

GLADSTONE REGIONAL EVENTS STRATEGY

2019 - 2024

DRAFT



GLADSTONE
REGIONAL COUNCIL

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The purpose of **THIS STRATEGY**

is to strengthen the Gladstone Region's profile and position as a nationally recognised event destination.

The Gladstone Region is a striking juxtaposition of industry and world heritage natural environment, creating a unique culture and event stage unlike anywhere else.

The strategy aims to position The Gladstone Region as a leading event-friendly destination by harnessing the region's competitive advantages. Through a vibrant calendar of events, it will increase overnight visitor expenditure,

bolster the economy and celebrate community and culture.

The strategy provides a strategic focus for council to support events, grow existing destination and signature events and attract new events to the region.

The strategy aims to develop greater synergies between events and tourism and the wider regional and State event and tourism strategies

to build a positive destination profile and create a higher return on investment for the community and industry in the Gladstone Region.

The Strategy outlines how Council will align, manage, partner, sponsor, promote and approve events within the Gladstone Region to meet consumer demand for authentic experiences in spectacular surroundings.



THE REHEARSAL

{Setting the scene}

Festivals and events generate awareness of the host destination through destination profiling and can be the catalyst to drive tourism, activate infrastructure and places and energise the local community. Over time, destination and signature events can become synonymous with the region where the event and region become inseparable.

Not only do vibrant events play a vital role in increasing visitation, they have the potential to simulate the local economy. The Gladstone Region has the capacity to host major events, cultural performances, conferences, festivals and expos.

Over 200 festivals and events are staged throughout the Gladstone Region annually. In the 2017/18 financial year, Gladstone Regional Council (GRC) supported 11 major events that generated \$7,627,251 economic value in the local economy and attracted 87,246 event specific visitors.

Local participation in festivals and events can create community cohesion and pride, while showcasing the region to visitors.

Visitors can experience the local cuisine, culture and arts, immerse

in activities such as scuba diving or cruising, reef, estuary and lake fishing or relax in nearby coastal villages such as Tannum Sands, Agnes Water and Town of 1770.

Gladstone is a multicultural community and all cultures are encouraged to be actively involved in presenting and participating in events. Opportunities lie for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be involved in event initiatives to celebrate the culture and history of the regional indigenous community.

The Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre (GECC) is Central Queensland's only fully integrated business and entertainment venue with a capacity for 1,500 people. Opportunities exist to become the business event hub in central Queensland with the GECC offering

state of the art audio and visual in the heart of the CBD and within walking distance of eateries and accommodation.

As a destination located in a port with cruise ship docking capabilities, Gladstone has secured the opportunity to host 15 domestic and international cruises with 800 to 2,000 passengers in 2019. The ships are docked for 8-hours plus, providing opportunities to run events in Gladstone during the cruise stop-over.

The development and cross promotion of packages including attractions, accommodation and transport to increase the visitor length of stay and enhance the experience.

TRAVELLING TO GLADSTONE



6 hour drive, 550 km Brisbane-Gladstone
1.5 hour drive, 100km Rockhampton-Gladstone



Once daily - 11 hours Brisbane-Gladstone



1h 10m flight, Virgin Australia/Alliance + Qantas
Scheduled Flights:
8 Monday-Thursday. 9 Friday. 4 Saturday. 5 Sunday



6 hours from Brisbane. 3 services per day.
Tilt train, Spirit of Queensland + Spirit of the Outback.



THE GLADSTONE REGION BIO

{Our brand story}

The Gladstone Region's image is one of Australia's major industrial locations. Its strategic proximity to considerable natural resources, combined with a natural deep water port that is one of the largest, bulk commodity ports in the world have positioned its strength in large scale industry, resources and energy, engineering and advanced manufacturing with a highly skilled workforce.

Its stunning locations including access to Heron Island and the Southern Great Barrier Reef, Australia's most northerly surf beach, Agnes Water and Town of 1770, proximity to National Parks and laid back coastal and rural hinterland lifestyles, make it an attractive destination for holiday makers and sea changers.

