

WAIKATO BUSINESS AWARDS 2024

CATEGORIES

- Small Business Award
- For Purpose Award
- Innovation Award
- Marketing Award
- Business Growth & Strategy Award
- Service Excellence Award
- Community Contribution Award
- International Trade Award
- Sustainability Award
- People & Culture Award
- Emerging Leader of the Year Award
- CEO of the Year Award

DATES

- Entries open on 29 April 2024 - <https://wba.awardsplatform.com/>
- Drop in help session dates: May & June – dates TBC
- Entry submissions deadline: 5 July 2024 at 10am. Please note, the entry deadline is final. No extensions will be provided (the system will automatically prevent entry submissions after the deadline)
- Finalists announced: 19 September 2024
- Awards presentations ceremony: 15 November 2024

WHY YOU SHOULD ENTER

- Development for you and your business begins at entry. Entering creates an opportunity to focus on your business in a structured way and identify core strengths and competitive advantages as well as areas that may benefit from more focus in the future.
- Improve. All entrants receive independent assessment and feedback from experienced judges; providing the business with independent advice to grow, develop and improve for business in general and for entering in future awards.
- Goal Setting. Judges' feedback supports internal goal setting for even further development for the business, its owners and employees.
- Your Network is your net worth. Participation in the awards provides networking opportunities with other business leaders and professionals, who are all striving for excellence.
- Recognition of Success. Award winners receive public recognition of business success being acknowledged as the best in the Waikato in your industry by your peers, the business community, media and potential employees.

- **Appreciation.** The award process provides a platform that acknowledges the contributions made by your employees, suppliers, clients and others to your organisation’s success.
- **Publicity.** Award participation provides another dimension for showcasing your services and products to a wider audience and enhances your reputation in your customer’s eyes.
- **To inspire others.** All finalists and winners will join past Waikato Business Award alumni and will gain recognition from the business community – promoting their achievements and assisting in growing the Waikato’s business success story.

EXTRA SUPPORT INFORMATION FOR ENTRANTS

- If you have any questions on the entry process, please contact the organisers by email: Rebecca.aston@waikatochamber.co.nz
- You may edit your entry after submitting, up until the entry deadline.
- Please make sure all your personal details are entered accurately, including contact details, as this will be used in the awards presentation if you are selected as a finalist.
- You are eligible to enter more than one category as long as the work submitted meets the criteria.
- You can use the ‘copy’ feature to create a copy of your entry and change the category as required.
- Drop-in sessions to answer any entry questions will be held with Dr. Heather Connolly, Head Judge and Rebecca Aston, Events and Marketing Manager, WCoC. Dates to be confirmed.

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

Businesses do not need to be members of the Waikato Chamber of Commerce to enter.

Entrants can indicate specific details they wish to be excluded from any publicity gained through their entry.

The initial entry fee is \$199+GST for the first entry, additional entries will be charged at the rate of \$99+GST each. The fee is payable at the time of submission.

The winner of the overall Supreme Business Award will be chosen by the judges from the winners of all categories.

Finalists of all categories will be announced at Awards finalist announcement event, with the category winners announced at the main awards Gala event.

Overall Supreme Business Award is judged on the overall application of organisations who are category finalists as well as subsequent finalist site visits.

At the Judge's discretion, an entrant may be transferred to another category that they believe best fits the entrant. If a transfer is made, the entrant will be notified.

At the Judge's discretion, two winners may be awarded in a category and/or any other special commendations awarded where deemed appropriate.

Any sole proprietor, partnership, incorporated society, limited liability company, educational institution, local or central government organisation, charitable or not for profit organisation, with its principal place of business based and trading in the Waikato region within the boundaries administered by the Waikato Chamber of Commerce is eligible to enter the awards. Individuals entering an applicable category (CEO and Emerging Leader of the Year) must also be associated with an eligible organisation.

Any business owned by a sponsor of the Waikato Business Awards can enter any category they are normally eligible to enter excluding the category which they are a sponsor of.

An organisation that is part of a larger national or international organisation must be able to demonstrate that it operates as a separate business unit.

Applicants must disclose any issues that may compromise the integrity of the awards or cause their organisation to discontinue in the following year. These issues may include legal action, law changes, possible loss of funding, or other risks.

All entrants must agree to take part in publicity around the WBA 2024 Awards that has been organised by the Waikato Chamber of Commerce, and as requested by the category sponsor.

All entries will be reviewed by the judging panel and those considered to be potential finalists will receive site visits in order to determine category winners.

All entrants and finalists are encouraged to attend the Waikato Business Awards presentation to be held on Friday 15 November 2024. This is a formal gala dinner during which the awards ceremony is held, and the winners are announced.

