

City of Whittlesea Business Awards 2024

The Business Awards promotes local business entrepreneurs, innovators, and hardworking operators and highlights achievements of leading the City of Whittlesea businesses across key industry sectors and provide a unique opportunity for businesses of all types and sizes to be recognised for their efforts, commitment, and successes.

The Awards are open exclusively for members of the [City of Whittlesea Business Network](#).

There are six award categories, each business can enter one award category, these categories will be judged by a panel and announced at the Gala Awards evening which includes a sit-down three-course meal and entertainment.

Entry Conditions:

- A business must be a member of the [City of Whittlesea Business Network](#) to enter (this is free)
- A business can enter a maximum of one award category
- Each business must have a valid ABN.
- Complete all contact details on the entry form.
- Businesses must be registered and/or operate within the City of Whittlesea.
- Entry to the City of Whittlesea Business Awards is free.
- Once you submit your entry your entry cannot be edited, to make changes to a submitted entry a new entry will need to be submitted.
- Entries must be made by the business, entries made by third parties on behalf of businesses will not be accepted.
- Incomplete entries will not be accepted.
- For the purpose of the Business Awards 2024, the valid reporting period (2023) is 01 Jan 2023 – 31 December 2023
- Businesses must not be in breach of any state/territory or local government law or regulation.
- The business must hold all appropriate permits and licences; this includes but is not limited to building, planning, and health permits.
- The business must not have any outstanding funds owing to Council
- Businesses with a primary operation relating to alcohol, tobacco, and tobacco-related products i.e., e-cigarettes, shisha, hookahs and pipes, gambling, and electronic gaming machines are not eligible to enter.
- The finalists and winners will be selected by a judging panel; the panel's decision is final.
- Entries will be submitted through a MS Forms entry form
- Entries will be accepted from the previous year's award entrants, finalists, and winners of the Whittlesea Business Awards however the entry must reflect the valid entry period.
- By entering you agree to have your business name and any photos or videos produced in relation to the awards used by the City of Whittlesea for promotional activity. This may include but is not limited to, print publications, the City of Whittlesea website, and social media channels.

Entries will open on Thursday 1 February at 9 am and close on Sunday 3 March at 11:45 pm

Submitting an entry

- Businesses can choose to enter one award category.
- Entries are only valid if made through the entry form available at www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/BusinessAwards
- Once you submit your entry you will be notified by email confirmation, if you do not receive this email, please make contact by email to business@whittlesea.vic.gov.au
- If you wish to use imagery or videos as part of your award entry, please forward these to business@whittlesea.vic.gov.au with the subject line 'Business Award Entry - your business name'

Entry and Judging Process

- Each entry will be assessed in the category entered.
- Entries for each category will be short-listed to up to 5 finalists
- A judging panel will assess the finalists for each category using a scoring matrix, with a winner determined by the highest score and announced at the Gala Awards Evening
- All businesses will be notified of the outcome of their entry
- Finalists and Business Network members will be invited to the Gala Awards Evening
- City of Whittlesea reserves the right not to issue an Award in any given category

The Award Categories

Award Category	Description and Criteria
<p>Home Based Business</p>	<p><i>The Home-Based Business Award recognises individuals and businesses that have not only embraced the unique challenges of operating from home but have also excelled in various aspects of the business – such as innovation, community contribution, customer service, sustainability, and diversity.</i></p> <p><i>Drawing on the main award categories of customer service, innovation and enterprise, sustainability and environment, community contribution and workplace diversity to substantiate tell us why your business should win this award.</i></p> <p><i>The judging panel will assess your entry based on:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service - Initiatives that ensure customers are at the centre of all business engagements. • Innovation and Enterprise - How new products, services, or ways of working have impacted. customer service delivery and/or business performance. • Sustainability and Environment - Initiatives in place to demonstrate the business's commitment to a sustainable environment. • Community Contribution - The work your business has undertaken with the community and how that has benefited the City of Whittlesea. • Diversity - Business practices that represent, embrace, or foster the diversity of the Whittlesea community.

Award Category	Description and Criteria
Customer Service	<p>Love your customers? Tell us how your business has delivered customer service excellence in 2023. Customers are vital for any successful business, and we know you all have different ways of ensuring your customers keep coming back.</p> <p>To demonstrate how you excel in customer service, the Judging Panel will assess your entry based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How you engage with your customers</i> • <i>Systems and procedures to receive and record customer feedback and satisfaction, this could be through an external feedback provider or inhouse</i> • <i>Your customer service policy or charter.</i> • <i>Your customer ratings through feedback, i.e., Trip Advisor, Trustpilot, Net Promoter Score, and in-house data collection tools, customer testimonials.</i>
Innovation & Enterprise	<p>Businesses have to keep evolving, has your business launched a new product or service, entered a new market, or introduced new ways of working in 2023 that have made positive impacts on the overall performance of your business? To demonstrate how your business has been a leader in Innovation and Enterprise, the Judging Panel will assess your entry based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Examples of new products you have launched.</i> • <i>Examples of new services you have introduced.</i> • <i>How do these new products or services improve your business performance?</i> • <i>How do these new products or services enhance the customer experience?</i> • <i>How the business arrived at the design and implementation of the products or services.</i>
Sustainability and Environment	<p>How has your business made improvements to the way it operates in 2023 to ensure it can achieve a sustainable future? To demonstrate how your business includes the impacts on the environment within the operation and how you focus on being sustainable, the Judging Panel will assess your entry based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Your strategies and activities clearly show how your business has developed and embraced becoming sustainable.</i> • <i>How your business includes the circular economy within its operation.</i> • <i>Examples of day-to-day methods that reduce the impact on the environment.</i> • <i>Future plans that include the inclusion of further sustainable policies.</i> • <i>Examples of how your business has implemented operational changes to include environmentally friendly practices.</i> • <i>How any initiatives have created new roles within your business, connected directly or indirectly to sustainability and the circular economy?</i>

Award Category	Description and Criteria
<p>Community Contribution</p>	<p>Local communities are stronger with successful businesses, and we want to award a business that has made a positive impact in the local community in 2023. How does your business contribute to local community initiatives?</p> <p>To demonstrate how your business impacts the local community, the Judging Panel will assess your entry based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The work your business has undertaken within the community and how that has benefited the City of Whittlesea</i> • <i>Percentages of local City of Whittlesea residents within your workforce</i> • <i>Highlight how your business supports or works in partnership with other local businesses</i>
<p>Workplace Diversity</p>	<p>The City of Whittlesea is a diverse area with people from many backgrounds calling the municipality home, how does your business represent such a diverse area?</p> <p>To demonstrate how your business impacts the local community, the Judging Panel will assess your entry based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A breakdown of your workforce, gender, disability, nationality, education status sexual orientation, and background.</i> • <i>Initiatives that make your workplace attractive to people from the CALD community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</i> • <i>Your workforce training programs, provide examples of activities you have carried out with training and placement providers to engage with different jobseeker cohorts.</i> • <i>How do you work with any local education providers to support your workforce through training and development?</i> • <i>Your workplace diversity policy and how this is implemented in your day-to-day operation.</i>