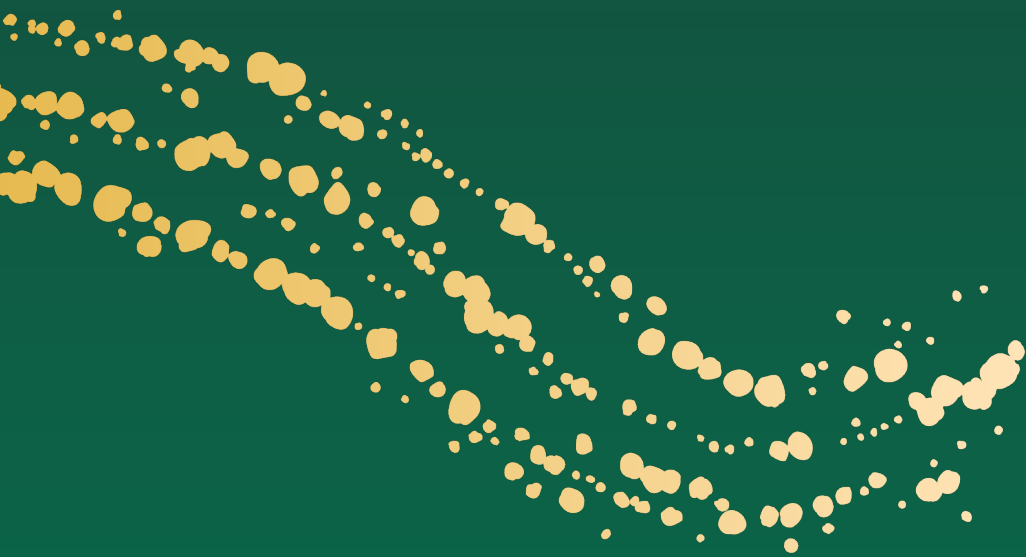




Australian Government
Australian Trade and Investment Commission

64th
Australian
Export Awards

2026 Australian Export Awards - Program Guidelines



Opening date and time:	14 April 2026 at 2:00pm AEST
Closing date and time:	12 June 2026 at 11:59 pm AEST
Commonwealth policy entity:	Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade)
Administering entity	Austrade
Enquiries:	visit www.exportawards.gov.au
Date guidelines released:	14 April 2026

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1. Australian Export Awards overview

The Australian Export Awards (the Awards program) is one of Australia's most prestigious and longest running export awards programs. The Awards program's purpose is to elevate and promote Australia's excellence in exporting and the economic and social benefits that trade and investment deliver for Australia.

Austrade works with state and territory partners to deliver the Awards according to these guidelines.



The Awards program open for application

We publish the Awards program guidelines on exportawards.gov.au.



You complete and submit an application

Complete and submit an application in the online portal of your home state or territory. The application must address all eligibility criteria as per Section 3 and Section 4 and must be completed in full, with all required attachments. You must submit your completed application and attachments before the closing date.



States and territories select finalists

State and territory government representatives will assess the applications against eligibility criteria. Eligible applications will be assessed by the relevant state or territory selection panel, or responsible delegate, against the assessment criteria.



State and territory winners announced

Winners of the state or territory category awards will be announced at state and territory award ceremonies.



National finalists and national winners selected

Austrade undertakes additional eligibility checks against state and territory winners prior to accepting the business at national level. Austrade will advise all state and territory winners of the outcome of this check.

Eligible national finalists will progress to a national judging process to determine a national winner in each national category.

The Minister makes final decision based on recommendations from a National Judging Panel. The Minister also selects Australian Exporter of the Year.



National ceremony

Austrade will announce national category winners and the Australian Exporter of the Year at the national awards ceremony at Australian Parliament House.



Trade promotion and facilitation

The Australian Exporter of the Year and all national category winners are promoted through Austrade social media channels and the Go Global Toolkit Academy. Austrade and state and territory government partners further engage with winners and finalists through trade facilitation.

1.1 Introduction

These guidelines contain information for the 2026 Australian Export Awards.

You must read these award guidelines before filling out an application.

This document sets out:

- the purpose and objectives of the program
- the eligibility and judging criteria and how to apply
- how award applicants are considered and selected
- how we may notify state and national finalists
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the Awards.

The Awards program is administered by Austrade for the Australian Government, in partnership with state and territory government partners.

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in Section 17.

Applicants should read this document carefully before submitting an application. We administer the Awards program with consideration of our obligations under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the PGPA Act) and the *Australian Trade and Investment Commission Act 1985*.

These guidelines will be updated annually as necessary. These 2026 guidelines, opening and closing dates and any other relevant information are at www.exportawards.gov.au.

