



07. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER TOURISM EXPERIENCES

CATEGORY QUESTIONS

2025 AWARDS. VERSION 1.1

DESCRIPTOR

This category recognises integrity and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism experiences. The connections with the environment, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions, connection to ancestors and cultural heritage are integral to cultural maintenance and way of life; it is a two-way relationship and guarantees the integrity and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism experiences.

PREREQUISITE

This category is open to businesses with more than 50% owned and controlled by Aboriginal people. (Aboriginal tourism business).

Aboriginal tourism businesses may be required to provide evidence from the Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network or Supply Nation that they are a certified member.

Aboriginal individuals may be required to provide a letter of confirmation or Aboriginal heritage or certificate from relevant (locality) incorporated Aboriginal association or land council. It must be stamped with the association's common seal.

An Aboriginal individual is defined as someone who: is of Australian Aboriginal descent; has previously and consistently in day to day life been known to be and/or identified as an Australian Aboriginal and is accepted as an Aboriginal in the community in which they live or have lived.

Businesses which do not meet this threshold may consider entering the Cultural Tourism category.

WORD COUNT

Word Count: Minimum of 4000 words, maximum of 7500 words.

IMAGE COUNT

Maximum 30 images.

SCORE SUMMARY

Submission Score	70 points
Digital Review Score	20 points
Consumer Review	0 points
TOTAL	90 points

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- Question 2.3
- A. In what ways has the business created opportunities for employment, skills development, and leadership for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during the qualifying period?
 - B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 3. EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

- Question 3.1
- A. How have improvements made in the qualifying period supported the continuation and sharing of traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture?
 - B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 4. EXCELLENCE IN MARKETING

- Question 4.1.
- A. Provide an overview of the business' target markets.
 - B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.
- Question 4.2.
- A. Provide 1-3 examples of marketing strategies that show respect to traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture?
 - B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 5. EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Question 5.1.
- A. What initiatives has the business put in place to deliver excellent customer service throughout the visitor journey, during the qualifying period?
 - B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.
- Question 5.2.
- A. How has the business made improvements to be more inclusive throughout the qualifying period?
 - B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 6. FINAL REMARKS

Final Remarks

RESPONSE GUIDE

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS

5 POINTS

Question 1.1

5 points

Question 1.1.A Provide an overview of the business.

(text box response)

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Response Guidance

Provide a clear and concise description of the business and the product/service/visitor experience it provides.

Include the vision and the values of the business to help set the scene for later questions.

Assume the judge has no prior knowledge of the business so take them on a journey of how and when it began, where the business is located or where the services are provided, who works in the business etc.

Highlight the business's points of difference and what makes it stand out from others. Consider the amenities, products, services, or facilities that enhance visitor satisfaction.

Clearly demonstrate your eligibility by aligning with the category criteria to ensure that there is no misunderstanding as to why you have entered this category. The judges (and auditors) need to understand how the business fits into the category; therefore, be sure to include a clear explanation.

The judges may not be familiar with the business - your submission may be judged nationally and could have judges that are not from your state/territory. Therefore, explain everything from the ground up.

Question 1.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q1.1.A Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- *Images of staff, services, experiences, buildings, room types etc.*
- *Map of location of business, route etc.*

This is an opportunity to show each of the products or services that are on offer.

Do not include any documents (plans, procedures, policies etc.).

Statement of Achievement

0 points

Automatic Listing of Quality Tourism programs the business has completed/renewed in the qualifying period.

- Quality Tourism Accreditation
- Sustainable Tourism Accredited
- Marine Tourism Accredited
- Camp and Adventure Activity Accredited
- International Ready Accredited
- EcoStar Accredited
- Accessible Tourism Program
- Accessible Tourism Accredited
- Tourism Emissions Reduction Commitment Program (minimum of Level 3)
- Star Ratings
- Online Trade Distribution
- International Trade Distribution
- Risk Management Tool
- Business Continuity Tool

If any of these programs are completed prior to the end of the qualifying period this will be reflected in your Statement of Achievement.