Events have the propensity to redefine the Gladstone Region's regional identity. To reflect and celebrate its unique juxtaposition of the contrast of industry and pristine environment.

In an increasingly competitive event market, the Gladstone Region will need to further differentiate its events to create and reflect its unique locations and culture.

By embracing its boom and bust industrial history, the significance of its stunning pristine natural environment and coastal Queensland lifestyle, the Region is in a pivotal position to shape its destination image by growing existing and attracting new destination and signature events.

Like nowhere else, the Gladstone Region is a striking juxtaposition of industry and pristine environment of the world heritage listed Great Barrier Reef.

BACKSTAGE

{Strategic context}



The Gladstone Regional Events Strategy has been developed to align with local, regional and state strategies to provide a long-term competitive advantage and coordinated approach. This strategy sits under the Corporate Plan and Operational Plan.

The strategy directly delivers on the objectives outlined in the following plans:

Gladstone Regional Council 2018–2023 Corporate Plan

Grow the region – Actively promote and support the Gladstone Region and enable its growth and prosperity by increasing visitation and awareness of the region through events. The development of a new Signature event has the potential to generate economic benefit, increased tourism and maximise the return on investment.

2018/19 Operational Plan

Developing the Gladstone brand the strategy will create transparent reporting between events and the council to deliver on community outcomes.

Gladstone Region Economic Development Strategy

Measuring and monitoring, to calculate economic benefit.

Draft Gladstone Region Arts and Cultural Plan 2018–2022

Creating a strong sense of history through the preservation, promotion and visibility of the region's rich natural and cultural heritage through multi-cultural events.

Central Queensland Tourism Opportunity Plan 2009–2019

Contribute to a positive image of the area as a destination in its own right (not just a stopover) for local and international visitors and business people, the strategy enhances the profile, positioning the Gladstone Region as an event friendly destination.

Gladstone Region Destination Tourism Plan 2014–2020

'Develop its leisure experiences to their full potential to enhance the liveability and tourism appeal of the destination' the Event Strategy will encourage industry collaboration to develop packages to enhance the visitor experience and increase the length of stay.

Tourism and Events Queensland's (TEQ) Events Strategy 2025

To showcase the best address on earth, signature experiences and events and leverage competitive advantage.

