



Employer Excellence Award

Entry Guideline

This award recognises organisations that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to their people by creating workplaces where employees feel valued, included, supported, and empowered to thrive.

Employer excellence can look different across sectors. A retailer, farm business, manufacturer, tradie, tourism operator, professional service, or community organisation may each create a great workplace in their own way. Judges are encouraged to consider impact relative to the size, resources, and context of each entrant.

Award Categories and Weightings

1. Workplace Vision & Experience (25%)
2. Engagement, Development & Support (25%)
3. Leadership & Culture (20%)
4. Inclusion, Belonging & Connection (15%)
5. Outcomes & Impact (15%)

Section One: Guidance for Entrants

How to prepare a strong entry

- Use clear and specific examples.
- Show how initiatives are experienced by employees in practice.
- Include outcomes, not only activities.
- Use staff feedback, retention data, testimonials, or examples where possible.
- Avoid repeating the same example across multiple questions.
- Keep responses concise and relevant.

1. Workplace Vision & Experience (25%)

Question

How do you define a great workplace in your industry, and how do you consistently create that experience for your people?

What strong responses include

- Your people philosophy or workplace values
- What employees can expect consistently
- How your workplace reflects industry realities
- Examples of values in action

Avoid

- Generic statements without evidence

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Clear and distinctive workplace vision strongly embedded in everyday employee experience, with compelling evidence. **Very Strong (4):** Strong workplace standards with regular evidence of positive employee experience. **Positive (3):** Clear intent with some examples of good practice. **Emerging (2):** Basic understanding with limited examples. **Limited (1):** Little evidence of a defined workplace experience.

2. Engagement, Development & Support (25%)

Question

What initiatives or systems have you introduced to improve employee engagement, development, or support? What difference have they made?

What strong responses include

- Training and development opportunities
- Recognition systems
- Wellbeing or flexibility initiatives
- Career pathways or mentoring
- Positive outcomes achieved

Avoid

- Listing benefits only without impact

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Strong and well-executed initiatives delivering clear improvements in engagement, growth, and support. **Very Strong (4):** Effective initiatives with good evidence of positive outcomes. **Positive (3):** Sound initiatives with some benefit evident. **Emerging (2):** Limited or early-stage initiatives with unclear impact. **Limited (1):** No meaningful initiatives demonstrated.

3. Leadership & Culture (20%)

Question

How do leaders in your organisation actively shape culture, support staff, and model the behaviours you value?

What strong responses include

- Leadership visibility and accessibility
- Role modelling values
- Coaching and support
- Clear communication
- Trust and accountability

Avoid

- Statements about leaders without examples of behaviour

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Leadership consistently shapes a high-trust, high-performing culture with strong evidence of positive staff impact. **Very Strong (4):** Strong leadership behaviours and clear cultural benefits. **Positive (3):** Supportive leadership with some examples of good practice. **Emerging (2):** Inconsistent leadership influence or limited evidence. **Limited (1):** Little evidence of leadership impact on culture.

4. Inclusion, Belonging & Connection (15%)

Question

How do you create an inclusive workplace where employees feel connected, respected, and able to belong?

What strong responses include

- Inclusive practices and fair treatment
- Strong communication and connection
- Team belonging
- Respect for diversity and individual needs
- Examples of employee voice being heard

Avoid

- Stating everyone is treated the same without examples of inclusion

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Strong inclusive culture where employees clearly feel connected, respected, and safe to thrive.

Very Strong (4): Clear inclusive practices with regular evidence of belonging and connection. **Positive (3):** Some positive inclusion efforts with moderate evidence. **Emerging (2):** Early-stage or informal inclusion practices.

Limited (1): Little evidence of inclusion or belonging initiatives.

5. Outcomes & Impact (15%)

Question

What measurable outcomes show your people-focused approach is making a real difference for employees and the business?

What strong responses include

- Staff Retention
- Improved engagement or morale n- Promotions or internal growth
- Reduced absenteeism
- Better customer outcomes
- Productivity or business improvements

Avoid

- Claims of success without evidence

Judging Guide

Exemplary (5): Strong measurable evidence that people-focused practices are delivering significant employee and business benefits. **Very Strong (4):** Clear positive outcomes with good supporting evidence. **Positive (3):** Some outcomes evident though limited measurement. **Emerging (2):** Minimal or early evidence of results. **Limited (1):**

No clear outcomes demonstrated.