SECTION 2. CULTURAL RESPONSIBILITY

30 POINTS

Question 2.1.

10 points

Question 2.1.A How does the business preserve and protect cultural traditions and ensure they reflect the heritage of the local community?

Describe the activity.

How does this activity contribute to the ongoing preservation and protection of traditions, culture and knowledge?

How does this relate back to the local community's heritage?

Outline how the business measures and manage the Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) and related protocols of this activity?

Response Guidance

Provide 2-4 examples.

(?) Activity

Describe the activity that the business has done to contribute to preserving and protecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions while ensuring they reflect the heritage of the local community e.g. through meaningful engagement, ethical practices, and cultural respect.

Some examples can include, but are not limited to:

- Partnering with local Indigenous communities to ensure authenticity in the experience and storytelling.*
- Supporting Indigenous art and cultural expression*
- Developing a storytelling experience*
- Incorporated Indigenous language and naming.*

(?) Preserve and Protect

Specify how this activity has preserved and protected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

(?) Relate to local Community heritage

Describe the cultural experience you offer to visitors.

Include a description of key cultural elements visitors experience, such as storytelling, art, dance, bush tucker, medicine or connection to Country.

Relate your response back to traditions, stories, or cultural practices specific to the business's local heritage.

(?) Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)

Detail collaborations with community members and how they contribute to the activity.

Explain how cultural protocols are respected and upheld.

Describe the engagement with Elders, knowledge holders, and the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in delivering these experiences.

Question 2.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q2.1.A Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- Images of the activity or key cultural elements

Do not include any documents (plans, procedures, policies etc.).

Question 2.2

10 points

Question 2.2.A In what ways does the business support and engage with the local community to enhance the economic, social, and cultural wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people?

Provide a short overview of the business’s approach towards engagement with the local community.

	Economic or social contribution?	Describe the activity and how it contributes to the local ATSI community.	What are some of the key outcomes of this activity in the qualifying period?
Example 1.	Drop down option		

Response Guide

Provide 2-4 examples.

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This is an opportunity to offer insight into how the business is contributing specifically to the economic and social wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Some examples include:

- *Social*
 - *Supporting local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through procurement, product packaging etc.*
 - *Sponsorship*
 - *Support of fundraising efforts towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives.*
- *Economic*
 - *Purchasing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wares*
 - *Collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses*
 - *Invest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander projects.*

Question 2.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q2.2.A Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- *Images investments or community projects.*

Do not include any documents (plans, procedures, policies etc.).

Question 2.3

10 points

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER TOURISM EXPERIENCES

Question 2.3.A In what ways has the business created opportunities for employment, skills development, and leadership for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during the qualifying period?

Provide a short overview of the business's approach towards skills development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

	Describe the activity and how it fosters employment of ATSI people.	What are some of the key outcomes of this activity in the qualifying period?
Example 1.		

Response Guidance

Provide 2–4 examples.

Describe the activities the business has done within the qualifying period which has supported the employment, skills development and leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Some examples are:

- Culturally inclusive recruitment and employment practices e.g. actively encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for jobs.
- Skills development e.g. on the job training, mentoring, etc.
- Becoming a workplace of choice e.g. creating an inclusive workplace for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Providing leadership and career progression opportunities.
- Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.
- Recognise and celebrate the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

Question 2.3.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER TOURISM EXPERIENCES

		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q2.2.A Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- Infographic demonstrating outcomes e.g. graph of increase in employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Testimonial from staff members.

Do not include any documents (plans, procedures, policies etc.).

SECTION 3. EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT 5 POINTS

Question 3.1

5 points

Question 3.1.A What improvements have been made to develop business operations and/or the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism experience during the qualifying period?

Provide a short overview of the business's approach towards developing its business operations and/or product offering.

EXAMPLE

Improvement 1:

What specific improvements has the business implemented in its operations and/or the product offering during the qualifying period? Keep this response to one sentence, providing a basic introduction only.

Describe the Improvement:

Provide further detail on the improvement.

Rationale:

What were the reasons for implementing this improvement and how did this enhance the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism experience?

