A picture containing text, font, graphics, logo

Description automatically generated

Independent Tourism Business of the Year

*Recognises local independent businesses that can best demonstrate strong growth within the visitor economy and an innovative approach to customer and employee relations, together with creativity to enhance sales.*

**Sponsored by**



***This sample application form is for information only and all applications must be made via the online application system.***

## Eligibility criteria

* This category is open to local independently run businesses, whether it be retail, accommodation, bar, eatery, attraction, or tour who can demonstrate how they have impacted on the local community and the visitor economy.
* Any independent business within Liverpool City Region actively involved in the Visitor Economy sector.
* The business must be independently owned and based within the City Region i.e., not part of a National/International chain.
* Franchises are not eligible to enter this award.
* Any independent business originally founded within the Liverpool City Region which has now expanded to other locations can enter this award.
* Businesses must clearly demonstrate how they are part of the wider Visitor Economy offering.
* Businesses of all sizes can apply as this category is judged within the context and style of the business.

## Applicant & business details

(not scored)

**Applicant’s name:**

Enter the applicant’s name here.

**Applicant’s job title:**

Enter the applicant’s job title here.

**Applicant’s phone number:**

Enter the applicant’s phone number here.

**Applicant’s email:**

Enter applicant’s email here.

**Business name:**

Name of business application relates to. Give the name used to promote the business, as you wish it to appear in all publicity materials, on certificates, in presentations etc.:

Enter your business name here.

**Business address:**

Enter your business address here.

**Closures during judging period** (the judging period runs from 30th October 2023 – 26th January 2024):

Enter closures during the judging period here.

**Promotional Description**

Provide a promotional description of your business.

* Focus on its strengths and stand out features
* Write your description with regard to this category
* This wording will be used in PR and awards literature if you are short listed as a finalist
* Wording provided is subject to edit
* 120 word maximum

Enter the promotional description here.

**Promotional Images**

Provide up to three landscape high resolution photos.

* Photos should relate to this category
* Photos should not be edited in any way e.g. embedded text or logos, a collage
* Only include photos that you own the copyright for
* If the photo requires a third-party credit e.g. photographer, please provide details
* These photos will be used in PR and awards literature if you are short listed as a finalist

## Background

(not scored)

**Briefly outline the story of your business (250 words maximum).**

*Judges will be looking for:*

* Length of time business has been open
* Target market(s) and typical customer profile
* Key milestones in developing the business
* Indication of size of business
* Number of staff employed, if any.

Enter information on the background of your business here.

**List any awards, ratings, accolades received in the last two years, including any that relate to COVID-19. Include the title, awarding body, level and date achieved.**

*For example:*

* Successes in this competition and the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence
* TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence
* Green Tourism award
* VisitEngland and/or AA quality assessment, local quality accreditation
* VisitEngland’s ‘We’re Good to Go’; the AA’s ‘COVID-19 Confident’; Quality in Tourism’s ‘Safe clean and legal’.

Enter information on any awards, ratings or accolades here.

There is no requirement for your business to be quality assessed. However, if you have an independent quality assessment/mystery shopping report from the last two years, you might wish to attach it when emailing your completed application form /upload it here (optional).

## Online presence & reviews

(this section is 30% of the final score)

* Social Media & Website = 20%
* Online Reviews = 10%

**Provide links to your online presence, which will be reviewed and scored by judges in addition to your answers to the four questions. Other sites may also be checked.**

**As part of this review, judges will be looking for evidence of your commitment to Accessible and Inclusive Tourism and Ethical, Responsible and Sustainable Tourism.**

Enter the website URL here.

Provide links to all business pages/profiles on Facebook, Instagram etc. and Twitter handles

Enter social media URL here.

**Accessibility & inclusivity information (**Provide links to your accessibility and inclusivity information.**)**

Enter the accessibility & inclusivity information URL here.

**Sustainability information (**Provide links to your sustainability information.**)**

Enter the sustainability information URL here.

**Online review sites**

Provide specific links to customer review listings for your business e.g. TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Google, Euan’s Guide, UpFront Reviews

Enter online review sites here.