2. About the Awards program

2.1 Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the Awards program is to elevate and promote Australia's excellence in exporting and the economic and social benefits that trade and investment deliver for Australia.

The objectives of the Awards program are:

- a. Showcase Australian innovation and capability by promoting our world-class exporters across a diverse range of sectors.
- b. Recognise Australian exporters creating economic or social benefits for Australia, including through efforts to:
 - i. contribute to Australian export trade diversification, net zero transformation, First Nations outcomes, manufacturing capability, economic security, or digital technology; or
 - ii. position Australia at the forefront of emerging industries; or
 - iii. contribute to Australia's national resilience or economic growth including through growth in foreign investment to support exports from Australia to global markets.
- c. Encourage and support more Australian businesses to become export-ready, diversify into new and emerging international markets, and succeed on the global stage.

2.2 Changes to the Awards program

The following changes are being implemented for the 64th Australian Export Awards program.

2.2.1 Reduction of categories

The 'e-Commerce' category was removed to reflect that digital commerce capability is now embedded across export sectors. Businesses that utilise e-commerce or digital platform to reach international customers are encouraged to apply under the category that aligns with their core product, service or industry.

All national categories were reviewed and simplified to better reflect contemporary export activity. There are 13 national categories for the 64th Awards program, with details at Section 4.

[Contact](#) your state and territory government representatives to discuss what category best suits your business.

2.2.2 Grouping and limitation of categories

A business can only apply in one of each of the following national category types:

- a. **National sector categories:** sectors, agreed between Austrade and its state and territory government partners, that represent export industries and sectors across a broad range of Australian goods and services exports.
- b. **Cross-cutting categories:** are not sector specific. They highlight achievements of Australian goods and services exporters across the economy.

Example: Business A, harvests and manufactures avocado oil from their operational headquarters in Atherton, Queensland. Business A has an annual turnover of \$8million and has been exporting for more than 5 years.

Business A would be eligible to apply for the Agribusiness, Food and Beverage category, as well either the Regional Exporter or Small Business category.

2.3 Awards program period

The Awards program will be open for applications from 2:00pm AEST 14 April 2026 to 11:59pm AEST Friday 12 June 2026.

3. Eligibility criteria

A business must demonstrate it meets all eligibility criteria to have its application assessed by a judge (Section 7.1).

A business must have no adverse findings following due diligence checks (Section 3.7.1) to progress as a state and territory finalist.

3.1 Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible to apply, a business must:

- a. be registered in Australia with an active Australian Business Number (ABN)
- b. operate as a separate business if part of a larger organisation
- c. operate legally in Australia and comply with all regulatory requirements.
- d. maintain appropriate business ethics and demonstrate a commitment to legal obligations including anti-bribery laws and laws to combat modern slavery, both in Australia and overseas markets.

- e. hold all relevant insurances, such as public liability and workers compensation, and be compliant with Australian tax obligations.
- f. meet all eligibility criteria in this section and in Section 4.

3.2 Previous winners

A business that has previously won a national category and has not been inducted into the Hall of Fame is eligible to apply for the Awards program.

3.3 Who is not eligible to apply

A business is not eligible to apply if they:

- a. are a government entity as defined in the “A New Tax System (Australian Business Number) Act 1999”, except where they are registered education and training providers.
- b. sponsor a state or territory Export Awards program or the Australian Export Awards program
- c. have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

3.4 Hall of Fame

The Hall of Fame was established in 2002 to recognise Australian exporters who have won across the same or multiple categories over several years. To be inducted into the Hall of Fame, a business must have:

- a. won 3 times in the same, or similar, national category; or
- b. won 5 times across different national categories.

A business inducted into the Hall of Fame is no longer eligible to apply.

3.5 General eligibility criteria

3.5.1 Eligible products or services

Businesses must demonstrate in their application that at least 50% of the overall value of their exported product or service is attributable to Australian inputs, capability, or benefit, using any three of the following five measures:

- a. Australian value-add: design, development, engineering, processing, manufacturing, branding, or service delivery occurring in Australia.
- b. Australian workforce: a significant proportion of staff or contractors are based in Australia.
- c. Australian IP ownership or creation: core intellectual property is developed, controlled, or legally owned in Australia.
- d. Australian management and decision-making: strategic leadership and operational oversight are located in Australia.
- e. Australian economic return: a substantial portion of profits or benefits flow back into Australia through employment, taxation, procurement, reinvestment, or cultural/economic contribution.

Businesses may be requested to provide additional information or evidence to substantiate alignment to the above measures.

3.5.2 Export activity

A business must be able to demonstrate to our reasonable satisfaction, that it has derived direct revenue across the three most recent financial years from the export of eligible goods or services.

