



Community Bank
Cannonvale - Proserpine



Guide to Completing Your Business Leader of the Year Award Entry

Presented by:

Whitsunday Regional Council, Whitsundays Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Bowen Chamber of Commerce.

Principal Partner:

Bendigo Community Bank Cannonvale-Proserpine

Category Sponsor:

Abbot Point Operations

About the Awards

The Whitsunday Business Awards 2025 celebrates the outstanding achievements, leadership, innovation, and resilience of businesses across the Whitsunday region.

With judging led by respected regional and external experts, and a sundowner Awards Ceremony from 5:30pm Friday 21 November 2025, this is the region's premier cross-sector business celebration.

In 2025, the following awards will be presented:

1. **Best of the Whitsundays: Business of the Year** for an outstanding business that sets the gold standard for excellence, innovation, and leadership in the region.
2. **Business Legends of the Whitsundays: Hall of Fame** celebrating businesses, or individuals, that have achieved long-term success and made an enduring impact.
3. **Business Leader of the Year** recognising an inspiring leader whose vision, dedication, and influence have driven exceptional business and regional success.
4. **Rising Star: Employee, Apprentice or Trainee** highlighting an exceptional individual who has demonstrated outstanding growth, dedication, and contribution.
5. **Small Business Hero**, recognising sole traders and small businesses that make a big impact through ambition, innovation, and resilience.
6. **Customer Service Champion**, celebrating businesses and individuals who consistently go above and beyond to create unforgettable customer experiences.
7. **Regional Game Changer**, recognising businesses that fuel economic growth, innovation, and community prosperity across the region.
8. **Trailblazing Young Entrepreneur**, celebrating rising stars (under 25) who are redefining success in start-ups, leadership, or industry innovation.
9. **Community Champion**, highlighting businesses making a real difference in the Whitsunday community through meaningful contributions and initiatives.
10. **Eco Excellence**, showcasing businesses that are leading the way in sustainability, environmental responsibility, and green innovation.



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About This Award

This award honours an outstanding business leader whose vision, commitment, and influence have delivered exceptional results for their business and contributed meaningfully to the broader Whitsunday region. Nominees must be actively involved in a business currently operating within the Whitsunday area.

Who Can Enter

This award is open to owner/operators, executives, or senior managers who:

- Hold a leadership role in a business currently operating within the Whitsunday region.
- Have demonstrated significant and sustained leadership that has positively influenced business performance, innovation, workplace culture, and/or community impact.
- Can demonstrate active involvement in the day-to-day leadership or strategic direction of the business.

Nominees may be self-nominated or nominated by a peer, team member, or industry representative.

Entry Format

Entries must be submitted via the **official online application form** available at:

<https://www.whitsundaycoastchamber.com.au/business-awards/>

We recommend preparing your responses in a Word document first, then copying them into the online form. Supporting documents can be uploaded as attachments.

Key Dates

- Applications close 11:59pm Sunday 7 September 2025.
Late applications will not be accepted.
- Nominations may be announced week commencing Monday 29 September 2025
- Whitsunday Business Awards event will be held from 5:30pm Friday 21 November 2025.

Need help?

Please contact the Whitsunday Business Awards administration team with any questions via admin@whitsundaycoastchamber.com.au

What You'll Need to Complete

Below is an overview of the key questions included in the award entry form, along with guidance on what to consider when preparing your responses.

- Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.
- The points listed next to each question indicate its weighting in the judging process.
- Each response has a maximum word limit.

Acknowledgement

As part of the entry process, applicants must confirm that they:

- Have read, understood, and agree to the terms and conditions of the Whitsunday Business Awards and their selected award category.*
- Are willing and able to provide evidence, if requested, demonstrating ethical business practices and compliance with all relevant laws and regulations.*
- Grant permission for their contact details to be shared with regional media for potential interviews and publicity opportunities.*

Business Information

- Your First and Last Name *
- Name of Business or Individual you want to nominate *
- Australian Business Number (ABN) *
- Email Address *
- Phone *
- Street Address/Business Location *
- Suburb
- State
- Post code
- Business Website

PART 1 - What do you do?

1.1 Describe your business (maximum 300 words, 10 points) *

Provide a clear overview of your business, including:

- What your business does and the industry it operates in
- The core drivers of your success
- Key goals, strategies, and areas of focus
- Your primary customers or markets, and how you plan to grow
- Examples of how your business has evolved, adapted to change, or introduced innovation through new products, services, or processes

PART 2 - How do you do it?

2.1 Vision and Business Impact (max. 300 words, 10 points)*

Describe how your leadership and vision have contributed to the growth, success, or transformation of your business (or the business you lead) within the Whitsunday region.

Your response could include:

- Strategic direction and business achievements under your leadership
- How your vision has shaped operations, culture, or outcomes
- Metrics demonstrating business growth or success

2.2 Industry and Regional Contribution (max. 300 words, 10 points)*

Share examples of how your leadership has influenced broader positive change in your industry or the regional business community.

