

Excellence Awards Programme 2026

Information Pack Business Awards



promoting exceptional hosted accommodation

Introduction

The Excellence Awards Programme is brought to you by Bed & Breakfast Association New Zealand in conjunction with our **Gold Sponsor, Vision Insurance**. The Award Programme provides our members with the opportunity to be involved in a robust process that helps raise the profile of their operation and gain recognition for their achievements.

The Awards Programme celebrates **excellence in hospitality** in the bed and breakfast hosted accommodation sector. Designed to provide a benchmark of excellence and inspiration to other hosts along with showcasing the best of New Zealand hospitality within our accommodation sector, the Awards Programme ensures all Association members are able to be celebrated and recognised.



Entries are open now and close 30 April 2026.

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Award Categories

The Excellence Awards Programme ensures members, in all stages of their bed and breakfast operation, are able to be honoured, recognised, encouraged and rewarded for their hard work and efforts to become the very best in their business and in New Zealand.

Vision Insurance Business Awards:

Vision Insurance Exceptional Bed & Breakfast of the Year Award

This Award is open to full members of the Association who have been operating their business two or more years – this business could be one, two, three or more (up to 10) rooms.

2023 Winners – Peter and Karen West, Waihi Beach Paradise Resort



Vision Insurance Rising Star of the Year Award

This Award is open to members who have been in business for fewer than two years and again, the size of the business does not matter.

Our 2023 Winner – Esther and Tom Seymour, 415 Marine Parade



Vision Insurance Essence of Bed and Breakfast of the Year

This Award recognises our members who go out of their way to provide an exceptional hosting experience for their guests within their business, their region and New Zealand. This award focuses less on the business side of your B&B and more on how you make your guests feel. To find out more about entering this Essence of B&B of the Year Award Category [click here](#)

Our 2023 Winner – Tim and Mary Wood, The Olive Rabbit



Vision Insurance Supreme B&B Business of the Year Award

This is the highest recognition for commitment to providing exceptional hosted accommodation. The winner of this Award is selected from the winners of two Award categories – Rising Star B&B Award and Exceptional B&B Award.





Why Enter?

Here's what the 2023 winners had to say about the benefits they have experienced from entering the Award Programme:

"Tom and I entered the B&B Awards as newbies to the industry. We saw it as a way of gaining useful experience, insights into the industry, and of course the exposure it gave us nationally and locally, cannot be overstated. It was amazing to have the help of a mentor, which gave us knowledge not only of the awards process but also of the industry as a whole. I would recommend the entire process to anyone keen to gain an understanding of our industry. And it wasn't at all too difficult."

*Tom and Esther Seymour
415 Marine Parade*

"Being relatively new to the industry we entered the B&B Association Awards to benchmark ourselves, and our business against others. Learning and sharing was the goal, winning something is just a bonus. Sharing knowledge amongst its members, while having fun doing so, has been a real strength of the B&B Association. It is an opportunity to relook at all of your systems and processes, to make sure everything is current and compliant in this ever-changing world and assess where things could be done differently."

Putting things on paper also helps you make sure you are meeting your own personal needs as well.

The process involves writing 300 words for each of the categories and attaching supporting documents, then submitting your entry online. There is help available from the Association Mentors if needed when preparing your entry, and no judging is done at your property. There are 3 judges who look over all the entries and choose the winners.

The benefits to ourselves were increasing our Brand awareness, finding our point of difference and how to use that in our business.

It is a chance to showcase and share your unique story, and the experience you offer for your guests.

The networking with the other members of the Association and at the National Conference has been a highlight for us. We would definitely encourage people to enter, the B&B Association holds an amazing Conference and Awards Ceremony biennially, and we learnt so much.

Give it a go, you will never regret it.

We wish to thank all those that have come before us, sharing your knowledge so everyone is better off for it.

The lifelong friendships we have gained has been the real reward."