Export activity must be lawful and ethically conducted and adhere to the [OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises](#).

3.5.3 Financial stability

A business must demonstrate to our reasonable satisfaction sound financial stability through provision of financial data.

A business may be requested to provide financial statements or other evidence to verify any information provided in the submission. Businesses cannot be insolvent, under administration, or subject to regulatory sanctions.

3.6 National finalist eligibility

To progress into the national program a business must meet all eligibility requirements, and must also have:

- a. won in one of the 13 national categories at the state or territory level,
- b. successfully progressed through national due diligence checks (Section 3.7.1) with no adverse findings (Section 3.7.2).

Winning at the state level does not automatically guarantee that a business will progress to the national level. A winner at the state and territory level is only deemed an 'eligible' national finalist once all due diligence is completed.

3.7 Due diligence

Due diligence commences on application to the program and concludes on the day of the national ceremony.

3.7.1 Due diligence checks

Austrade undertakes due diligence of all national finalists. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. ABN status check
- b. checks against all eligibility criteria in Section 3 and Section 4
- c. financial checks, such as financial insolvency
- d. business screening through media monitoring and other checks, including checks against business leadership, directors or boards, and
- e. review of publicly available information of the business where relevant

Austrade sets the expectations for each state and territory government representative to undertake similar due diligence. Austrade is not responsible for a state and territory due diligence process, or findings resulting from this process.

Austrade's right to undertake due diligence in relation to all national finalists is not limited by the fact that a state or territory government may have conducted their own due diligence in relation to a particular finalist or finalists.

3.7.2 Due diligence findings

A business may be found ineligible at the national level if there are any adverse findings as part of due diligence checks (3.7.1).

Adverse findings include, but are not limited to, any activity that has the potential to cause harm or cause reputational damage to Austrade, or the Australian Government and program sponsors.

The Austrade responsible delegate may exclude a business from consideration for an award based on the information available through the application process or due diligence.

The Minister for Trade and Tourism reserves the right to deem a business not eligible if the business' conduct may bring, or has brought, Austrade or the Australian Government into disrepute.

All decisions are final and there is no appeal mechanism for outcomes of due diligence. Any communication on the decision is at Austrade's discretion.

Austrade is not responsible for state and territory identification and handling of any adverse findings as a result of any state and territory due diligence processes. Austrade is not bound by any adverse findings of any state or territory government, however, Austrade may have reasonable regard to any such adverse findings for the purpose of making its own decision as to eligibility.

4. National categories

There are 13 national categories for the 2026 Awards program.

A business can apply in up to two categories, with maximum one of each of the following national category types only:

- National sector category (Section 7.1)
- Cross-cutting category (Section 7.2)

4.1 National sector categories

National sectors categories, agreed between Austrade and its state and territory government partners, represent export industries and sectors across a broad range of Australian goods and services exports.

4.1.1 Agribusiness, Food and Beverages

4.1.1.1 Description

Outstanding international success in manufactured foods, beverages or agricultural products.

This includes primary production, forestry, fisheries and related services or technology.

4.1.1.2 Eligibility

Businesses must fit the description of Section 4.1.1.1 and meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3.

4.1.2 Creative, Lifestyle and Design

4.1.2.1 Description

Outstanding international success in creative industries and consumer-facing, design-led products and services. This brings together creative outputs and lifestyle/consumer brands where design and brand experience are central.

4.1.2.2 Eligibility

Businesses must fit the description of Section 4.1.2.1 and meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3.

4.1.3 Digital and Smart Technologies

4.1.3.1 Description

Outstanding international success in information technology, digital technologies, software, hardware or digital services.

This includes solutions using cloud, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Internet of Things, Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality, robotics, quantum, fintech, cybersecurity and related tools.

4.1.3.2 Eligibility

Businesses must fit the description of Section 4.1.3.1 and meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3.

4.1.4 International Education and Training

4.1.4.1 Description

Outstanding international success in education and training.

This includes higher education, VET, transnational education, online learning, curriculum development and EdTech.

4.1.4.2 Eligibility

Businesses must fit the description of Section 4.1.4.1 and meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3.

4.1.5 International Health

4.1.5.1 Description

Outstanding international success in the fields of health, medical or wellbeing.

This includes biotechnology, biosecurity, medical technology, digital health, e-health, aged care, disability, complementary health, pharmaceuticals and related services.

4.1.5.2 Eligibility

Businesses must fit the description of Section 4.1.5.1 and meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3.

4.1.6 Manufacturing and Advanced Materials

4.1.6.1 Description

Outstanding international success in manufacturing, engineering or advanced materials development.

This includes manufacturing of medical devices, advanced manufacturing technologies, design and production.