Your response could include:

- Advocacy, partnerships, or mentorship efforts
- Initiatives that benefit other local businesses or sectors
- Contributions to industry development, collaboration, or policy

2.3 Building People and Culture (max. 300 words, 10 points)*

How do you lead and support your team?

Your response should outline:

- Leadership approach and its impact on workplace culture
- Support for staff development, wellbeing, and inclusion
- Evidence such as testimonials or employee feedback

2.4 Driving Innovation (max. 300 words, 10 points)*

How do you encourage innovation and continuous improvement?

Your response should outline:

- Use of new technologies, processes, or data
- Development of new products or services
- Examples of innovative problem-solving, digitisation, or customer/staff engagement

PART 3 - What are your impact?

3.1 Economic Contribution (max. 300 words, 10 points)*

Outline your broader economic contribution to the Whitsunday region beyond your direct business outcomes.

Consider including:

- Local employment generation
- Investment or regional supply chain engagement
- Business support, capacity-building, or collaboration



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3.2 Social Impact (max. 300 words, 10 points)*

Demonstrate how your business or leadership supports your community.

Consider including:

- Support for charities, events, or local initiatives
- Accessibility, diversity, and inclusion practices
- Volunteerism, advocacy, or community leadership

3.3 Environmental Impact (max. 300 words, 10 points)*

Outline your approach to sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Your response should include:

- Key sustainability goals or practices
- Waste, energy, and emissions reduction
- Integration of environmental considerations across your business
- Circular economy or sustainable design initiatives

PART 4 - Why are you exceptional?

4.1 What sets you apart? (max. 300 words, 10 points)*

Highlight the standout qualities that make your leadership exceptional.

Your response should include:

- Differentiators and unique contributions
- Awards, milestones, and achievements
- Stories of customer, team, or industry impact
- Contributions to the reputation of the Whitsundays

4.2 Why should you be recognised? (max. 300 words, 10 points)*

Explain why you deserve to be named Business Leader of the Year.

Consider including:

- How your leadership embodies excellence
- What this recognition would mean to you and your team
- The legacy or inspiration you aim to create

Supporting Material

To support your application, you can upload **up to three (3) supporting files** (such as testimonials, photos of your team, premises, or community activities, business performance graphs or media coverage) and an optional video on why you should win.

Please upload a high-resolution image of your **business logo**. *

Top Ten Tips for a Strong Application

1. **Be clear and concise** – Communicate your message simply and directly. Focus on key achievements and impacts.
2. **Tailor your responses** – Align your answers with the specific criteria of the award category you're entering.
3. **Use evidence and examples** – Back up your claims with real results, data, or short case studies where relevant.
4. **Make the most of your word count** – Stay within the word limit, prioritising quality over quantity.
5. **Avoid jargon** – Use plain English that can be easily understood by judges from any industry background.
6. **Demonstrate impact** – Explain how your work makes a difference—to customers, staff, or the wider community.
7. **Attach relevant support materials** – Only include documentation that directly strengthens your entry.
8. **Have someone review it** – A second pair of eyes can help catch gaps, errors, or unclear messaging.
9. **Speak from the heart** – Let your passion, purpose, and pride in your work come through clearly.
10. **Answer each question thoroughly** – Ensure you've addressed all parts of the question before submitting.

Eligibility, Terms & Conditions

Eligibility

- Entrants must work in or operate a registered business within the Whitsunday Regional Council area.
- Businesses must have been operational for at least 12 months as of Monday 4 August 2025, unless entering a category that permits new or emerging businesses.
- Employees, apprentices or trainees must have been working in the business for at least 12 months as of Monday 4 August 2025.
- Entrants must demonstrate ethical business practices and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Sole traders, not-for-profits, and social enterprises are eligible to apply where relevant to category criteria.



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Entry Requirements

- All entries must be submitted via the official online nomination form by the published closing time and date of **11:59pm Sunday 7 September 2025**. Entries submitted after this deadline will not be considered.
- Entrants can apply to a **maximum two award categories** but must submit a separate application for each.
- All responses must be truthful and accurate to the best of the entrant's knowledge.

Judging

- Entries will be assessed by an independent panel of judges appointed by the award program partners.
- Entries that are incomplete, off-topic, or fail to sufficiently address the award criteria may be deemed ineligible and will not be forwarded to judges.
- Judges' decisions are final, and no correspondence will be entered into regarding outcomes.
- The Judging Panel reserves the right to withdraw any entry if the business or nominee is found to have brought the Awards or award program partners into disrepute.
- The Judging Panel reserves the right to move entries between categories if deemed more appropriate.

Confidentiality

- All information submitted will be treated as confidential and used solely for the purpose of judging.
- Judges and award program administrators are bound by confidentiality agreements.

Promotion and Media

- By entering, finalists and winners agree to have their business name, logo, and images used for promotional purposes related to the Awards.
- Event photography and videography may be used for marketing and reporting purposes by the award program partners.

Costs

- There is no cost to enter the Awards. Finalists are responsible for their own attendance and any associated costs to attend the Awards Event.