Peter and Karen West

Waihi Beach Paradise Resort (since sold)

"Entering the Bed & Breakfast Essence Award in 2023 has been highly beneficial for both of us, enhancing our credibility in the hosted bed and breakfast industry. This recognition has bolstered The Olive Rabbit's reputation. The award has also improved our marketing efforts and increased our exposure to potential guests, especially through press releases. Our guests frequently enquire about our achievement, highlighting their preference for award-winning accommodations, which motivates us to continually improve what we do. Ultimately, this experience has provided us with valuable feedback and networking opportunities that have, in turn, added value to our business."

Mary and Tim Wood

The Olive Rabbit

Winners / Awards

Vision Insurance Supreme Bed & Breakfast of the Year Award

The Winner of the **Vision Insurance Supreme Bed & Breakfast of the Year Award** will be chosen from the winners of the Exceptional Bed & Breakfast of the Year Award and the Rising Star of the Year Award categories. The overall winner will receive a trophy, certificate, award logo, recognition on the Association's website for a 12 month period, recognition in the Association's newsletter and recognition in a media release provided by the Association.

Vision Insurance Exceptional Bed & Breakfast of the Year Award

Vision Insurance Rising Star of the Year Award

Finalists in each of these two Award categories will be selected from the entries received. The winners in each category will comprise:

Winner

Runner Up (if awarded) / Highly Commended (if awarded)

Each Award winner will receive a trophy, certificate, award logo, recognition on the Association's website for a 24 month period, recognition in the Association's newsletter and recognition in a press release provided by the Association.

Each Highly Commended and / or Runner Up (if awarded) will receive a certificate, recognition in the Association's newsletter and recognition in the media release provided by the Association.



Judging Panel

Introducing your Judges for 2026 ...

Jane Wilson

BBANZ Board Member, since 2025;

Jane, with her husband Mark Simmonds, owns and hosts Okuta Bay Retreat at Whakamoenga Point, Lake Taupō. They opened the luxury lakeside Bed and Breakfast in 2024.

Jane has had an extensive career in tourism, working across retail, wholesale, and Destination Management. She has held senior roles in the sector, including General Manager, New Zealand for South Australia Tourism, GM Marketing for Cairns & the Great Barrier Reef, and most recently spent five years leading Destination Great Lake Taupō, the local RTO for the Taupō region.



Garth London

President, BBANZ;

Garth and Angie set up [Whakaipo Lodge](#) in 2013 having come from corporate backgrounds. Garth also established Adventure Shuttles, a small tour business specialising in transport, guiding and mountain biking in the central North Island. He trained as a civil engineer and spent most of his professional career working in sales and general management, including executive roles in business units of large organisations.



Ann-Marie Johnson

Past President, BBANZ;

Ann-Marie joined the Board in 2020 and became President in 2023-2025. She was an independent Board Member, and brought a wealth of tourism industry knowledge and experience to the B&B sector through her longstanding work with TIA and the Tiaki Promise. She also offers extensive experience of advocacy and communications. Ann-Marie has previously mentored entrant in the BBANZ Awards.



**All Award Winners will be announced at the National Conference,
June 18-19 2026.**



Mentor Programme

We have mentors available for all members who enter the Awards Programme. To sign up to receive mentoring ([click here](#)). Scott McPherson and Angie London, our Mentors, will not write your entry for you but they will help by providing you with guidance where you might need it. To become part of the mentoring programme you will need to complete an “Expression of Interest” and once this is received your nominated mentor will contact you to ascertain if you would like to use their services.

"Entering awards can feel daunting. You know there is something special about your business, but it is not always easy to articulate that in a way that does it justice.

That is where having support from someone within our industry can make all the difference. An experienced, independent perspective can help you refine your submission, highlight strengths you may be too close to see, and ensure you present your business in the strongest possible light.

This is not about judging what you do. That is the role of the awards panel. It is about helping you shape your entry so it clearly reflects the heart of your business, the care you put into your guests' experience, and the professionalism that sets you apart. It is an opportunity to gain insights that may further guide your business.