4.1.6.2 Eligibility

Businesses must fit the description of Section 4.1.6.1 and meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3.

4.1.7 Professional Services

4.1.7.1 Description

Outstanding international success in the field of professional services.

This includes legal, accounting, administration and support services, business management and consultancy, marketing services, franchising and licensing, engineering, financial and insurance, market research, translation services and tourism and business events.

4.1.7.2 Eligibility

Businesses must fit the description of Section 4.1.7.1 and meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3.

4.1.8 Resources and Energy

4.1.8.1 Description

Outstanding international success in the resources and energy sectors.

This includes production, processing or value-adding of extractive resources, or provision of related equipment, services or technology.

4.1.8.2 Eligibility

Businesses must fit the description of Section 4.1.8.1 and meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3.

4.1.9 Sustainability and Green Economy

4.1.9.1 Description

Outstanding international success in the Green Economy.

This includes environmental solutions, clean energy, sustainable materials, renewables, waste and water management, green building, smart cities or businesses with strong sustainability practices.

4.1.9.2 Eligibility

Businesses must fit the description of Section 4.1.9.1 and meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3.

4.2 Cross-cutting categories

Cross-cutting categories, agreed between Austrade and its state and territory government partners, are not sector specific. They highlight achievements of Australian goods and services exporters across the economy.

4.2.1 Emerging Exporter

4.2.1.1 Description

Outstanding export achievement by a business which has been exporting for two years or less. This includes established and new businesses in any industry.

4.2.1.2 Eligibility

To be eligible for the Emerging Exporter category, a business must:

- a. meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3
- b. be exporting for 2 years or less

A business that applies in this category is not eligible to apply in any other sector specific or business category.

Example: Business B designs ready to wear athletic clothing from their headquarters in Darlinghurst, Sydney. Business B has an annual turnover of \$1.5 million and has been exporting for 16 months.

Business B would only be eligible to apply for the Emerging Exporter category.

4.2.2 First Nations Exporter

4.2.2.1 Description

Outstanding international success by a First Nations business. This includes First Nations businesses operating in any industry.

4.2.2.2 Eligibility

To be eligible for the First Nations category, a business must:

- a. meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3
- b. be 51% First Nations owned by individuals who are recognised as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.
- c. provide evidence to demonstrate the business meets the 51% threshold.

To ensure alignment with the Australian Government's [Indigenous Procurement Policy](#), evidence must include the below registrations or certifications:

- a. with Supply Nation on the '[Indigenous Business Direct](#)' public register (as a 'registered' or 'certified')
- b. by the [Office of the Registrar for Indigenous Corporations \(ORIC\)](#)
- c. by the [First Nations Chamber of Commerce and Industry \(FNCCI\)](#),
- d. By other Indigenous Chamber of Commerce within a businesses' home state or territory, or Australian Indigenous Chamber of Commerce.
- e. by [Indigenous Business Australia](#), or an [Indigenous Business and Employment Hub](#), under the [National Indigenous Australians Agency \(NIAA\)](#),
- f. by local Aboriginal Land Councils or Prescribes Bodies Corporate (PBC), or
- g. other government recognised indigenous business registers.

4.2.3 Regional Exporter

4.2.3.1 Description

Outstanding international success by a regional business.

This includes businesses in any sector that is based in a regional or remote location.

4.2.3.2 Eligibility

To be eligible for the Regional Exporter category, a business must:

- a. meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3
- b. have their primary operations located in a regional or remote Australian area as per [ABS ASGS RA1-RA4](#)*; or
- c. have a significant proportion of their value-add or production activity occurs in regional or remote Australian area as per [ABS RA1-RA4](#); or
- d. generate measurable regional economic benefit, such as:
 - a. regional employment
 - b. supply chain engagement
 - c. operating facilities in regional locations
 - d. investment in regional communities
- e. a [RA0](#)* (major cities) headquartered organisation may qualify only if it can demonstrate substantial, ongoing regional operations linked to export activity.

*The [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\) Edition 3 Remoteness Area](#), is managed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Remoteness Areas divide Australia into five classes of remoteness which are characterised by a measure of relative geographic access to services.

The Awards program utilises the ASGS to establish consistent eligibility on what 'regional or remote' is for the purpose of this category.

The eligible Remoteness Area will be determined at the time an application is submitted and will be maintained throughout the program year.

4.2.4 Small Business

4.2.4.1 Description

For outstanding international success by a small business.

This includes businesses with total annual turnover not exceeding A\$10 million.

4.2.4.2 Eligibility

To be eligible for the Small Business category, a business must:

- a. meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3, and
- b. must meet requirements outlined by the Australian Taxation Office regarding the [definition of a small business entity](#), that is:
 - must have annual sales (turn over) below \$10 million and not be linked with any other business.

