Please note: self-entry is not permitted for this category.***

The purpose of the Nominee Profile is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your nominee. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Current role and organisation — NB: we have in mind frontline staff such as tour guides, drivers, receptionists, housekeeping, customer service staff, concierge etc
- Relevant previous or external roles
- Any other information you feel is relevant

### 1. How has the nominee dealt with changes in their role and adapted during Covid-19? What have they done that differentiates them from their peers?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period from **May 2020 — May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- What makes them stand out from the crowd?
- How have they demonstrated commitment, flexibility and passion for Scottish tourism and their role?
- Voluntary work to support the local community/area
- Taken on a new role or adapted a current role within the business
- Innovative ideas to adapt and enhance the customer experience and/or business itself

## **2. Please provide an example of where they have gone beyond the call of duty for the benefit of others**

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period from **May 2020 — May 2022**. cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Why are they an unsung hero – what did they do that will make others remember the experience?
- Going the extra mile to help customers, colleagues and/or the local community/sector
- How have they improved the customer experience?
- Have they supported their team/colleagues in a way that was lacking previously, eg. wellbeing, mental health, motivation etc
- What evidence do you have to demonstrate the benefit? Eg. Feedback/reviews, increased spend per visit

## **3. How have they set an example for others in the industry and what positive impacts has this had on the workplace, customer experience and/or local community?**

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome within the time period from **May 2020 — May 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant; you may include aspects such as:

- What positive changes have been implemented due to this person?
- How has their action impacted others for the better?
- What evidence do you have to demonstrate the positive impact? Eg. feedback from colleagues/customers/locals, increased spend per visit

## Working Together for Tourism

The Covid-19 pandemic has meant big changes in the way businesses are working. We've seen the industry come together to provide support to each other, the local community and visitors alike, helping to get businesses and the local area back on track when the time was right.

This category celebrates partnerships, collaborations and team working, whether that be with local businesses, communities or a group of individuals. This is the category for anyone operating a collective approach to deliver activity – anything from an innovative campaign or initiative, to a new offering or service – created as a direct result of Covid-19 and which has had a positive effect on staff, customers, visitors and/or the local community to ensure that everyone could have a confident and positive experience.

## Who should enter?

This category is open to anyone (businesses and individuals) in the tourism and hospitality industry – community tourism, tourism businesses (B2B and B2C), hospitality businesses, destination management organisations (B2B), tour operators, destination marketing companies, destination management companies, transport operators, destination and sector organisations, retail and entertainment venues. If you believe that "tourism is everyone's business" and you are operating a collective approach to deliver activity, this is the category for you!

### Questions and criteria

#### Executive Summary

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your collaborative activity. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored and is for information only.**

- Who is involved in the activity?
- Purpose of the partnership/collaboration/activity
- Type(s) of activities/services on offer
- How long the partnership/collaboration/activity has been operating
- Any other information you feel is relevant

#### 1. Please provide details of your activity created as a direct result of Covid-19 that demonstrates the value of working together

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome, some of which must have taken place **within the past 24 months**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- New collaborative activity/partnership working with clearly defined aims, results and joined up thinking
- Is there a unique selling point and/or is the activity in response to an issue or gap in the market?

#### 2. How is your activity excelling in delivering for your business, local community and/or visitor experience?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and outcome, some of which must have taken place **within the past 24 months**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- What evidence do you have to support the value and excellence of the activity? Eg. feedback, increase in numbers (bookings, financial, engagement figures)
- How has your activity improved resilience and/or economic sustainability?
- Does the activity include investment in resumption for 2021 and beyond, and if so, how?
- What is the legacy of the collaboration and/or will the collaboration continue?

#### 3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy's ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues

to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland's transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
- Ensuring tourism and events in Scotland are **inclusive**
- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland's natural and cultural heritage**

## National Categories

### Outstanding Sporting Event

Despite being one of the most strongly impacted sectors by the Covid19 pandemic, Scotland's events and festivals sector has shown impressive resilience, innovation and has continued to deliver excellent experiences in line with ever-changing restrictions. From large scale international events to national and local events, Scotland has a rich annual programme of sporting events which make an important contribution to our thriving communities and cities and the health and wellbeing of our people, supporting the message that Scotland is the Perfect Stage for events.

This category aims to celebrate and recognise outstanding sporting events delivered during the pandemic. If your events bring attendees in from outside of the immediate area, from across Scotland or internationally, then you should consider your event part of Scotland's tourism and events offering and eligible to apply. Entries are sought from sporting events that can demonstrate exceptional resilience, innovation and the delivery of excellent live, online or hybrid experiences, in spite of the challenges encountered over the past 2 years.