*I strongly encourage you to step forward and share your story.
Garth London, President BBANZ"*

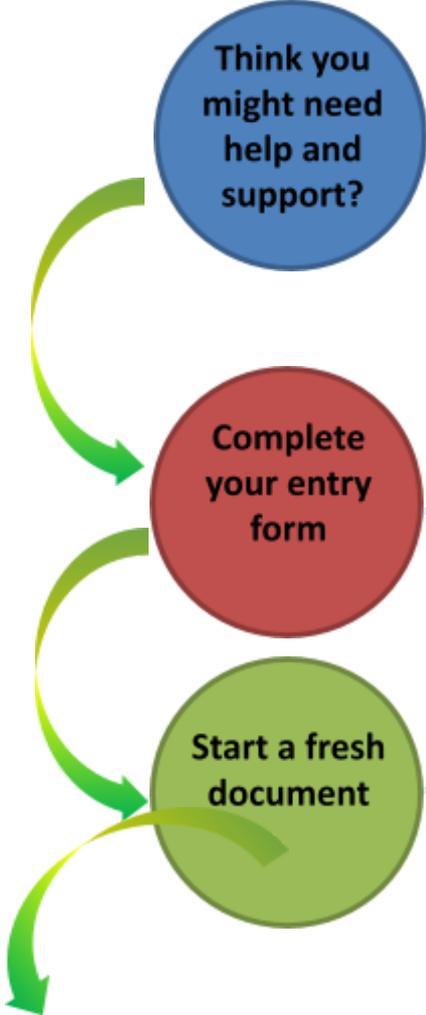
Both mentors, Scott (top) and Angie, have extensive experience in the bed and breakfast industry, they will be of great help and support when writing your entry so don't hesitate to call on one of them to help you. Both have entered the awards previously.





**DREAM BIG
&
MAKE IT HAPPEN**

How to Enter



**Think you
might need
help and
support?**

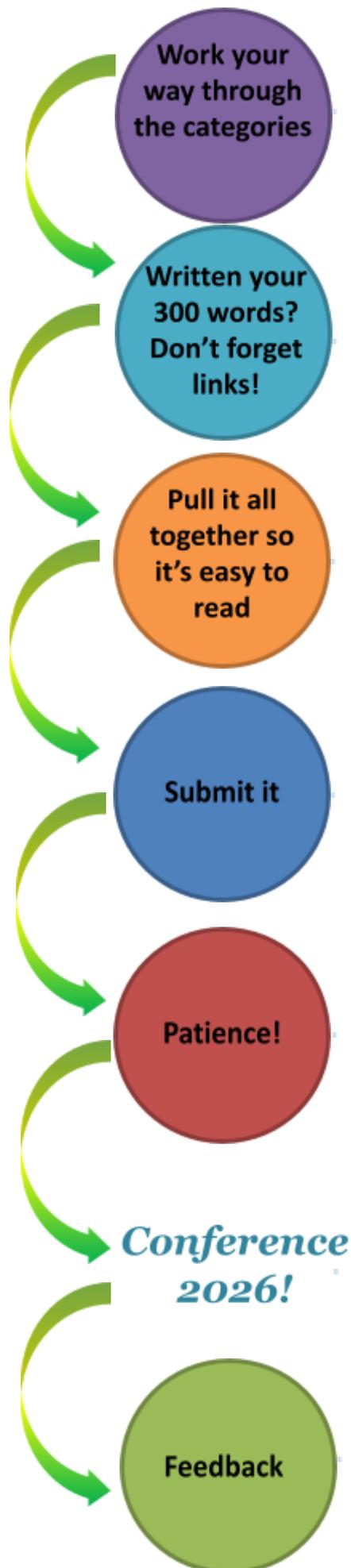
Complete your mentoring request form and one of our mentors will be in touch to help you ([click here](#))

**Complete
your entry
form**

Always best to start with the easy stuff. Ensure you complete your entry form – see page 22.

**Start a fresh
document**

Particularly if you have entered before – always important to view things through fresh eyes. It's also a good idea to have a look through your property with fresh eyes.



Remember you only have 300 words for each category so you need to be innovative, creative and concise. And don't be shy! We're talking about your success and how you achieved it. Celebrate it and share it!

The Judges love links to further information or appendices! Photos, videos, articles, websites, blogs – you name it, you can submit it as evidence. The more the better!