4.3 State based categories

The following state and territories have additional categories within their state program. Winners of these categories do not progress as a finalist to the national program.

States and territories have sole discretion over additional state-based categories. [Contact](#) your state and territory government representatives to discuss any state-based categories.

4.3.1 New South Wales

4.3.1.1 Western Sydney Exporter Award

For outstanding export achievement in any Industry sector, by an enterprise located in the Greater Western Sydney area.

4.3.1.2 NSW Exporter to Asia Award

For outstanding export achievement in ASIA in any industry sector.

4.3.2 Queensland

4.3.2.1 Women in International Business

Recognising the outstanding achievement in international business by a woman, or group of women, either through developing or leading an international enterprise, or through their contribution as a senior leader in an enterprise.

The award particularly focuses on achievement in international markets, as well as an ongoing commitment to international trade relations.

4.3.3 Victoria

4.3.3.1 Global Victoria Women

For outstanding success by a Victorian woman involved in international business.

5. Assessment criteria

You must address all criteria and provide required attachments and evidence in the application form. The application form asks questions and requests information that related to the eligibility criteria in Section 3 and 4, and assessment criteria in this section.

Judges will score each section based on the weighting indicated at Section 5.1 and score per the scoring guide at Section 5.2.

5.1 Section weighting

We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each assessment area. There are three assessment areas that are weighted and scored.

Assessment area	Weighting
1: Your business story and national benefit	40%
2: National category	20%
3: Business and export growth strategy	40%

5.2 Scoring guide

Your applications will be scored using the following range:

Score range	Guidance
1 – 32	Demonstrates little or no understanding of the criteria; addresses it to an unsatisfactory level.
33 - 50	Demonstrates some understanding of the criteria; addresses it to a basic level.
51 - 65	Demonstrates satisfactory understanding of the criteria; addresses it to a satisfactory level.
66 - 85	Demonstrates a good understanding of the criteria; demonstrates a high level of achievement in addressing it.
85 - 100	Demonstrates a very good understanding of the criteria; demonstrates an outstanding level of achievement in addressing it.

5.3 Assessment area 1: Your business story and national benefit

Criterion 1: Demonstrated advantages in international markets due to clear value proposition and business innovation/s.

Demonstrate this by telling a compelling story about what makes the business unique, inspiring, innovative and competitive.

You must demonstrate this through examples such as:

- The motivation or idea behind your business.
- What makes your brand, products or services, intellectual property and operations unique, innovative and competitive.

Criterion 2: Demonstrated export success

Demonstrate this by providing a clear example of the businesses export success, and any impacts, benefits or diversification as a result of the international business outcome.

Include details of the outcome or impact through examples such as:

- what was the impact on your bottom line?
- where there any key drivers to this success, e.g. innovation, diversification, access to new markets, new marketing campaigns etc?
- did it allow you to hire more staff?
- did it increase your export revenue?
- did it allow you to expand into new markets?
- did you find new customers?

Criterion 3: Demonstrated value and benefit to Australia

Demonstrate this by detailing direct and indirect linkages to the creation of economic or social benefits, and the businesses contribution to the economic prosperity of Australia through efforts such as:

- trade diversification
- sustainability or transformative net-zero activities
- First Nations outcomes
- manufacturing capability
- economic and national security
- economic return and investment, including foreign investment to support export trade
- digital technology
- job creation and skills development within Australia
- cultural promotion

5.4 Assessment area 2: National category

Criterion: Demonstrated specialised knowledge of sector or business type.

Demonstrate this by providing specific examples that address sector or business specific related challenges, risks or barriers, innovations or competitive edge, product development and delivery of goods and services.

5.5 Assessment area 3: Business and export growth strategy

Criterion 1: Demonstrated understanding of international business risks and risk mitigation strategies

Demonstrate this by outlining international business risks and the sound strategies and controls in place to mitigate those risks.

Criterion 2: Demonstrated commitment to export growth and diversification

Demonstrate this by providing examples on export growth and diversification over a three-year period through efforts such as:

- diversification in new or existing markets
- diversification in products or services
- sufficient resourcing and investment in staff development
- export development and commercialisation
- increases in sales and foreign revenue

- supporting international marketing strategies

5.6 Previous winners

A business that is applying in the same category they have previously won, within a 2-year period, will need to demonstrate against each assessment criterion significant advances across one or more of the below requirements:

- Export revenue growth (10%+ year-on-year).
- Market diversification (2+ new international markets).
- Innovation (new products/services/technology).
- Sustainability and net-zero impact improvements.
- Increased Australian workforce or economic contribution

Responses in the application should be tailored to demonstrate these requirements.