Entrants may use consultants or other outside assistance to help them prepare their entries; however, the providers of any such external assistance must not be present during any part of the judging process.

If selected as a finalist, entrants will be requested by the chief judge to supply a copy of their last two year's full financial accounts. It is a condition of entry to meet this request. (Please note that the financial accounts will only be reviewed by the chief judge and a senior member of the Waikato Management School Accounting/Finance department).

All entries are treated in confidence. Judges are required to sign a confidentiality agreement that prevents them from sharing any information in relation to entrants outside of the judging process.

Judges will not participate in the judging of any organisations where they are a Shareholder, Director or Employee of, or where an actual or potential conflict of interest arises.

Judges will not participate in the judging of any other entrants in a category where they are conflicted as above.

Entry submissions will be destroyed at the completion of the judging process.

The judges' decision is final, and no communications will be entered into.

As part of the application process, entrants' consent to the possible disclosure of their personal contact information by the Waikato Chamber of Commerce to the Waikato Business Awards sponsors. This information may be used by sponsors for promotional and/ or sales purposes.

Entrants are required to submit their application in a digital format via the WBA website entry portal. <https://wba.awardsplatform.com/>

Entrants must be available for Judges site visits or virtual meetings 29 July – 16 August 2024.

CEO of the Year judging date to be confirmed.

Entries close 10am Friday 5 July, 2023.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR ENTRANTS

- Make your submission in the entry pack clear and concise, using the supporting evidence to illustrate your narrative as additional attachments.
- Strict word count for all categories:
 - 2,500 total word count for each individual category entered (approximately 500 per question).
 - 800 total word count for CEO of the Year.
- Submissions are not judged on the creativity of any entry presentation.
- Entrants are required to submit information requested within each category entry form with separate entries for each category entered where more than one entry is permitted.
- Judges want entrants to say enough in their written entry to attract them for a site visit.
- Entrants who are selected for site visits by the judges will be asked to discuss and demonstrate performance and results on the following topics:
 - Specific category entered – 60%
 - General business attributes covering the following topics – 40%
 - Governance, Leadership and Planning
 - People Management
 - Customer Focus
 - Systems & Community/ Industry Contribution
 - Business Performance
- A separate guide “Preparing for a visit from the judges” will be provided to all entrants that are successful in proceeding to the judging round.
- Judging visits are expected to take between one and two hours with repeat visits by alternative judges where deemed required.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS BY CATEGORY

Small Business Award

Recognises excellence in organisations with an annual turnover up to and including \$1 million per year, which have achieved overall significant growth or performance as a result of effective planning and delivery.

Entry requirements: minimum 1.5 full time equivalent employees and an annual turnover up to and including \$1 million excl GST.

- Question 1 Provide an outline and explanation of significant business achievements during the last 12 - 18 months. What would you attribute these significant achievements to?
- Question 2 Describe your organisation's growth and/or performance. E.g. growth in staff numbers, profit, sales.
- Question 3 Demonstrate the significance of the growth and/or performance you have experienced relative to others in your sector.
- Question 4 How did you achieve this level of growth and/or performance? What obstacles, risks or challenges did you overcome and how?
- Question 5 Describe what you are doing to ensure the business is sustainable. Include examples of the return on investment of this projects in terms of sales or impact. How will you make sure the business either consolidates its position and/or keeps growing?

For Purpose Award

Recognises excellence in organisations, that apply commercial strategies to maximise improvements in community wellbeing, reinvesting profit, or surplus from trade to achieve its social mission.

Entry requirements: minimum 1.5 full time employees or equivalent including volunteers, with verification of charitable or not-for-profit status.

- Question 1 Provide an outline and explanation of significant achievements during the last 12 – 18 months. What would you attribute these significant achievements to?
- Question 2 Demonstrate how you have applied commercial business strategies to improve community/stakeholder wellbeing.
- Question 3 How do you communicate your values and plans to your stakeholders?
- Question 4 Describe a key achievement that has resulted in a significant impact to your community/stakeholders?
- Question 5 Describe what you are doing to ensure the business is sustainable. How will you make sure the business either consolidates its position and or keeps growing to support its social mission?

Innovation Award

This category recognises organisations that have enhanced their success through innovation - both in thinking and implementing of an idea. An innovation can be in a product/service/technology or process.

Entry requirements: minimum 2 full time equivalent employees and annual turnover in excess of \$1 million excl GST.

- Question 1 Provide an outline and explanation of significant business achievements during the last 12 – 18 months. What would you attribute these significant achievements to?
- Question 2 Describe the innovation. How is it unique/original? How did you identify the opportunity and introduce the change?
- Question 3 What have you done to ensure the benefit of this innovation is sustainable? What plans do you have to use this innovation to sustain your growth, or develop new innovations?
- Question 4 How do you measure the value of the innovation? How does the innovation contribute to your success and competitive position?
- Question 5 Describe any risks or challenges you faced in introducing this innovation. How did you manage them? What did you learn as a consequence?