Remember if you need help with anything contact your Mentor (or if it is a formatting technical issue contact the Association Secretary).

Close your eyes and take a deep breath. There comes a time when you have to click "send". Don't forget – entries close 30 April 2026.

You will receive notification from the Association Secretary that your entry has been received. And you will be advised if your entry is shortlisted.

Book your attendance at conference so you can be there to receive your Award in person.

Once the awards winners have been announced you will receive feedback on your award entry.



Entry Form:

Go to Page 22 to enter.

Send Your Entry to:

Association Secretary

e.secretary@bandbassociation.co.nz

All entries should be sent electronically including all supporting documentation and photographic evidence.

Nominate someone

If you know a B&B host property that deserves to be nominated for an Award, get in touch with the hosts and encourage them to enter. You can nominate them by providing them (and us) with a nomination letter, however, they will need to complete all other aspects of the entry requirements.

Know someone awesome?

Nominate them!

Entries are open now and close 30 April 2026





Writing your Entry

Below is a list of all the categories that the Judges will consider evidence from so you should cover as many of them as you possibly can.

In each category provide as much tangible evidence as possible in either written or video format. Each category has a limit of 300 words so you will need to be creative about how you do this.

Relate your responses to activities and the way your bed and breakfast is operated. Successes and highlights should show specific dates.

Attach supporting documentation or provide links to supporting evidence. Evidence could include (but is not limited to) written feedback, newspaper articles, press releases, signed financial accounts, marketing plans, evidence of improvements with identifiable outcomes, photographs and details on how the business is measuring success.

Assume the Judges “know nothing” – don’t rely on the Judges to look elsewhere for further evidence – make sure you include it or links to it.

Be innovative

Be creative

Be concise

&

Celebrate your success!



Note: All information supplied will be treated as confidential and only made available to the Judging Panel.

Categories:

Each category should be expanded upon with no more than 300 words per category. For example: showing you operate your B&B in a professional manner. You would need to tell us how you use the systems you have in place for managing enquiries, bookings, check-ins, and checkouts and how your systems work – not necessarily what your systems are.

Remember:
The evidence provides the “how” and “why” you meet the category.

Business Commencement

Describe why you opened a bed and breakfast and provide the date of your business commencement.

Evidence may include details of how you identified the need for your business; the process you went through to successfully start your business; and describe / list any business goals you may have.

Compliance

Describe how you ensure you comply with all local and national rules and regulations.

Evidence may include meeting any local government regulations; Insurance; Acts of Parliament; ACC; Food and Beverage regulations; Health & Safety; and Civil Defence.



Property

Describe any improvements you have made to your property since purchase including:

- External – buildings, grounds and gardens
- Internal – bedrooms, bathrooms and guest lounge

Evidence may include what improvements (if any) will you be making to your business in the future? What additional factors make your business remarkable (e.g. location, composition, building awards)?



People

Describe how you look after people in your business including you (and your staff); your guest experience – hosting & hospitality. Provide links to your reviews where available, eg. TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Airbnb, etc. Evidence may include: how you involve employees (if you have them) in your business to ensure business excellence; What sets your businesses apart from other commercial or non-hosted accommodation in providing an exceptional guest experience and how do you measure customer satisfaction.

Partnerships

Describe how you work cooperatively with other tourism operators, your regional tourism organisation (RTO), inbound tour operators (ITOs), and other partners locally, nationally, or internationally. Explain how you promote your local region and contribute to strengthening the visitor experience.

You may also outline how you support the BBANZ brand, help uphold its values and reputation, and any ways you are involved with or represent BBANZ within your local community.

Operations

This section covers the systems and processes that ensure your B&B runs smoothly and delivers a consistent and exceptional guest experience. Consider areas such as reservations, payments, policies, guest inclusions, breakfast service, guest spaces, security, first aid, supplies, cleaning, health and safety, guest information, marketing, and sustainability.

You may wish to include supporting evidence such as your business plan, health and safety plan, or marketing plan.