6. How to apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these Award program guidelines.

You can only submit an application:

- through the application state or territory online portal (see links at Section 6.1)
- during the application period.
- in one state or territory where the business' head office is located or where the majority of operations are established.
- as separate application for each eligible category (Section 4).

You can only submit an application in:

- one national sector category, and
- if eligible one cross-cutting category.

To apply you must:

- complete the online application form via the applicable state or territory online portal no later than the closing date and time.
- provide all the information requested in the application form
- meet all eligibility criteria
- address all assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments as required under Section 3, Section 4 or Section 5.
- submit a separate and complete application for each eligible category (Section 4).

You are responsible for ensuring that your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the [Criminal Code Act 1995 \(Cth\)](#). We will investigate any false or misleading information and may exclude your application from further consideration.

If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should contact us immediately on at export.awards@ustrade.gov.au. We do not have to accept any additional information, or requests from you to correct your application after the closing time.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application, including evidence that supports eligibility. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the application closing time.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

You will receive an automated email from the portal system to advise that your application has been submitted.

If you need further guidance about the application process or if you are unable to submit an application online contact your respective [state or territory contact](#) or contact the Australian Export Awards team at Austrade by email at export.awards@austrade.gov.au.

6.1 Online application portal links

Select your home State and Territory application portal from the below links.

- [ACT Chief Minister's Export Awards](#)
- [Premier of Queensland's Export Awards](#)
- [NSW Export Awards](#)
- [Northern Territory Export and Business Awards](#)
- [South Australian Premier's Business and Export Awards](#)
- [Tasmanian Export Awards](#)
- [Governor of Victoria Export Awards](#)
- [Western Australian Export Awards](#)

6.2 Attachments to the application

You must attach supporting documentation to the application form in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

6.2.1 Supporting evidence

We require you to provide information to demonstrate eligibility per Section 3 and 4, and substantiate claims against assessment criteria in Section 5.

This includes:

- a. HR data across 3 financial years for full-time employee figures and, where relevant, casual or seasonal employee figures
- b. Export revenue across 3 financial years (2023/2024, 2024/2025, 2025/2026) including:
 - total sales revenue from export and export sales
 - foreign only export revenue sales
 - export sales figures from the top 3-5 export markets
- c. If the business is an Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) listed company, information to demonstrate financial stability per Section 3.5.3 by either:
 - maximum 2-year-old audited financial report including the auditor's report, OR
 - un-audited financial results if the audited financial report is greater than 2 years old.
- d. If the business is not an ASX listed company, information to demonstrate financial stability per Section 3.5.3, by either:
 - Financial data across 3 financial years (2023/2024, 2024/2025, 2025/2026):
 - net profit
 - current, non-current and total assets
 - current, non-current and total liabilities

- net worth
- working capital, OR
- a letter from a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) that attests to your financial stability
- e. Information on any Federal or state government grants received in the last 3 years, including the:
 - purpose of the grant, and
 - amount of the grant/s

6.2.2 Promotional attachments

We require you to submit the following promotional assets with your application.

- a. digital assets for your business, including:
 - minimum three images that reflects your business' products, services, culture and community. Images must be:
 - landscape only
 - file type: JPG or PNG
 - resolution: minimum of 1MB in size, minimum of 300dpi or above
- b. business logos:
 - 1 x colour logo
 - 1 x reverses logo (white logo, clear background)
 - file type: JPG or PNG
 - resolution: High-res as EPS or AI
- c. optional: video assets for your business that promote your business' products, services, culture and community

6.3 Application period

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications unless agreed by state and territory government representatives and Austrade.

6.4 Key dates

Applications Open	2:00pm AEST, 14 April 2026
Applications Close	11:59pm AEST, 12 June 2026
Notifications to state and territory finalists	August 2026
Notification to successful state and territory award winners	August – October: at state and territory award ceremonies
Notifications to successful national finalists	August – October: following announcement of winners at each state and territory award ceremony
Notifications to successful national winners	Late-November at the national ceremony

6.5 Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application period, contact your [state or territory program representative](#) or by emailing us at export.awards@austrade.gov.au.

7. Judging process

Applications that meet all eligibility criteria in Section 3 and Section 4 are assessed by judges over 4 key stages:

Stage 1: State and territory judging

Stage 2: National category judging

Stage 3: National Judging Panel

Stage 4: Selection of national winners

The selection of category winners reflects the applications received and information available to within each stage of the judging process. The program delegate/s may exclude an application from consideration based on the information available in each stage of the judging process.

All judges will sign confidentiality agreements and conflict of interest declarations prior to commencing any judging to ensure fair, equitable and unbiased assessment of all applications.