Applications should also recognise the relevant Covid-19 restrictions which were in place at the time. Eligible events will have been delivered **between September 2020 to August 2022**. For annual or recurring events, it is the most recent edition that is eligible.

#### Who Should Enter:

Organisers of established local, regional or international events of any size. Your event must be a recurring event as part of the ongoing tourism offering to enter. Events must have taken place within the time period from **September 2020 - August 2022** with outcomes known at the time of submission.

Organisers of regional, national or international sporting events that contribute to Scotland's tourism offer, attracting out of region participants/spectators and showcasing our built facilities and natural environment are eligible to apply. Events must have taken place in Scotland within the time period from **September 2020 - August 2022** with outcomes known at the time of submission.

#### Questions and criteria

##### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your event or festival.

Your entry should focus on the most recent edition of your event taking place **between Sept 2020 – August 2022**. Some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. **This question is not scored** but it is important to set out a good overview of your event/festival for general understanding/background knowledge.

- Please let us know if your event was local/regional/international in terms of its participation/spectator base and if travel restrictions impacted this.



- Spectator / Participant / Athlete numbers and profile, recognising where appropriate the restrictions that were in place at the time with regards to participation numbers and /or spectators
- Number of years the event has been operating for
- If the event is recurring or a one-off
- Any other information you feel is relevant

**1. In what ways did your event demonstrate outstanding resilience and innovation despite the challenges faced by the events sector due to the Covid19 pandemic?**

The judges are looking for events that still managed to deliver excellence, adapting their approach and innovating to succeed. Please cover any aspects you think are relevant. You may wish to outline aspects such as:

- If you had to change the planned concept and/or format of your event because of restrictions. What impact did this have and how successful was it?
- How you managed operational planning for your event in the context of ever-changing Covid restrictions and instability
- If your event was new and created specifically in response to the pandemic what could be delivered within the restrictions
- How you innovated to ensure effective and safe delivery?
- Are there any key learnings from how you innovated or adapted your event that you will take forward post pandemic? Will these help you develop going forward?

**2. Please tell us what success your event achieved in terms of the event experience, participant experience, media reach (broadcast, digital) and**

**sporting excellence.**

This is your chance to highlight to judges what made your event outstanding in terms of the experience that was delivered and how it engaged with spectators, participants and /or attendees and through wider media reach. Please cover any areas you think are relevant, although we suggest you include aspects such as:

- How did the event engage & inspire spectators and participants (both through in person attendance / participation, broadcast, or wider digital engagement and online audiences)? As spectating was limited at points during this period, tell us how you adapted your event experience to continue to engage with fans.
- Provide an outline of feedback /research /stats from event attendees that evidence high visitor satisfaction and engagement
- Describe what you've done to make the event as inclusive and accessible as possible, and how you ensure potential attendees know what you had available e.g. disabled people, families, seniors, young people, people with additional needs, etc
- Tell us who watched your event. Please provide detail in terms of in-person and/or online audience numbers, participation, spectators, media reach, broadcast and engagement, etc.

**3. Please demonstrate how your event incorporated responsible planning and delivery**

Responsible event delivery is an essential criterion for excellence and should be core to all event planning. The judges are looking for you to demonstrate that responsible event planning and delivery was central to your approach and that you excelled in this respect. Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.



You should provide clear evidence in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy's ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland's transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
- Ensuring tourism and events in Scotland are **inclusive**
- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland's natural and cultural heritage**

## Best Business Event

After two years of the pandemic where few face-to-face business events made it to fruition, this category again celebrates business events as catalysts for economic and social transformation. Aligned to VisitScotland's Journey to Change, the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) business events can range from corporate conferences or incentive programmes to annual global congresses with thousands of international delegates.

### Who Should Enter:

Organisers, intermediaries and owners of business events such as Destination Management Companies (DMCs), Professional Conference Organisers (PCOs), venues, Hotels and suppliers to the business events sector. Intermediaries are invited to submit on behalf of or in conjunction with corporate clients where appropriate. Please note that the event must have taken place within twelve months of the application date and outcomes should be known at the time of submission.

### Questions and criteria

#### Executive Summary

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your business event. Some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. Your event must have taken place and outcomes collated during the time period of **July 2021 – August 2022. This question is not scored** and is for general understanding/background knowledge only.