**Question 1 - Your Top Qualities**

(this question is 20% of the final score)

**Tell us about up to five ways in which your business is impressive compared to your competitors (500 words maximum).**

Describe the unique selling points, strengths and essence of your business. One or more of the following example areas may be relevant to address in your answer (it is not mandatory to cover every area):

* Quality of your core product and customer experience
* Added extras that delight your customers
* How you care for your team
* Use and promotion of local suppliers, including food & drink offer centred on locally sourced produce
* Innovative marketing and PR, including partnerships with other businesses
* Facilities and welcome for people with a range of accessibility requirements
  + For example, this may include information provision, adapted customer experiences, accessible facilities for people with a range of impairments and staff disability awareness training
* Managing and improving environmental, social and economic impacts
  + For example, this may include a carbon reduction plan, energy and waste monitoring, green transport, community initiatives and responsible purchasing
* Innovative adaption, diversification and/ or resilience building

Enter answer to question 1 here.

Links to relevant supporting evidence online (optional):

It is not a requirement to submit supporting evidence; however, if you do, ensure that the focus is on the quality and relevancy of the evidence submitted rather than quantity.

Any written answers that are included within the supplementary evidence, attempting to circumvent the question word counts, will be disregarded.

Enter links to supplementary evidence here.

## Question 2 - Your Recent Improvements

(this question is 20% of the final score)

**Tell us about up to five ways in which you have developed your business and/or improved the customer experience over the last two years (500 words maximum).**

Explain your reasons for making the improvements and indicate which parts of the business are impacted. One or more of the following example areas may be relevant to address in your answer (it is not mandatory to cover every area):

(Only include examples of improvements undertaken in the last two years.)

* Promotional initiatives e.g. new website
* Improving the skills of you and your team
* Expansion, upgrade of facilities, enhancements to your services
* Facilities and welcome for people with a range of accessibility requirements
  + For example, this may include information provision, adapted customer experiences, accessible facilities for people with a range of impairments and staff disability awareness training
* Managing and improving environmental, social and economic impacts
  + For example, this may include a carbon reduction plan, energy and waste monitoring, green transport, community initiatives and responsible purchasing
* Innovative adaption, diversification and/ or resilience building
* Approximate date of improvement

Enter answer to question 2 here.

Links to relevant supporting evidence online (optional):

Enter links to supplementary evidence here.

## Question 3 - Your Results

(this question is 15% of the final score)

**Tell us about three successes from the last year, providing figures where relevant (300 words maximum).**

One or more of the following example areas may be relevant to address in your answer (it is not mandatory to cover every area):

* Whether you are able to attribute success directly to any of the improvements that you’ve made (mentioned in Question 2)
* Percentage increase in occupancy levels/visitor numbers, sales, customer satisfaction and wastage reduction
* Percentage increase in online bookings
* Increase in repeat business
* Business generated from marketing activity
* Growth of social media following and engagement
* The significance of the level of impact on your business

Enter answer to question 3 here.

Links to relevant supporting evidence online (optional):

Enter links to supplementary evidence here.

## Question 4 – Your Future Plans

(this question is 15% of the final score)

**Tell us about three ways you will develop and promote your business over the next year and the reasons why (300 words maximum).**

One or more of the following example areas may be relevant to address in your answer (it is not mandatory to cover every area):

* Continued adaptation, diversification and resilience building
* Facilities and welcome for people with a range of accessibility requirements
* For example, this may include information provision, adapted customer experiences, accessible facilities for people with a range of impairments and staff disability awareness training
* Managing and improving environmental, social and economic impacts
* For example, this may include a carbon reduction plan, energy and waste monitoring, green transport, community initiatives and responsible purchasing
* Expansion, upgrade of facilities, enhancements to your services
* Improving the skills of you and your team
* Marketing and PR, including partnerships with other businesses
* Operational efficiency

Enter answer to question 4 here.

Links to relevant supporting evidence online (optional):

Enter links to supplementary evidence here.