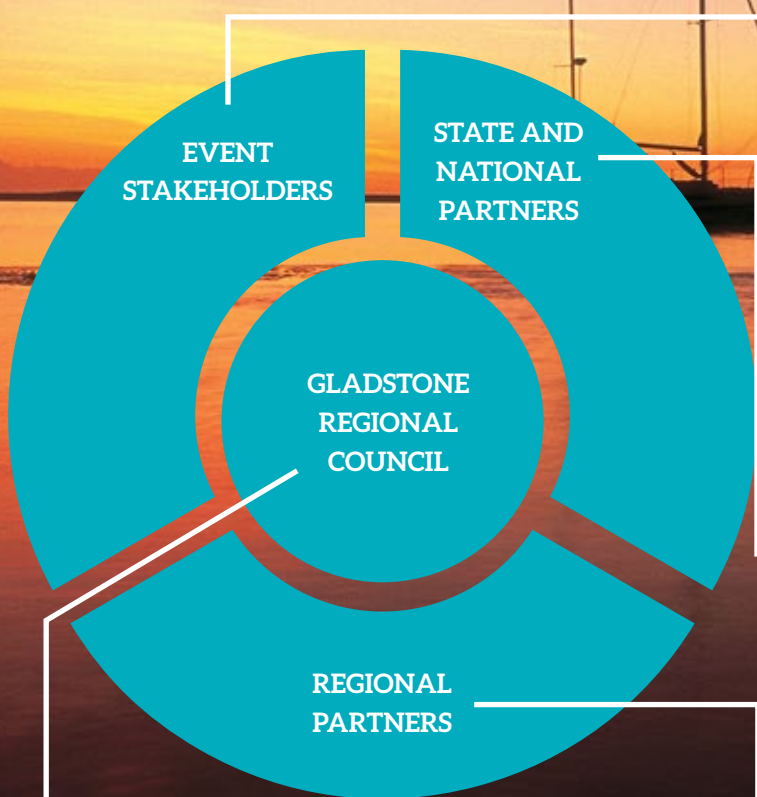


PRESENTED BY

{Strategic Partners + Collaboration}

Successful events must be based on more than marketing initiatives. Events require partnerships, collaboration, destination planning, management and development.

The objective of the strategy is to provide a cohesive framework for the development and marketing of events to create a long-term, distinctive competitive advantage for the Gladstone Region. This will be achieved through a collaborative approach with events, tourism and strategic partners.



EVENT STAKEHOLDERS

Gladstone Region Stakeholders

- Local event organisers
- Local event sponsors + suppliers
- Local tourism operators
- Media partners
- Volunteers
- Local community

Major Event Organisers + Sponsors

- Major Event owners and promoters
- Key event sponsors
- Event suppliers

STATE AND NATIONAL PARTNERS

Tourism and Events Queensland

- “It’s Live in Queensland” campaign
- Digital and social media platforms
- Destination, Business and Major Event Programs
- Target market insights

Tourism Australia and Tourism Research Australia (TRA)

- Digital and social media platforms
- Tourism trends
- Visitor statistics

GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL

- Leadership and strategic direction
- Event attraction
- Event capacity building
- Event support (financial + in-kind)

REGIONAL PARTNERS

Gladstone Area Promotion and Development Ltd (GAPDL)

- Destination Brand – Southern Great Barrier Reef
- Marketing campaigns
- Digital & social media platforms
- Media PR
- Packaging/networking with tourism industry
- Tourism development