Marketing Award

This category recognises businesses that show an outstanding example of a marketing project where research was used to validate performance. Examples of performance include increasing revenue, customer loyalty, retention, satisfaction, profitability and/or brand awareness.

Entry requirements: minimum 2 full time equivalent employees and annual turnover in excess of \$1 million excl GST. Whilst 3rd parties may have created and assisted in completing the project relating to this entry, the organization entered must be the beneficiary.

- Question 1 Provide an outline and explanation of significant business achievements during the last 12 – 18 months that can be attributed to a specific marketing project or social media campaign.
- Question 2 Explain any research you undertook and how you reviewed the importance of target marketing and the emerging buyer behaviour of your customers. How did you respond effectively to meet changing expectations with this particular marketing project?
- Question 3 How did you develop and manage channel strategies, support channels to market, identify relevant pricing strategies and deliver on customer experience with this particular project?
- Question 4 Describe how you evaluate the role of marketing planning and how you developed the competitive operational marketing plan.
- Question 5 How does this project contribute to the short and long-term achievements or successes of the business? How do you monitor and evaluate the effectiveness (ROI) of your marketing activities?

Business Growth & Strategy Award

This category recognises organisations that have achieved significant business growth during the last two years as a result of effective strategic planning and actioned delivery

Entry requirements: minimum 2 full time equivalent employees and annual turnover of at least \$1 million excl GST.

- Question 1 Provide an outline and explanation of the strategic planning you undertook to grow your business during the last two years.
- Question 2 Describe the outcome of this strategic planning in relation to your organisation's growth (e.g. growth in profit, sales, staff numbers, customers etc.)
- Question 3 Demonstrate the significance of the growth you have experienced, compared to that of other in your industry.
- Question 4 What obstacles, risks, challenges, and also opportunities did you encounter when implementing your strategy and how did you go about to engage with them.
- Question 5 Describe what you are doing to ensure the business is sustainable. How will you make sure the business either consolidates its position and or keeps growing? What is next?

Service Excellence Award

This category recognises organisations that have succeeded through showing consistent dedication to superlative service and demonstrates its commitment to the customer through its service policy, staff training and/or other specific means.

Entry requirements: minimum 2 full time equivalent employees and annual turnover in excess of \$1 million excl GST.

- Question 1 Provide an outline of how your consistency dedication to service has led to significant business achievements during the last 12 – 18 months.
- Question 2 What processes do you have to determine the requirements of your customers and stakeholders, and meet their respective needs?
- Question 3 How does your company-wide philosophy create a culture and commitment to the customer?
- Question 4 How do you ensure that the whole team is able to deliver a high standard of customer service and commitments?
- Question 5 Describe what you are doing to ensure that you can continually meet and exceed customer expectations in a sustainable manner?

Community Contribution Award

Recognises organisations, be they commercial or charitable, whose ongoing work or specific project(s) have resulted in outcomes to the community which are visionary, have high impact and are transformative, embodying the qualities that define excellence in contribution. This includes outstanding generosity, creativity, innovation, commitment, and courage.

Entry requirements: Minimum 2 full time equivalent employees and annual turnover in excess of \$500,000 excl GST.

- Question 1 Provide an outline and explanation of significant community achievements during the last 12 – 18 months. What would you attribute these significant achievements to? Ensure you can outline the impact of your achievement.
- Question 2 How did you achieve this? What obstacles, risks or challenges did you overcome and how? How did you engage the community in your planning, execution etc.
- Question 3 Describe what you are doing to ensure the business is sustainable and you can continue to have a positive impact on the community you engage with. How will you ensure the organisation either consolidate its position and/or keeps growing?
- Question 4 How do you measure the value of community contribution?
- Question 5 How do you develop and manage channel strategies and support channels to promote and market your philanthropic activity?

International Trade Award

Recognises businesses that successfully work within, and captures the benefits of, the global market, demonstrating outstanding International Trade achievements, sustainable growth and results.

Entry requirements: minimum 2 full time equivalent employees and annual turnover in excess of \$1 million excl GST.

- Question 1 Provide an outline and explanation of significant business achievements during the last 12 – 18 months. What would you attribute these significant achievements to?
- Question 2 Describe your organisation’s strategies for exporting. How do you determine and capture the export opportunities for your business? What role does the export market play in your overall business aspirations?
- Question 3 What are the unique obstacles, risks or challenges you face and how have you overcome/managed these? Describe trade barriers, cultural challenges or other risks.
- Question 4 Demonstrate your understanding of the off-shore markets/industries that you deal with.
- Question 5 What are the key factors that have contributed to your success?