Specific Goals:

	<i>What specific goals did the business aim to achieve with this improvement?</i>
	Outcomes: <i>What were the measurable results of these changes?</i>
	Contribution <i>How have the improvements contributed to the preservation and sharing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures?</i>

Response Guidance

Provide between 2-4 examples.

The response to this question can include examples relating to:

- *Business operations*
- *Product development*

(?) Business Operations

"Business operations" generally refers to the day-to-day activities involved in running a business. This can include but is not limited to managing resources, processes, and people to achieve organisational goals.

Some examples of improvements include;

- *Operations (inventory management, compliance and safety, risk management, trade distribution etc.)*
- *Finance (systems, investment, pricing strategy etc.)*
- *Human resources (training, reward, recognition, professional development, attracting staff etc.)*
- *Business capability or learning initiatives (e.g. completion of Quality Tourism programs including risk management, online distribution etc.)*

(?) Product Development

"Product offering" generally refers to the products, services and experiences a company offers its customers.

Some examples of improvements include;

- *Technology (developed a mobile app to improve the experience, introduced AI chatbots to assist in visitor enquiries etc.)*

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- *Product packaging (value added to the experience with other local products/experiences etc.)*
- *Facilities (upgrade or introduced new facilities e.g. cultural precinct, local artist gallery, etc.)*
- *Experiences (upgraded or introduced new experiences e.g. tour, bushtucker, traditional Welcome to Country etc.)*

Note: this is not a complete list but does provide some examples for consideration.

(?) Rationale

Provide the judge with a clear understanding why the improvement was made.

Some examples on the rationale for the improvement could be:

- *Business Operations*
 - *Reduce business expenses*
 - *Streamline processes*
 - *Other strategic objectives.*
- *Product Development*
 - *Driven by feedback*
 - *Reaching new markets*
 - *Advancing technologies*
 - *Other strategic objectives.*

Note: this is not a complete list but does provide some examples for consideration.

Consider how the improvement aligns with the vision or values of the business as identified in Q1.

(?) Specific Goals

Provide the judge with the specific goals that the business aimed to achieve with the improvement.

Some examples of specific goals could be:

- *Reduce manual effort by 15%*
- *Improve workflow efficiency by 30%.*

(?) Outcomes

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What were the measurable results of these changes?

Provide measurable results that demonstrate to the judge the outcomes of the improvement.

Consider what learnings were made during this process, particularly if intended outcomes were not achieved.

(?) Contributions

Provide the judge with a clear connection as to how the improvements contributed to the preservation and sharing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Judges are looking for improvements that not only enhance the business operations or product, but also actively support the preservation, respect, and sharing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, ensuring long-term cultural and economic sustainability.

Some examples of

- *Collaborated with Traditional Owners and Indigenous custodians to ensure cultural authenticity in its development.*
- *Sourced authentic Indigenous art, crafts, and food directly from local communities, ensuring fair compensation.*
- *Use certified Indigenous designs in branding and products, ensuring artists receive proper recognition and royalties.*
- *Partnered with Indigenous-owned businesses.*
- *Ensure minimal environmental impact on culturally significant sites.*

Question 3.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guidance

Provide evidence to support your response. For example:

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- *An image of the improvement*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)*
- *Before and after images of works*
- *An infographic e.g. graph, demonstrating the outcomes.*

SECTION 4. EXCELLENCE IN MARKETING	15 POINTS
Question 4.1	5 points
4.1.A Provide an overview of the business's target markets.	

Provide a brief introduction to the business's target markets and how the business identified its top 2 to 3 markets.

EXAMPLE

Name of Target Market:	

<p>What stage is the target market in for the business? <i>Identify if this is Primary Market, Secondary Market, Growth Market or Emerging Market.</i></p>	(tick box)
<p>Target market characteristics <i>Describe the target market i.e. who are they, where are they from, age, behaviours and motivations.</i></p>	
<p>How does the business meet the expectations of this target market? <i>Demonstrate how you have tailored the business to the target market.</i></p>	

	<p>What research have you undertaken to confirm this target market is right for the business? <i>Describe the research or analysis undertaken to determine that this target market and their characteristics are suitable to the business.</i></p>	
	<p>How do you communicate the significance of the business’s cultural tourism offerings to this market?</p>	

Response Guidance

Provide between 2-3 markets.