- Type of event i.e. Association Congresses at UK, European or International level, Incentive Programmes, Corporate Conferences, or Sectoral Innovation Events. **Please note NOT eligible to enter: On the day ticketed, or walk-up publicly accessible events of any type, Christmas Party Night programmes, Corporate AGMs and B2C [consumer] exhibitions, business events with no in-person element (100% online).**
- Number of delegates/participants in person and online
- Number of years the event has been operating for, frequency of event and previous locations

- Any other information you feel is relevant

### 1. In what ways is your business event unique to Scotland?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity within the time period from **July 2021 – August 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant, although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Highlight any Innovative programming or presentation
- Collaborative working with other Scottish businesses and stakeholders, including the “adjacent industries” beyond tourism
- Truly exceptional logistical delivery/challenges overcome which can include Covid-related mitigations
- How have you developed a sustainable element to your business model

### 2. Tell us about the impact and outcomes your business event generates for the area or location in which it takes place, and what will be the real legacy and ultimate “leave behind” to make it worthy of this award?

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity within the time period from **July 2021 – August 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant, although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- How did the event enhance the profile of the town, city or region and Scotland?
- Legacy from the event – actual or anticipated. e.g. academic, social, infrastructural, experiential, learnings
- For competitive bid scenarios, how did you convince the client to choose Scotland? How did you **win** it?
- How client objectives were met and exceeded

- Event experience – how does the event engage, excite or inspire its attendees/ participants?
- New digital /omnichannel audience initiatives
- Alignment to Scottish Government National Performance Framework
- Alignment to UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Alignment to Journey to Change

### 3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy’s ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland’s transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
- Ensuring tourism and events in Scotland are **inclusive**
- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland’s natural and cultural heritage**

## Responsible Tourism Award

Responsible Tourism focuses on a collaborative approach for re-building and growing the value of tourism, in a way that makes better places for people to live and visit, in every corner of Scotland. Responsible Tourism maximises the positive benefits and minimises the negative impact of tourism for everyone.

It's not just about reducing our carbon footprint. It's also about making sure our industry is inclusive, has a positive impact on communities and supports our heritage.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy's ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. VisitScotland's approach to developing Scotland as a Responsible Destination focuses on four key objectives:

- Supporting Scotland's transition to a **low carbon economy**
- Ensuring tourism and events in Scotland are **inclusive**
- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of Scotland's **natural and cultural heritage**

This award celebrates businesses and events, which have made demonstrable progress embedding Responsible Tourism values into their core activity, across the four key objectives outlined above. We understand that many businesses and events will be in the early stages of implementing Responsible Tourism practices and, therefore, the level of detail provided in some of your answers may vary. So while your business or event may be excellent at sustainability, you may not have so much to say about inclusive tourism or community engagement at this stage. That's okay, we still want you to apply! Equally, if you can demonstrate that you are truly inclusive or work closely with your community, but have not yet

implemented many measures to tackle climate change but have a plan to do so that is acceptable.

Do give as much information as you can on the work you are doing. We are focused on a responsible recovery and are keen to hear about any aspect of your responsible business or event, why these objectives are important to you and how you are amplifying the responsible message.

For more information on Responsible Tourism and the potential activity under each objective, please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#).

### **Who Should Enter:**

Businesses and events which have demonstrable progress embedding Responsible Tourism values into their core activity, across any aspect of their activity.

### Questions and criteria

#### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your day-to-day businesses. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. This question is not scored and is for information only.

- Size and purpose of business/experience/event
- Types of activities/services on offer to guests
- What Responsible Tourism means to your business or event and why Responsible Tourism is important to Scotland as part of the post pandemic recovery

- Membership of any sustainability, inclusion groups, voluntary sector organisation or certification programs
- Any other information you feel is relevant

**1. Please demonstrate your approach to implementing environmental sustainability actions in your business or event, helping to protect Scotland's beautiful landscapes and biodiversity?**

How do you approach implementing environmental sustainability actions? How are you driving action on **climate change**? Any activity you have undertaken to protect Scotland's **natural heritage and biodiversity**? What projects have you already implemented and any planned for the next 12 months?

Please include a note on how the last 12/24 months of very challenging trading times and restrictions may have impacted this work.

You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and the outcome within the time period from **May 2020 – August 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant.

- What are your priority actions covering the following areas:
  - Reducing carbon emissions and environmental impact
  - Encouraging the protection and responsible enjoyment of Scotland's natural and cultural heritage
- What actions you have implemented over the last 2 years?
- How have you measured and monitored the success and impact of the actions?
- What actions you are planning to implement over the next 12 months

**2. Please demonstrate your approach to delivering an inclusive visitor experience for all and how you engage with your local community**

How do you approach **implementing actions that support your business/event being more inclusive to all customers**? How do you engaging with and supporting your local community and ensuring that tourism benefits the community? What projects have you already implemented and any planned for the next 12 –24 months?

Please include a note on how the last 12/24 months of very challenging trading times and restrictions may have impacted this work. You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and the outcome within the time period from **May 2020 – August 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant.