7.1 Stage 1: State and territory judging

Judges will assess each eligible application on its merit and based on how well it meets the criteria.

Judges will only consider information that is requested as part of the application process. Additional information will not be considered.

Judges will competitively rank all applications in the same category. Each application will be scored and competitively ranked as per the Score Guide (Section 5.2).

Austrade manages the judging process in accordance with these Guidelines and sets the expectations of state and territory government representatives to act in accordance with these guidelines.

Austrade is not responsible for the judging process and outcomes of any state or territory as part of Stage 1 of the judging process.

7.2 Stage 2: National category judging

A business that wins a national category at a state and territory ceremony will progress to Stage 2, subject to progressing as an eligible national finalist (Section 3.6) with no adverse due diligence findings (Section 3.7).

Eligible applications (Section 3.7) are assessed by a panel of judges for each category, which may include:

- Award program sponsors,
- representatives of relevant industry or business associations,
- key internal or external stakeholders
- subject matter experts for the category.

Judges will assess each application on its merit and based on how well it meets the criteria.

Judges will only assess the requested information provided in the application. Additional information will not be considered.

Judges will competitively rank all applications in the same category. Each application will be scored and competitively ranked as per the Scoring Guide (Section 5.2) and progress through to the National Judging Panel.

7.3 Stage 3: National Judging Panel

The National Judging Panel (the Panel) is by invitation only at the discretion of the Austrade CEO, and is comprised of:

- the Austrade CEO or delegate,
- Awards program sponsors
- relevant C-suite business leaders or head of agency government officials

The Panel reviews outcomes of national category judging at Stage 2, to make recommendations to the Minister for Trade and Tourism. The Panel takes into consideration:

- national category judges scores and comments
- overall alignment to the Awards program's purpose and objectives
- due diligence findings (Section 3.7.2)

The Panel recommends national category winners to the Minister for Trade and Tourism.

7.4 Stage 4: Selection of national winners

The Minister for Trade and Tourism will make the final decision on the national category winners and the Australian Exporter of the year, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Panel, due diligence findings and overall alignment to the Awards program's purpose and objectives.

There is no appeal mechanism for decisions on national winners.

8. Notification of application outcomes

State and territory government representatives may advise you of the outcome of your application in writing.

8.1 Feedback on the application

State and territory government partners reserve the right to decide if they provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

Austrade will provide written feedback to national finalists that ask within 1 month of the request.

8.2 How winners are announced

Winners are publicly announced at both the state and territory ceremonies and the Austrade national ceremony.

Austrade may notify a category winner in advance of the national ceremony. This information is under strict embargo until we publicly announce all winners at the national ceremony.

8.3 Obligations of national category winners

Following the national ceremony, national category winners are encouraged to assist in publicly promoting trade and investment opportunities and the Awards program.

There are no set obligations following the national ceremony.

9. Probity

We will make sure that the Awards program process is fair, is conducted substantially in accordance with the published guidelines and incorporates safeguards against fraud and corruption, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct.

These guidelines may be changed from time-to-time by Austrade. When this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on www.exportawards.gov.au.

10. Enquiries and feedback

For further information you can contact us at export.awards@austrade.gov.au or contact your [state or territory](#) government representative.

If you have a complaint, contact us at export.awards@austrade.gov.au. We will refer your complaint to the appropriate person/s.

If you do not agree with the way Austrade has handled your complaint, you may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will not usually consider a complaint unless the matter has first been raised directly with Austrade.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072

Website: www.ombudsman.gov.au

11. Conflict of interest

Any person that is involved with the assessment of applications through the judging process will be asked to declare any perceived or exciting conflicts of interest or that, to the best of their knowledge, there are no conflicts of interest.

Any conflicts of interest could affect the Awards. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if Austrade's staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel, including sub-contractors have a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who can influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel
- relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/ grant opportunity.

You may be asked to declare, as part of your application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interest or that, to the best of your knowledge, there are no conflicts of interest.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(section 13\(7\)\)](#) of the [Public Service Act 1999](#).

12. Terms of Participation

The Australian Export Awards program is run by the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade) ABN 11 764 698 227, Levels 1-2, Nishi Building, 2 Phillip Law Street, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia.

