



Regional
Development
Australia
FAR WEST NSW

2026 Far West Excellence in Business Awards

GUIDELINES



"The Awards put exceptional business people in the spotlight, acknowledging their hard work and commitment in building great businesses within our communities."



ABOUT THE AWARDS

The Far West Excellence in Business Awards is the region's most prestigious and celebrated annual business event. Established in 2014, they recognise and celebrate the achievements of people and businesses in the region, the Awards offer an important opportunity to showcase the achievements and capabilities of the businesses that form the backbone of the region's economy.

The Far West Excellence in Business Awards;

- Provide inspiration to local businesses.
- Set benchmarks for best practice.
- Celebrate outstanding achievements.
- Encourage business to innovate and plan for the future.
- Recognise exceptional staff.
- Recognise the commitment and achievement of the region's apprentices and trainees.

Since 2014, the outstanding achievements of a wide range of organisations have been acknowledged, regardless of the size of the industry or business.

Outback Spirit Award

This Award is chosen by the judging panel and will be selected from the winners of the business categories. It recognises an organisation that demonstrates overall excellence in their field and across all categories.

This category cannot be applied for

Dave Gallagher Community Spirit Award

This Award is chosen by the judging panel and will be selected from the finalist of the business categories. It recognises an organisation that demonstrates a strong commitment to growing and supporting Far West NSW.

This category cannot be applied for

DATES TO REMEMBER

Entries Open: 01 July 2026
Entries Close: Midnight, 31 August 2026
Gala Awards Event: Saturday 07 November 2026

Nominating in the Awards

The Far West Excellence in Business Awards consist of 2 different sections.

SECTION ONE – SELF NOMINATED CATEGORIES, CONSISTING OF;

1. **Excellence in Business** - This category recognises a business with 10 or more employees that has effectively driven growth and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies implemented to achieve business success and/or resilience.
2. **Excellence in Customer Service** - Awarded to a business that recognises and demonstrates that their customers are the core of their business.
3. **Best Small Business** - Recognising a business with less than 10 employees that has effectively driven growth and is able to demonstrate the strategies implemented to achieve business success and/or resilience.
4. **Best New Business** - This category recognises a new business (less than 2 years old) that has effectively driven growth and is able to demonstrate the potential to achieve future success.
5. **Outstanding Employee of the Year** - The Outstanding Employee Award recognises an inspirational employee who has demonstrated a passion for their role and a commitment to their workplace and community.
6. **Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality** - This award recognises a business that has achieved significant growth (market share, sales volume, turnover, profitability) and is able to demonstrate the specific strategies and plans implemented to achieve sustainable growth in the previous financial year.
7. **Excellence in Social Enterprise / Outstanding Community Organisation** - This award recognises an organisation that works to improve the social, cultural or environmental wellbeing of the community.
8. **Employer of Choice** - This award recognises a business that has implemented strategies and initiatives to create stimulating and supportive workplace environments for its employees.
9. **Excellence in Innovation** - This award recognises a business that has implemented innovative solutions for new and existing business needs through the introduction or improvement of an idea, product, method, technology, process or application.
10. **Excellence in Presentation and Marketing** - Awarded to a business that demonstrates a focus on sound marketing principals and development of a strong business image.
11. **Apprentice or Trainee of the Year** - Awarded to an apprentice or trainee that has gone above and beyond the call of duty and made a valuable contribution to the success of the business they work for.
12. **Outstanding Arts and Cultural Organisation** - Awarded to the most outstanding arts and cultural organisation in the far west that provide a positive benefit for the community. This includes all areas of the arts including music, visual arts, performance and craft, as well as cultural institutions such as museums, galleries and keeping places.

All nominations for the Business Awards must be submitted online at <https://www.farwestbusinessawards.com.au/>

You must nominate your business and complete the nomination form to enter the Business Awards categories above.

SECTION TWO - THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS CONSISTING OF;

1. **The Region's Most Popular Business** - Awarded to the region's most popular business as voted by the public.
2. **Service with a Smile** - Awarded to the region's most popular employee as voted by the public.
3. **Community Organisation** - Awarded to the region's most popular Community Organisation as voted by the public.

The public can nominate you and your business in the People's Choice categories.