WHAT'S ON

{Event calendar}



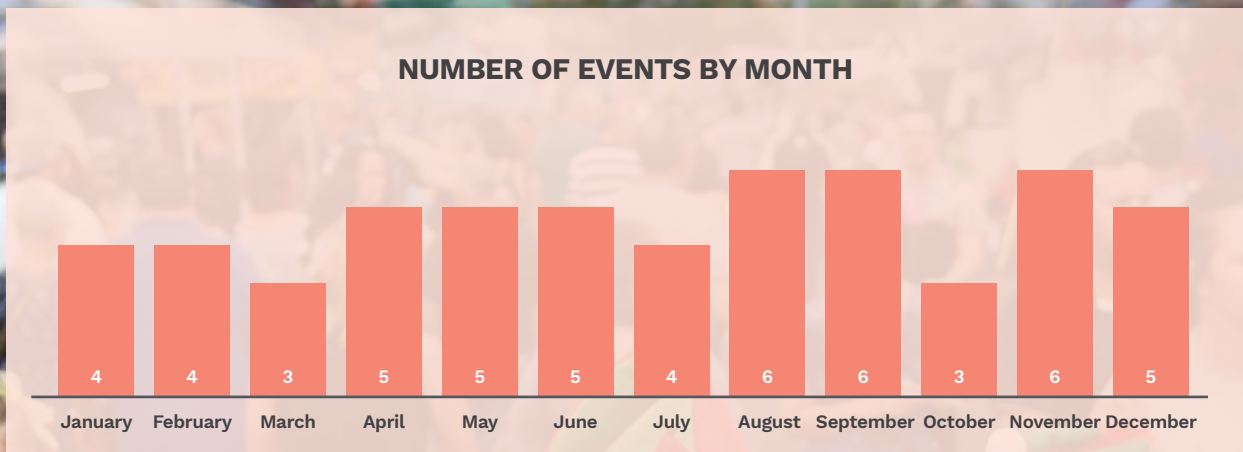
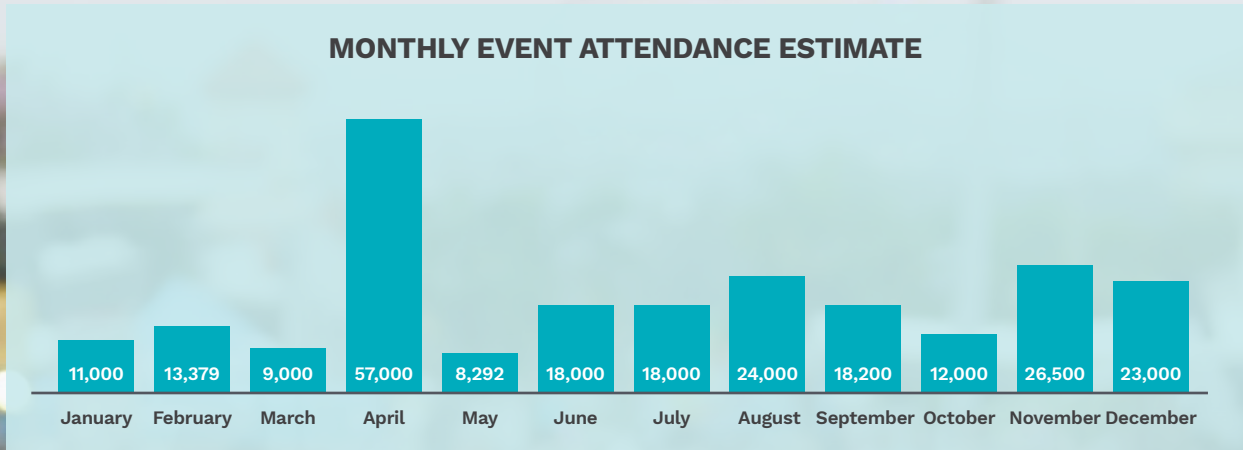
Events are a powerful strategic asset to grow visitation as they provide a definite, time-based reason to visit Gladstone, to break the inertia gap between intention to visit and actual visitation.

Gladstone has a diverse calendar of major events, sporting events, conferences and community events attracting significant attendance that all contribute to the economic activity and prosperity of region. The following represents a snapshot of events on the Gladstone 2019 calendar.

