



# Shop of the Year

## SAMPLE APPLICATION

This sample application form is for information only and all applications must be made via the online application system.

*Recognises businesses that make a significant contribution to tourism in their area, with a retail offering.*

## Eligibility Criteria

- Directly involved in tourism, making a contribution to the visitor economy with a significant proportion of business generated by people visiting from outside the local area.
- A business' main offering must have been open for a period of at least eight weeks since the introduction of COVID-Secure operating guidelines and this period must be reflected within the application. Businesses where the main offering has remained closed since April 2020 may consider applying to the Resilience and Innovation Award.
- Businesses that have been trading for at least three months and up to two years when applications open are strongly recommended to apply to the New Tourism Business of the Year category before considering applying to any other categories.

- A single shop site from an independent, chain or group operator
- Retail offering
- Has a unique selling point that might be a retail offering, theme or entertainment

## Applicant & Business Details

(Not scored)

Applicant's Name

Applicant's Job Title

Applicant's Phone Number

Applicant's Email

<p><b>Business Name</b> Give the name you use when promoting your business, as you wish it to appear in all publicity materials, on certificates, in presentations etc.</p>	
<p><b>Business Address</b></p>	
<p><b>Closures during judging period</b> (the judging period runs from November 2021 to January 2022)</p>	
<p><b>Promotional description</b></p> <p>Provide a promotional description of your business.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on its strengths and stand out features</li> <li>• Write your description with regard to this category</li> <li>• This wording will be used in PR and awards literature if you are short listed as a finalist</li> <li>• Wording provided is subject to edit</li> <li>• 120 word maximum</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Promotional images</b></p>	

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Provide up to three landscape high resolution photos.

- Photos should relate to this category
- Photos should not be edited in any way e.g. embedded text or logos, a collage
- Only include photos that you own the copyright for
- If the photo requires a credit e.g. photographer, please provide details
- These photos will be used in PR and awards literature if you are short listed as a finalist

## Background

(Not scored)

Briefly outline the story of your business (250 words maximum).

*Judges will be looking for:*

- Length of time business has been under current ownership
- Target market(s) and typical customer profile
- Key milestones in developing the business
- Indication of size of business
- Number of staff employed, if any

List any awards, ratings, accolades received in the last two years, including any that relate to COVID-19. Include the title, awarding body, level and date achieved.

*For example:*

- Successes in this competition and the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence
- TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence
- Green Tourism award
- VisitEngland's 'We're Good to Go'; the AA's 'COVID-19 Confident'; Quality in Tourism's 'Safe clean and legal'

There is no requirement for your business to be quality assessed. However, if you have an independent quality assessment/mystery shopping report from the last two years, you might wish to attach it when emailing your completed application form /upload it here (optional).

## Online Presence & Reviews

(Scored)

Provide links to your online presence, which will be reviewed and scored by judges in addition to your answers to the four questions. Judges will also be looking for evidence of customer reassurance within your online presence as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Other sites may also be checked.

Website

Social Media Platforms

Provide links to any business pages/profiles on Facebook, Instagram etc. and Twitter handles

Online Review Sites

Provide specific links to any customer review listings for your business e.g. TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Google, Euan's Guide

### Question 1 – Your Recent Improvements

(Scored)

Tell us about up to **five** ways in which you have developed your business and/or improved the customer experience over the last two years (300 words maximum).

*Judges will be looking for:*

- Expansion, upgrade of facilities, enhancements to your services
- Promotional initiatives e.g. new website
- Improving the skills of you and your team
- Sustainability and accessibility improvements
- Reasons for making the improvements e.g. based on customer feedback
- Innovative adaption to restrictions, diversification and resilience building during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Approximate date of improvement

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Links to relevant supporting evidence online (optional):

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### Question 2 – Your Top Qualities

(Scored)

Tell us about up to **five** ways in which your business is impressive compared to your competitors (300 words maximum).

*Judges will be looking for what makes you unique, such as:*

- Added extras that delight your customers
- How you care for your team
- Use of local suppliers, including food & drink offer centred on locally sourced produce
- Innovative marketing and PR, including partnerships with other businesses
- Facilities and welcome for people with a range of accessibility requirements
- Managing and improving environmental, social and economic impacts
- Innovative adaption to restrictions, diversification and resilience building during the COVID-19 pandemic

1.

2

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Links to relevant supporting evidence online (optional):

### Question 3 – Your Results

(Scored)

Thinking of how you measure success, tell us about **three** successes from the last year (300 words maximum).

*Judges will be looking for:*

- Percentage increase in visitor numbers, sales, customer satisfaction and wastage reduction
- Percentage increase in online bookings
- Increase in repeat business
- Business generated from marketing activity
- Growth of social media following and engagement

1.

2.

3.

Links to relevant supporting evidence online (optional):

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<b>Question 4 – Your Future Plans</b>	<b>(Scored)</b>
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Tell us about **three** ways you will develop and promote your business over the next year (300 words maximum).

- Judges will be looking for:*
- Expansion, upgrade of facilities, enhancements to your services
  - Improving the skills of you and your team
  - Marketing and PR, including partnerships with other businesses
  - Operational efficiency
  - Sustainability and accessibility improvements
  - Continued adaption, diversification and resilience building as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

1.

2.

3.

Links to relevant supporting evidence online (optional):

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<b>Terms &amp; Conditions of Entry</b>
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## **Applicant Terms and Conditions**

“Competition” means Visit York Tourism Awards and the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence

“Organiser” means Make It York/VisitYork

“You” means the individual who submits an application

“Platform” means OpenWater

### **By submitting an application to the Competition, you agree to be bound by the following terms and conditions:**

- Applications for the Competition must be submitted within the time and date ranges specified at [www.visitYork.org/tourismawards](http://www.visitYork.org/tourismawards)
- Applications must be submitted via OpenWater following the link at [www.visitYork.org/tourismawards](http://www.visitYork.org/tourismawards).
- It is free to apply to all of the Competition categories.
- You must be open at some point between November 2021 and January 2022, so the judges can visit if required. If you are due to be closed for any part of this period, please ensure this is highlighted in the ‘closures’ box on your application. Should the Government require your business to close due to COVID-19, alternative judging arrangements may be made.
- Applications may be submitted by any individual representing the business applying and the individual who submits the application will also become the contact whom all correspondence from the Organiser and VisitEngland concerning the Competition will be addressed to.
- You must inform the Organiser immediately of any changes to the contact information relating to you or the business applying during the Competition.
- Employees or representatives/agents of the Organiser and VisitEngland are not eligible to submit an application to the Competition except for categories in which third party nominations are publicly invited.
- The business applying complies with all current and relevant legal and licensing obligations before submitting an application. The judges reserve the right to not consider an application if this is in doubt and cannot be confirmed.
- You can apply for more than one category, except where specified within the eligibility criteria, but separate applications must be completed for each.
- Applications will only be considered if they are deemed to meet the eligibility criteria.

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