Sustainability Award

Recognises organisations that embrace sustainable practices in daily operations that reduce the impact on the environment and or provide product, or services that have positive environmental and or social outcomes.

Entry requirements: minimum 2 full time equivalent employees and an annual turnover in excess of \$500,000 excl GST.

Entry requirements:

- Question 1. Outline and explain how your organisation has made significant business commitments to sustainable developments during the last 12 – 18 months. This can include environmental stewardship, and or social education or social innovation. What would you attribute these commitments to?
- Question 2. Describe in detail the steps you took in your planning process towards your sustainable developments. What obstacles, risks or challenges did you overcome and how? How were staff engaged in the process?
- Question 3. How have you aligned your strategic objectives to your social and or environmental actions and programs, beyond just legislative requirements?
- Question 4. Describe how you monitor and report progress in achieving your sustainable practices?
- Question 5. How do you communicate your social and, or environmental sustainability to all your stakeholders?

People & Culture Award

Recognises a business that has demonstrated strategies and initiatives to create a stimulating, high performing and supportive workplace environment to maximise the full potential of its team and create a values-based culture.

Entry requirements: minimum 2 full time equivalent employees and annual turnover in excess of \$500,000 excl GST.

- Question 1. Provide an outline and explanation of the strategies used to attract, engage and develop people and build a high-performance culture during the last 12 – 18 months.
- Question 2. How did you achieve this? What obstacles, risks or challenges did you overcome and how?
- Question 3. What practices and strategies do you have in place to retain staff? (e.g. diversity and inclusion, pay equity, employee benefits etc)
- Question 4. How do you demonstrate commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of your employees?
- Question 5. What strategies have you implemented that supported your team members' mental, physical and emotional health during the Covid pandemic over the past 3 year? (i.e. resource and wellbeing programs, communication plans, covid policy).

Emerging Leader of the Year Award

Recognising emerging leaders, who have significantly contributed to an organisation.

Entry requirements: minimum 2 full time equivalent employees and annual turnover in excess of \$500,000 excl GST.

- Question 1 Describe the candidate's leadership role in the organisation and how this has evolved over the past 2 years.
- Question 2 How has the candidate engaged in, and contributed to the organisation's overall strategic goals and, or company values?
- Question 3 How has the candidate invested in their own leadership journey and how has this been transferred into their role in the organisation?
- Question 4 Describe initiatives that exemplify how the candidate has contributed to creating a successful collaborative culture and staff satisfaction in the organisation
- Question 5 How would others in the organisation describe the candidate?

CEO of the Year Award

Recognises Chief Executives/Managing Directors, who demonstrate exemplary leadership.

CEOs and MDs are evaluated based on criteria including the performance of the company that they lead, the extent to which they have contributed to the company's performance, overall leadership qualities and the esteem in which they are held by peers.

A suitable CEO demonstrates strong leadership qualities combined with the ability to conceive a strategy for long-term growth and determination to drive related events.

Entry requirements: must be a CEO or MD of an entity of substance defined as achieving one or more of the following:

- Employing a minimum of 15 full time equivalent employees
- Have an annual turnover in excess of \$3.5 million excluding GST.
- Have delivered consecutive shareholder return for not less than the last five years.

Question Provide an essay of no more than 800 words describing the outstanding leadership of the candidate and how they contribute to the organisation. The essay should cover the suggested points outlined below:

CEO essay topics: a brief description of the organisation the candidate works for

- The leadership traits that have enabled them to develop and maintain strong organizational leadership
- Examples of external factors and events that have contributed to their leadership style
- Examples of significant behaviours and or obstacles that they have had to overcome
- Examples of their exemplary leadership and significant achievements made in their organisation

FINANCIALS FOR ALL CATEGORIES

Due to their confidential nature, financial information does not need to include actual numbers, providing percentage-based information is adequate. The example provided below shows the correct way to show positive and negative results.

Sample: Increase 200%, Decrease -200%

What is your financial year range?

01 April – 31 March

01 January – 31 December

01 July – 30 June

Total Revenue (\$)

Total Revenue (\$) 2022/23

Total Revenue (\$) 2023/24

Revenue Increase/Decrease (%)

Revenue Increase / Decrease (%) 2022/23

Revenue Increase / Decrease (%) 2023/24

Gross Profit (\$)

Gross Profit (\$) 2022/23

Gross Profit (\$) 2023/24

Gross Profit (%)

Gross Profit (%) 2022/23

Gross Profit (%) 2023/24

Net Profit (\$)

Net Profit (\$) 2022/23

Net Profit (\$) 2023/24

Net Profit (%)

Net Profit (%) 2022/23

Net Profit (%) 2023/24