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
<p>11 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p> <p>14-24 Sunfest</p> <p>19 Hotter Than Hell</p> <p>26 Australia Day Events</p>	<p>15-17 Agnes Blues Roots & Rock Festival</p> <p>21-24 Gladstone Community Musical</p> <p>23 Ride 4 Life Gladstone Show & Shine</p> <p>25 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p> <p>28 World Science Festival</p> <p>28 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p>	<p>1 World Science Festival</p> <p>2 Beach Arts Music (BAM)</p> <p>10 Zonta International Women's Breakfast</p> <p>31 Tannum Crab Classic</p>
APRIL	MAY	JUNE
<p>6 Beach Arts Music (BAM)</p> <p>12-14 Boyne Valley Country Music Camp Out</p> <p>17-21 Harbour Festival</p> <p>19 Brisbane-Gladstone Yacht Race</p> <p>19-21 B2G Village</p> <p>25 ANZAC events</p> <p>27 Miriam Vale Rodeo</p>	<p>3-5 Boyne Tannum HookUp</p> <p>4 Beach Arts Music (BAM)</p> <p>5 Baffle Creek Raft Race</p> <p>6 Labour Day</p> <p>11 Mayor's Charity Ball</p> <p>20-26 Children's Festival</p> <p>26-26 Captain Cook 1770 Festival</p> <p>26 GECC Little Day Out</p>	<p>1 Beach Arts Music (BAM)</p> <p>2 Ecofest</p> <p>4 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p> <p>6 Queensland Day</p> <p>8 Great Yarwun Valley Rally</p> <p>22 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p> <p>22-23 Mt Larcum Show</p> <p>30 The Whitlams</p>
JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
<p>6 Beach Arts Music</p> <p>7-14 Naidoc Week</p> <p>13 Turkey Beach Tractor Bash</p> <p>13-14 Luminous</p> <p>13 Jason Heatherington Cup</p> <p>20 Koolyangarra's Garden Party</p> <p>20-21 Baffle Creek Car/Bike Muster</p> <p>27 Brisbane Roar Game</p> <p>27-28 Relay for Life Gladstone</p>	<p>2 QSO Symphony Under the Stars</p> <p>3 Beach Arts Music (BAM)</p> <p>4 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p> <p>8-9 Gladstone Show</p> <p>10 Gladstone Cup</p> <p>10 Gladstone Swap Meet & Car Boot Sale</p> <p>18 Vietnam Veterans Day</p> <p>18 Botanic to Bridge</p> <p>23 Mayor's Seniors Morning Tea</p>	<p>1 Multicultural Festival</p> <p>6 Beach Arts Music (BAM)</p> <p>20 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p> <p>21 Under the Trees Arts + Music Festival</p> <p>23-28 Baffle Creek Family Fishing Festival</p> <p>27-28 Calliope Rodeo & Ute Muster</p> <p>28 NRC Rugby Union Game</p>
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
<p>5 Beach Arts Music (BAM)</p> <p>19 Martin Hanson Memorial Art Awards</p> <p>25 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p> <p>30 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p>	<p>2 Beach Arts Music (BAM)</p> <p>2 Pop Con</p> <p>6,13,19, Feast on East Markets 20 + 27 + Cruise ships</p> <p>8-10 Lowmead 3 Car Challenge</p> <p>11 Remembrance Day</p> <p>15-16 Miriam Vale Wood Chop</p>	<p>1 Christmas Street Party</p> <p>4 Feast on East Markets + Cruise Ship</p> <p>6 Carols by Candlelight</p> <p>7 Ulysses Toy Run</p> <p>7 Beach Arts Music (BAM)</p> <p>31 New Year's Eve</p>

SEASONALITY

The chart below illustrates the potential total event attendance from events staged in the Gladstone Region with over 1,000 attendees. The months of April, August, November and December have events with the highest attendance estimates excluding cruise ship passengers.



Event SNAPSHOT



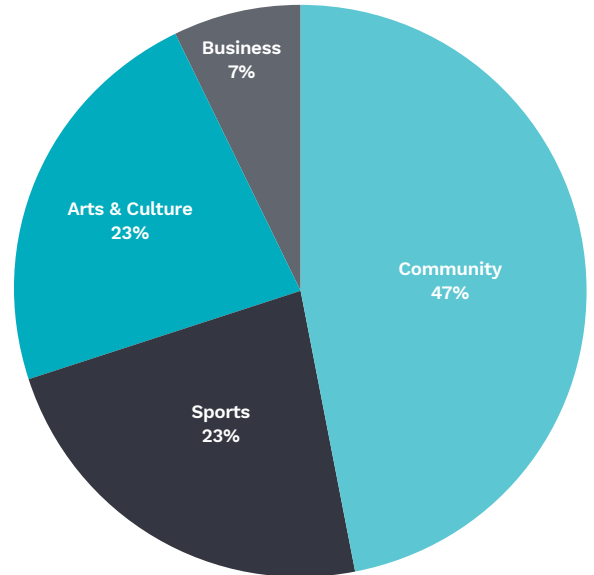
200
festivals and events p.a.
(including civic & community events)

197k
total attendance of events
1,000+ p.a

UNIQUE EVENTS

-  Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race + Nautical Themed Celebrations
-  Australia's Largest Family Friendly Fishing Competition
-  Emerging Grass-roots style Arts and Music Festivals

EVENT TYPE



GLADSTONE REGIONAL COUNCIL SUPPORTED EVENTS

11 Major Events Funded

Economic Value
\$7.6m

Visitors
87,246

ROI
\$38/1



PEAK EVENT SEASON

Based on events with attendance over 1,000, the peak event seasons are April/Easter, August, November (Crusie ships), December

THE STAGE

{Venue + Green Spaces Snapshot}

The Gladstone Region has the capacity to host conferences, leisure, arts & cultural, community, sporting and business events.