A **target market** is a specific group of potential customers that a business directs its marketing efforts and products towards.

Identify the various characteristics such as demographics, psychographics, geographic location, and buying behaviour of the selected target market.

Demonstrate how the business tailors its products/service/visitor experience to effectively reach and engage the target market.

(?) Target Market Characteristics

For the target market characteristics, consider the following:

- **Geographic – Where they are:** Where the people live or visit
- **Demographic – Who they are:** Their age, family size, income, or lifestyle, such as families, retirees, or holidaymakers.
- **Psychographic – What they care about:** What they enjoy, believe in, or value, like being active, spending time outdoors, or supporting local businesses.
- **Behavioural – What they do, how they act** e.g. like hiring bikes, exploring the area, or looking for fun activities.
- **Motivations – What drives them, why they do things:** e.g. like wanting to have family adventures, stay healthy, or trying something new.

(?) Meeting the expectations of a target market

Demonstrate the business’s understanding of the target market’s needs, preferences, and behaviours, and how the business has tailored its products, services or experiences to meet these needs.

(?) Research

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Outline how the business has determined that this target market is suitable for the business. What research was undertaken, and what was concluded from this research.

4.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

Provide evidence to support your response. For example:

- An image of the target market
- An infographic e.g. graph demonstrating the market characteristics.

Question 4.2.

10 points

Question 4.2.A Provide 1-3 examples of marketing strategies that show respect to traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture?

Provide a short overview of the business approach towards developing its marketing strategies.

EXAMPLE

Marketing Strategy 1:

What was the marketing strategy? E.g. was it a campaign, an exhibition, an event, a partnership, or other marketing initiative?

Objective: Provide quantifiable objectives for the strategy.

Target Market: As per market/s identified in Q4.1

Concept: Provide greater detail of the strategy.

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Rationale and Research:	<i>Describe the research and analysis undertaken to determine that this strategy will achieve the objectives and reach the intended target market.</i>
Activity/Tactics:	<i>Describe the activities or tactics used in the strategy.</i>
How does this strategy align with local, regional or state destination/marketing plans?	<i>Detail how the local, regional or state destination/marketing plans were considered in the development of the strategy.</i>
<i>How does your marketing strategy ensure that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture is represented in an authentic and respectful way?</i>	
What were the outcomes	<i>E.g. an increase to website traffic by 21% which generated an increase in online bookings by 30%</i>

Response Guidance

Provide between 1-3 examples.

It is recommended that you include examples that differ to any of the improvements you have included in Q3.1.

(?) Objectives

Provide details on the business's marketing objective.

Objectives or goals can include, but are not limited to:

- Improve brand awareness*
- Increase sales*
- Higher number of leads*
- Attract new customers*
- Improve customer retention*
- Increase online engagement*
- Expand into new markets*
- Optimise ROI*
- Highlight new features/experiences.*

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Be sure to provide some quantifiable objectives e.g. increase leads from website by 10%.

(?) Target Market

Be sure to align this to one or more of the markets identified in Q4.1.

(?) Concept

This is where you can provide an overview of the strategy outlining its key highlights.

For example:

- *A digital campaign to highlight the unique selling proposition of the business*
- *A PR campaign to highlight how the business fulfils specific visitor needs*
- *Improved website content to create an emotional connection with visitors*
- *Targeted email campaign conveying key business ethics/commitments e.g. sustainability or accessibility*
- *Social campaign demonstrating how the business aligns with target markets values, preferences etc.*

(?) Rationale

Why did the business execute this strategy?

And what research was used to support the development of this strategy, e.g. visitor feedback, ticket sales, digital analytics etc.