Describe the systems you have in place for handling reservations, bookings, payments, and cancellations, and how easy it is for guests to do business with you. Outline how you monitor and improve your operational processes, and any procedures you have introduced to enhance guest satisfaction.

You may also highlight operational practices that positively impact your local community or environment, as well as any innovations, sustainability initiatives, or distinctive touches that make your B&B stand out.



Financial

Provide an overview of the financial performance of your business over the past 12 months and how this compares to previous years. Your overview could be displayed in percentages where appropriate. Evidence may cover areas such as Inland Revenue; banking; pricing and business improvement. It may also include the tools you use for financial management and the effectiveness of your financial management, and how you manage the inevitable highs and troughs of seasonality.



Sales & Marketing

How do you ensure your business stands out from the competition?

Evidence may cover areas such as your website, the B&B Association Quality Assurance Programme, Qualmark and other awards, regional tourism initiatives, social media, Tourism Industry Aotearoa and marketing and innovation initiatives. They may also include describing your target customers, how you market to them and the effectiveness of this; do you use marketing initiatives to improve your business performance; your current and future marketing plans.





Terms, Conditions & Criteria

The Awards are open to all members of the Bed & Breakfast Association who can satisfy the following criteria at time of entry. All Entrants agree to abide by these terms and conditions:

- Must have personally owned and operated or been a manager of the B&B for a minimum of 12 months at the time entries close.
- Must have personally been an Association member for a minimum of six months for the Rising Star B&B Award; or two years for the Exceptional B&B of the Year Award.
- Must have been assessed and be BBANZ Quality Assured at time of entries closing. The earlier you submit your entry, the more likely we are to be able to have your assessment completed by April 30.
- Must have current financial membership of the Association (at time of entry and at time of annual conference).
- Members are encouraged to enter or be nominated for more than one award category.
- Entry is not open to current Members of the Board or any Office Holders of the Association.
- All information provided by the Entrant be true and correct.
- The Judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- Previous Excellence Awards entrants (including winners and runners up) are able to enter.
- All finalists and winners agree to media coverage including Facebook and Instagram.
- All entry information is held on a confidential basis. No information will be shared with third parties.
- Entrants' contact details may be supplied to the Awards sponsor.
- Bed & Breakfast Association New Zealand Incorporated reserves the right to cancel the Awards Programme or any part thereof.
- The Entrant must not be under investigation by any NZ or international statutory body (for example: ACC, Police, IRD). If this is found to be untrue the Entrant will be removed from the Awards Programme.



Summary

It really is very easy to enter!

Complete
your
mentor
request
form

Complete
your
entry
form

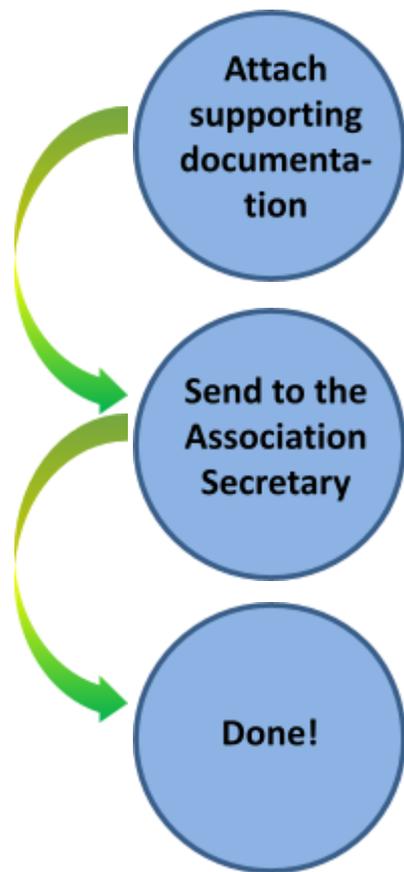
No more
than 300
words per
category

Complete your mentoring request form and one of our mentors will be in touch to help you - [click here](#).

Print page 22 of this document and complete your entry form.

See the categories and descriptions on pages 16-17.





Either links, photos, etc.

Send your Entry Form and all information to:
secretary@bandbassociation.co.nz

Enter via this [link](#)

and - Good Luck to you all!