15

dedicated conference and event venues

20

green spaces suitable for festivals and events

20

sporting facilities

ACCOMMODATION

1967
rooms

5555+
capacity

Not including cabins, caravan sites, Air B&B or backpackers

GREEN SPACE RATINGS

East Shores
- national standard

Palm Point/Spinnaker Park
- state standard

Millennium Esplanade
- state standard

Tondoon Botanic Gardens
- regional standard

HIGH EVENT INFRASTRUCTURE RATINGS*

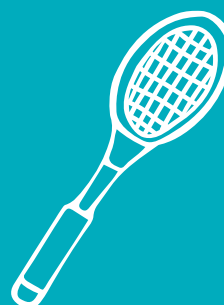
Performing Arts

Motor sports

Tennis

Rugby league

Touch football



*Source: Sports Marketing Australia. Gladstone Capacity and Capability Assessment 2019

BUSINESS EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

Gladstone Entertainment and Conference Centre
- national standard

Gladstone Events Centre

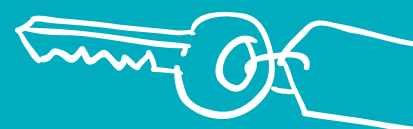
Rydges

Harvey Road Tavern (marquee)

Oaks Grand Gladstone

Heron Island

Average expenditure reported by meeting and convention organisers was \$192 per delegate day.



VENUE RATINGS

1 x Conference and Entertainment Centre
- national standard (1,500)

1 x art gallery and museum
regional standard

4 x state standard sporting facilities

16 x regional standard sporting facilities

HIGH RATING SPORTS VENUES*

The Benarby Raceway
- state standard

Marley Brown Oval
- state standard

The Gladstone Tennis and Squash Association
- state standard

Briffney Creek Playing Fields
- state standard



*Source: Sports Marketing Australia. Gladstone Capacity and Capability Assessment 2019

BIG SPENDERS

{Visitor Economy Snapshot}

With direct access to the Southern Great Barrier Reef, including Heron, Wilson, Lady Musgrave and the Capricorn Bunker group of islands and famous for fishing and boating, the Region is a popular holiday destination.

Events have the propensity to increase visitation and length of stay in Gladstone to ultimately increase the overnight visitor expenditure (OVE) by 104% compared to the \$94 domestic day-tripper.

DOMESTIC DAY TRIPPER

\$94⁵⁰

DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT SPEND

\$127⁵⁰

DOMESTIC OVERNIGHT SPEND IN COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATION

\$192⁵⁰

VALUE OF TOURISM⁵

Total Spend
\$308m

VISITORS⁵

Total Visitors
950,000

International
54,000

Domestic
Overnight
469,000

Domestic
Day-trippers
427,000

SPEND⁵

Total average
spend per trip \$324

Domestic per trip \$514

Average spend per night \$127
Average spend per night in
commercial \$192

International per trip \$490
Average spend per night \$39
Average spend per night in
commercial \$61

LENGTH-OF-STAY⁵

Domestic 4 nights
International 13 nights

PEAK TOURISM SEASONS

April - October

WHY VISITORS COME TO GLADSTONE⁴

Visiting Friends and
Relatives (VFR) 27%

Holiday 39%

Business 29%

Other 5%

MAJOR SOURCE MARKETS

1. Regional Queensland
(Rockhampton/Capricorn,
Bundaberg/Harvey Bay)

2. Brisbane

GENERATING⁵

2,586,000 nights

OUR FANS

{Target Markets}

GEOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The Gladstone Region is within a 90-minute drive from Rockhampton and 300km of Bundaberg, Hervey Bay and 400km from Mackay, Emerald and Sunshine Coast and just over 1 hour flight from Brisbane.