1. By applying using the Awards program online portal you are accepting these terms on behalf of your business.
2. You confirm that you have the authority to apply, give consents, and provide information on behalf of your business.
3. You confirm that your business meets the eligibility criteria under Section 4 and Section 5.
4. After you submit your application, Austrade and/or relevant State or Territory Export Awards government representative may contact you to:
 - make further enquiries in relation to your application;
 - establish your business' suitability to be featured in the program;
 - seek further consents or releases;
 - work with your business for the purpose of running the program;
 - promote your business during or after the conclusion of the program.
5. We, meaning Austrade and its partners, cannot guarantee that your business will be featured in the program. Austrade maintains absolute discretion on whether you or your business are eligible and whether or how to feature your business in the program. Austrade may stop featuring your business in the program at any time without prior notice to you or your business.
6. You and your business are not entitled to any form of payment from Austrade or its partners in relation to the Australian Export Awards program.
7. Austrade may modify the program at any time and at its sole discretion without notice to you or your business.
8. We are not responsible for applications that we have not received, be it because they have been lost, submitted late or misdirected for any reason. Austrade does not warrant that the application form will always be available during the submission period.
9. To deliver the program, we will collect the following information:
 - your businesses details, including business address, core financials, and nature of business;
 - your name and contact details, including phone number and email address;
 - the application; and
 - any further details or material that you provide to support your application.
10. We may use your information and material to:
 - administer the program and contact you or your business in relation to the program;
 - publish and promote your business and the program using diverse media outlets and media releases, including on but not limited to social media channels, websites, email marketing, YouTube, as well as printed and broadcast media;
 - help promote Australia internationally as an exporter and investment destination; and
 - generate written case studies for other Australian Government activities.

- Supply your contact details to agencies/sponsors/suppliers engaged by Austrade of behalf of the Australian Export Awards

11. You represent and warrant that your business holds the full rights to all material that you submit as a part of your application, that such material is factually correct and that you are authorised to license our use of the material as outlined in clause 10 above.

13. Privacy

Austrade is authorised by law to collect your personal information to perform its functions under the [Australian Trade and Investment Commission Act 1985](#).

We treat your personal information in accordance with our Privacy Policy, the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- who we give your personal information to.

We may share the information with other government agencies or Award sponsors for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- to improve the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of Australian Government programs
- for promotional purposes
- for research
- to announce the Awards program winners.

Where partners that receive your personal information are state and territory agencies, they will handle such personal information in accordance with applicable privacy laws.

'Personal information' means information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:

- whether the information or opinion is true or not and
- whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- Confidential information as per Section 14 or
- Personal information

We may give the personal information we collect from you to our employees and contractors, the Panel, and other Commonwealth employees and contractors, so we can:

- administer the Awards program
- research, assess, monitor and analyze our programs and activities
- identify and manage any financial, legal/regulatory, governance, national interest or national security risks.

We, or the Minister, may:

- announce the names of successful award winners to the public
- publish personal information on the department's websites

14. Confidential Information

Other than information available in the public domain, you agree not to disclose to any person, other than us, any confidential information relating to the Awards program application, without our prior written approval. The obligation will not be breached where you are required by law, Parliament or a stock exchange to disclose the relevant information or where the relevant information is publicly available (other than through breach of a confidentiality or non-disclosure obligation).

We may at any time, require you to arrange for you; or your employees, agents or subcontractors to give a written undertaking relating to nondisclosure of our confidential information in a form we consider acceptable.

We will keep any information in connection with the Awards program confidential to the extent that it meets all of the four conditions below:

1. you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
2. the information is financial data or financial statements not publicly available and is provided by a business for the sole purpose of the Awards program
3. the information is commercially sensitive
4. revealing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else.

We will not be in breach of any confidentiality agreement if the information is disclosed to:

- the Panel and other Commonwealth employees and contractors to help us manage the program effectively, including for an integrity purpose
- employees and contractors of our department so we can research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities
- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery
- other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman, Privacy Commissioner or National Anti-Corruption Commissioner, or staff of their agencies
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary, or
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The Awards may also include any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held.

15. Freedom of Information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about this opportunity, are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#)¹ (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A02562/latest/versions>

exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

16. National Security

As part of our due diligence process, we will consider whether a business has affiliations or associations with any foreign entities, which may be contrary to Australia's sovereignty, values and national interests. This means any affiliation or association between the business and foreign entities must be open and transparent.

17. Definitions

- “application” refers to the application for participation in the Awards program submitted through the program site.
- “business” means the legal entity applying to participate in the program and agreeing to these terms.
- “partners” refers to other Australian Government and State and Territory agencies active in trade promotion, and program sponsors, supporters and co-presenters working with Austrade to administer the program.
- “the Awards program” refers to the 64th Australian Export Awards program.
- “program site” means Austrade’s www.exportawards.gov.au website for the program, including the application form linked to the website.
- “you” refers to the individual applying for recognition of a business under the program.
- “we” or “our” refers to Austrade and its state and territory partners.
- ‘home state or territory’ refers to the state or territory where your business’ majority operations or business headquarters are located.