Nominations for the People's Choice can be made;

1. Online at <https://www.farwestbusinessawards.com.au/>
2. Online through QR code to access the form.
3. In paper format – Paper nominations are only available at the RDA Far West Office, 353 Blende Street. Paper nominations must be completed and submitted at the RDA Far West office.

THE JUDGING PROCESS

The Business Awards categories are judged by an independent panel of experts. None of the panel have visited our region and their assessment will be based purely on the information you include in your nomination. They are not aware of your business or the outstanding achievements of your business or team, if you don't tell them they won't know. The Tips and hints document provides additional information that may assist you.

The People's Choice Awards category winners are the businesses, individuals and organisation who receive the greatest number of votes.



HOW THE AWARDS HELP GROW YOUR BUSINESS

Participating in business awards can significantly boost your business's growth by enhancing its reputation, increasing brand awareness, and fostering valuable connections. Winning an award, or being a finalist, can lead to media coverage, increased customer trust, and stronger employee morale. This recognition can also attract new customers, investors, and business partners, ultimately driving sales and revenue.

- **ENHANCED REPUTATION AND CREDIBILITY:**
Business awards serve as a form of external validation, demonstrating excellence and reliability to both customers and potential investors.
- **INCREASED BRAND AWARENESS:**
Participating in awards programs can lead to media coverage, which helps raise brand awareness and visibility within the industry.
- **BOOSTED EMPLOYEE MORALE:**
Recognition and appreciation for their hard work can increase job satisfaction and retention rates among employees.
- **ATTRACTING NEW CUSTOMERS AND INVESTORS:**
Being a finalist in the Business Awards can be a powerful marketing tool, attracting new customers who are drawn to leading companies and fostering trust in the brand.
- **NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES:**
Award ceremonies and events provide valuable networking opportunities to connect with peers, industry experts, and potential partners.
- **DRIVING INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE:**
The process of preparing for an award application can lead to reflection on current practices and identify areas for improvement and innovation.
- **STRATEGICALLY REVIEW YOUR BUSINESS GROWTH:**
Developing your nomination provides an opportunity to review your growth and reflect on the positives of the previous 12 months.
- **LONG-TERM GROWTH:**
The positive impacts of participating in business awards can extend beyond the immediate recognition, creating lasting benefits for the company.

IS MY BUSINESS ELIGIBLE?

Nominated business will be eligible to enter the Far West NSW Excellence in Business Awards, providing the following criteria is met.

The nominated business must:

- Reside in Far West NSW; which is classified as the RDA Far West regional footprint as shown in the map below
- Be a registered trading business



CONDITIONS OF NOMINATION

1. All entrants or nominations must operate in the Far West of NSW, as defined by the RDA Far West regional footprint, and the map on page 5.
2. The Judging Panel reserves the right to place your entry into a category it feels most appropriate.
3. The Judging Panel reserves the right to create or delete categories based on the number of entries received.
4. The applicant acknowledges that if they win an Award, that the Award is personal to the winner and is not assignable to another person or business.
5. Awards will be presented to the organisation, or the person named on the nomination form.
6. No alterations to nominations will be accepted after the published closing date for nominations.
7. **A finalist MUST have a representative present at the gala event on 07 November 2026**
8. The winner of the **Outback Spirit Award** will be required to deliver a brief acceptance speech.
9. The winner of the **Dave Gallagher Commitment to Community Award** will be required to deliver a brief (1-minute) acceptance speech.
10. Nomination for the Awards is free.
11. Your privacy is protected, and all entries are regarded as CONFIDENTIAL, all individuals involved in the judging process are required to complete a 'Confidentiality Agreement.'
12. Entries must be submitted in the official entry format, online or People's Choice as an online or paper copy. All questions must be addressed in full to be eligible.
13. All entrants or nominations must be registered with the ATO as a business and hold a current ABN number, except People's Choice.
14. Sponsors may enter the Awards but may not enter the category that they are sponsoring.
15. New Business category – defined as operating less than 2 years.
16. Best Small Business category – defined as less than 10 Employees.
17. Best Business category – defined as 10 or more Employees.
18. People's Choice – entrants must act honestly, fairly and in good faith in participating in the Awards. Entries must be submitted on the official entry format online or People's Choice paper copy at the RDA Far West Office.
19. No responsibility is accepted for late, lost, incomplete, incorrectly submitted, or misdirected entries or due to technical malfunctions that result in an individual being unable to submit an entry online.
20. The judge's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

Celebrating Success in the Far West