(?) Activity/Tactics

Describe the activities or tactics used in the strategy

Different channels can include, but are not limited to:

- *Digital Advertising*
- *Emails*
- *Events*
- *Influencer marketing*
- *Search Engine Optimisation*
- *Social Media*
- *Traditional Marketing*
- *Trade activities.*

(?) Align with local, regional or state destination/marketing plans

Demonstrate how the activity aligns with local, regional or state destination/marketing plans.

(?) Authenticity

Demonstrate the steps taken to ensure that any promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is represented in an authentic and respectful way.

For example, consultation with Traditional Owners, Elders or local community representatives, seeking permissions and approvals, using indigenous artists, engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander marketing agencies/designers etc.

(?) Outcomes

Provide measurable results that demonstrate to the judge the outcome of the strategies.

Consider what learnings were made during this process, particularly if intended outcomes were not achieved.

Be sure these results relate back to your specific objectives.

4.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guidance

Provide visual evidence demonstrating the marketing activity.

Videos can be included, however do not produce a video for the specific purpose to respond to this question, it must have been produced as part of the activity.

Examples of images/video evidence can include:

- *Instagram Reel*

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- *TikTok*
- *Video segment on TV*
- *TV Commercial.*

SECTION 5. EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE 15 POINTS

Question 5.1. 10 points

Question 5.1.A What initiatives has the business put in place during the qualifying period to deliver excellent customer service throughout the visitor journey?

Provide a brief overview of the business's customer service philosophy.

EXAMPLE

Customer Service Initiative 1.	
Describe the initiative that enhances the business customer service:	
At what stage of the visitor journey does this impact? <i>(Pre, During, Post, All)</i>	(checkbox with multiple choice option)
What influenced the development of this initiative?	
What investment has been made in this aspect of the visitor experience?	
What outcomes have come from this initiative?	

Response Guidance

Provide the 2 examples.

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Focus on the initiatives that have specifically related to customer service and provide examples that have not been included in question 3.1.

Ensure that you include activity that is new in the qualifying period.

This could include, but is not limited to:

- *Staff training and development*
- *Customer feedback and post stay surveys*
- *Improved booking processes*
- *Improved service delivery in Front of House*
- *Additional services e.g. 'Welcome to' evening canapes, turn down service with complimentary local chocolates.*

(?) Describe the initiative

Consider the various touchpoints of visitor engagement and how these have been enhanced, specifically for the customer experience.

(?) Stage of the visitor journey

Specify at what point the initiative takes place within the visitor journey – pre, during, post or at all points.

(?) Influence of Initiative

Consider why the business focused on improving this specific customer experience.

This could be, but is not limited to examples such as:

- *Customer feedback*
- *Staff input*
- *Competitive landscape*
- *Data/survey insights*
- *Shift in customer demands or expectations.*

(?) Investment

Consider all resources put towards the initiative. This could be financial, time investment in staff, technologies, supply chain etc.

(?) Outcomes

Provide examples of what outcomes were achieved as a result of the initiative. For example, increased online ratings by XX%, return visitation etc.

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You could include testimonials here to demonstrate an improved visitor experience.

5.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q5.1.A Examples of the type of evidence you could include are:

- Staff initiatives
- Customer initiatives in place
- A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)

Question 5.2.

5 points

Question 5.2.A How has the business made improvements to be more inclusive throughout the qualifying period?

(text box response)

- Has undertaken or updated an Accessibility Assessment e.g. through the Accessible Tourism Program on the QTF in the qualifying period.
- Has included an Accessible Guide on the business website.
 - Please insert website page the guide is available on.

Response Guidance

Demonstrate how the business has actively considered, and where able, met the needs of a diverse community. This could include:

- *Staff training*
- *Management and leadership*
- *Business policy making*
- *Improved/modified systems/operations/facilities*

Demonstrate how the business has analysed its target markets and identified any specific requirements that may need to be considered for these guests.

5.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q5.2.A Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- *Inclusive initiatives in place*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)*

SECTION 6. FINAL REMARKS **0 POINTS**

In 100 words or less, provide any final remarks as to why the business should be considered as a winner in its chosen category.

(text box)

Response Guidance

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Make this a personal response to close out the submission.