Below are some aspects you may wish to include:

- What are your priority actions covering the following areas:
  - Welcome all customers to your business or event and catering for their needs
  - Supporting your local community and ensuring your business has a positive impact on your local community
- What actions you have implemented over the last 2 years?
- How have you measured and monitored the success and impact of the actions?
- What actions you are planning to implement over the next 12-24 months

**3. Please demonstrate how you communicate and collaborate to implement and amplify the work that you do to be a responsible business or event**

How do you use communication and collaboration to support the implementation of your responsible tourism actions and inform and inspire others? Please include a note on how the last 12/24 months of very challenging trading times and

restrictions may have impacted this work. You should provide **clear evidence** of activity and the outcome within the time period from **May 2020 – August 2022**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant. Below are some aspects you may wish to include (if applicable):

- How you have engaged with your team on your responsible tourism action plan. What training have you provided for your team to support their awareness and the implementation of actions? E.g. disability awareness training or sustainability training.
- How you have engaged your customers in your responsible tourism journey to raise awareness and encourage action. What feedback have you had from your customers?
- How you have engaged with your supply chain, to raise awareness of your responsible tourism action and work together on implementation, as well as supporting action in your suppliers.
- Creative partnership working or innovative ways of working with businesses in your sector or destination, other stakeholders, organisations, local charities or your local community, to share your learnings from your responsible tourism action journey to encourage collaboration to drive forward supporting Scotland as a leader in responsible tourism

## Best Luxury Experience

This award celebrates those businesses bringing luxury to the Scottish visitor experience. Luxury experiences are those bespoke offerings which showcase the best of Scotland and bring the wow-factor to every step of the customer journey. This award recognises unique tour offerings or experience packages, with a focus on exclusivity and attention to detail.

## Who Should Enter?

Scottish-based tour operators with bespoke luxury offerings, food and drink or accommodation providers offering specific luxury packages.

### Questions and criteria:

#### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to give judges a general overview and better understanding of your business. Although not an exhaustive list, some examples of the type of information judges will be looking for are listed below. This question is **not scored** and is for background information only.

- Types of services on offer
- Size and purpose of your business
- How long you have been operating
- Any other information you feel is relevant

#### **1. Please tell us how your luxury experience or package stands out, providing a wow-factor for your guests.**

Do you go above and beyond in unique and innovative ways to ensure your guests experience luxury during every moment?

You should provide **clear evidence** of your commitment to quality and how you gather and implement feedback to ensure your full guest experience consistently delivers world class standards, within the time period **May 2020 – May 2022**. Your entry should focus on a specific luxury experience or package, rather than your business as a whole.

Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Examples of collaboration and partnership with other high-quality tourism providers to create a full luxury package for your visitors
- How your staff recruitment and training methods ensure the highest standards of hospitality and service
- The unique aspects of your experience on which your guests comment most positively
- The ways in which you bring a sense of place to your experience (using local produce, working with local producers, craftspeople and suppliers) and the storytelling experience your customers receive
- The attention to detail paid to all aspects of the guest experience – from pre-arrival (digital presence) through to post-visit
- Any luxury accreditation awarded, such as VisitScotland Quality Assurance Star ratings

**2. What are your aspirations/ambitions for the next 12 months and how will you measure success? Tell us what you plan to do.**

In response to the events of the past 24 months, how do you plan to safeguard your business and ‘build back better’?

You should provide **clear evidence** of future planning and how this will be **monitored / measured**. Please cover any areas you think are relevant although you may wish to include aspects such as:

- Plans for new and innovative products/services
- New collaboration and/or partnership working
- How will you respond to current market influences and benchmark your provision against other businesses?

- How will you measure the success of a newly developed product or service (TripAdvisor, customer reviews, growth of a different type of customer, social media engagement etc.)?

**3. Please demonstrate your commitment to delivering Responsible Tourism.**

Please refer to the [Responsible Tourism Support Guide](#) to help shape your answer and highlight aspects that you may wish to include.

You should provide **clear evidence** in your answer of activity and the outcome (e.g. certification, increased customer base, positive impact on local community and/or environment), addressing as many of the four priority areas mentioned below as possible.

In line with the Outlook 2030 strategy’s ambition for sustainable and responsible growth, it is important that the tourism and events industry in Scotland continues to develop in a responsible way. Responsible tourism in Scotland focuses on four priority areas:

- Supporting Scotland’s transition to a **low carbon economy and environmental sustainability**
- Ensuring tourism and events in Scotland are **inclusive**
- Ensuring tourism and events contribute to **thriving communities**
- Supporting the protection and considerate enjoyment of **Scotland’s natural and cultural heritage**