

## Excellence Awards Programme 2026

### Information Pack Essence of Bed & Breakfast Award



*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 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 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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# Vision Insurance Essence of B&B of the Year Award



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** – those who capture the essence of what hosting a bed and breakfast is all about.

Note: This category is a separate Award. The winner of this Award is not eligible to be included in the Supreme B&B of the Year Award.

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





## Why Enter?

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

"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

*"We found the whole process to be extremely beneficial and it wasn't as difficult as we thought!"*



# Winners / Awards

## **Vision Insurance Essence of B&B of the Year Award**

Finalists will be selected from the entries received. The winners will comprise:

Winner

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

The Award 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 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 press 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 was our 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 entrants in the BBANZ Awards.





# Mentor Programme

We have mentors available specifically for all members who enter the Awards Programme. To sign up for 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





## How to Enter

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

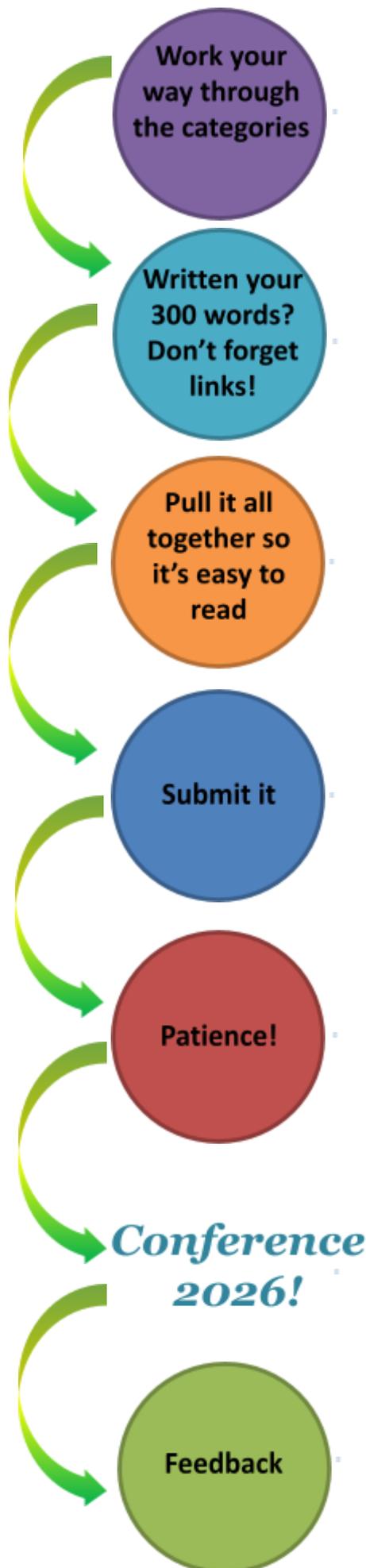
Complete your mentoring request form and one of our mentors will be in touch to help you ([click here](#))

**Complete your entry form**

Always best to start with the easy stuff. Ensure you complete your entry form – see page 19.

**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.

## Mentoring Programme:

If you'd like to take part in the Mentoring Programme complete an Expression of Interest ([click here](#)) and one of our Mentors will be in touch with you to help and support you through the entry process.

## Entry Form:

Go to Page 18 to enter.

## Send Your Entry to:

Association Secretary

e. [secretary@bandbassociation.co.nz](mailto: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 encouraging 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 now open now and close 30 April 2026.**



## Writing your Entry

Below is a list of 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.

## Entry 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.

## People

**Describe how you look after people in your business including you (and your staff); your guest experience – hosting & hospitality and involvement in your Local Region and Association.** Provide links to your reviews where available, ie. 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
- How you measure customer satisfaction;



## Partnerships

- How you work cooperatively with other operators, your RTO, ITO's and other partners in your region/worldwide
- How you support and promote BBANZ;
- what is your involvement with BBNZ within your local community

## Operations

***The operational side of your business covers many aspects such as reservations, payments, policies, guest inclusions, breakfast, guest areas, security, first aid, guest supplies, cleaning, compendiums and sustainability:***

Evidence may include

- What are the processes you have introduced to ensure and enhance customer satisfaction.
- What checks do you have in place to ensure constant improvement of your operating processes?
- What operational procedures have had a positive effect on the local community and environment.
- What additional operational processes make your business remarkable and set you apart from other B& B's (sustainability, innovations, unique surprise and delight offerings ).





# Terms, Conditions & Criteria

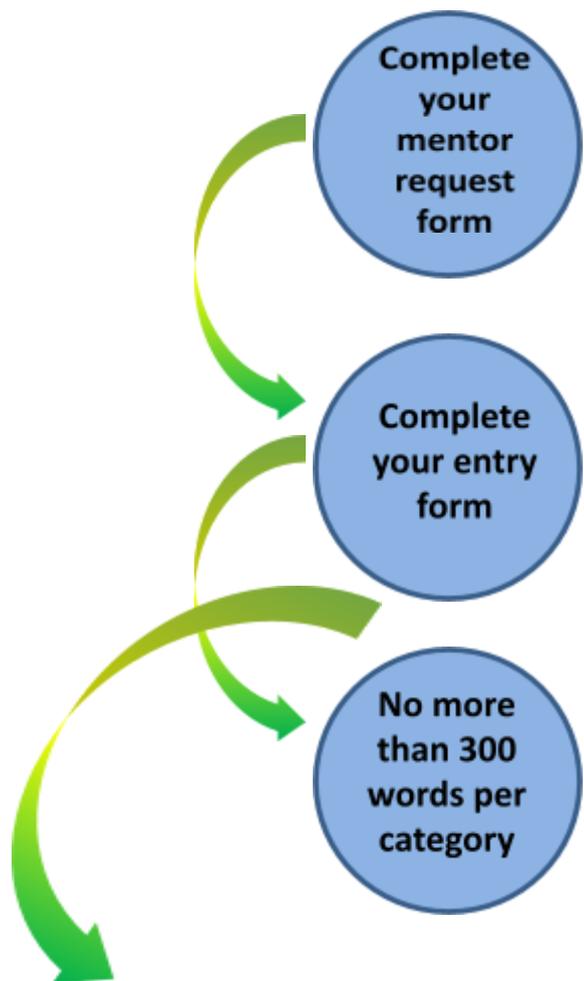
The Awards are open to all members of the Bed & Breakfast Association who can satisfy the following criteria at time of entry. All Entrants agree to abide by these terms and conditions:

- 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 two years for the Essence of B&B Award at the time entries close.
- 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 & 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 mentoring request form and one of our mentors will be in touch to help you - [Click here](#)

Print page 19 of this document and complete your entry form.

See the categories and descriptions on pages 13-14.



Either links, photos, etc.

[secretary@bandbassociation.co.nz](mailto:secretary@bandbassociation.co.nz)

Enter via this [link](#)

**and - Good Luck to you all!**