MOST VISITORS TO THE GLADSTONE REGION ARE:



Holiday 39%



Business 29%



Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) 27%

MARKET SEGMENTATION

PRIMARY MARKETS



SELF-DRIVE/SHORT-BREAK

Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Mackay, Emerald, Sunshine Coast.



FLY/DRIVE
Brisbane.



BUSINESS EVENTS/MICE

Highlight walking distance of conference/meeting room & accommodation, coastal and reef island locations, pre/post touring. Focus on attracting arts, environmental, and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) conferences.



SPECIAL INTEREST

Fishing, boating, cruise, yachting, diving.



SPORTING EVENTS

Regional and state.

HIGH VALUE TRAVELLERS (HVT)

To increase the economic impact from events and the ROI for council and the region, it is recommended to further attract events and develop event experiences to appeal to domestic travellers who will generate a greater overnight visitor expenditure (OVE).

Tourism and Events Queensland has identified such visitors as High Value Travellers (HVT's) who engage in domestic leisure travel, spend more than the average traveller on leisure trips, and are aligned to experiences offered in Queensland.

These intrastate and interstate markets could offer good potential for Gladstone Region events which develop experiences aligned with their holiday needs. Of note are those markets 18-49 travelling with children (for family friendly events e.g. Luminous, Harbour Festival, Boyne Tannum Hookup) and without children and 50+ market travelling without children (e.g. seeking specifically seeking food and wine, e.g. Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race, Feast on East, Agnes Blues, Roots and Rock Festival, Under the Trees, BAM)

Travelling with children	1.4 million interstate	288,000 intrastate
18-49 travelling without children	1.3 million interstate	408,000 intrastate
50+ travelling without children	1.5 million interstate	440,000 intrastate

WHAT THEY'RE SPENDING THEIR MONEY ON

{Consumer + Event Trends}

With some events in Gladstone plateauing in attendance and receiving limited media profiling outside the region, the need to meet market appeal and changing consumer demands is paramount.

The success of events will be based on understanding customer needs, programming to meet those needs and a willingness to take creative risks, to live on the edge of boom and bust.

Consumer and event trends that provide implications and opportunities for the Gladstone Region include:

LIKE A LOCAL

Live like a local. With the explosion of Airbnb, tourism blogs and publications relating to eating like a local, hang out where the locals go, speak like a local.

Implications/Opportunities for Gladstone Region Events

To promote more localised “untourist” spots and create regional dispersal, encourage event attendees to develop a deeper connection with the region and experience a wider variety of the Gladstone Region and unearthing experiences, such as Crow Street Creative.



Health + Superfoods + Wholesome Foods are major recent Australian trends, with food and coffee culture, paddock to plate experiences and health and well-being relating to food high on consumer agendas.

Implications/Opportunities for Gladstone Region Events

Provide signature Gladstone Region food experiences at all events e.g. seafood, mud crab, reef fish, reef & beef, tropical flavours. Something unexpected e.g. serving famous Miriam Vale mud crab sandwiches at a conference in Gladstone. Initiatives like a Tannum Sands butcher who sells “Under the Trees” burger patties should be applauded and promoted as year round event legacies.



The Green Consumer, being environmentally aware, wanting to consume environmentally sustainable products and experiences and wishing to contribute and give back are major consumer trends affecting all events, particularly in meetings and events and events targeting Millennials and Gen Z

Implications/Opportunities for Gladstone Region Events

Develop the Region as a “green” event stage for all events, particularly in the MICE and performing arts/music events sectors.



STEM –science, technology, engineering and mathematics is a growing theme for education in Australia, and related MICE and festival style events around this theme is on the increase.

Implications/Opportunities for Gladstone Region Events

With its leading industry position and highly qualified workforce/engineers, the Region is perfectly poised to build on this theme. Its MICE strategy could be to specifically target events in this field.



Cutting Edge Arts + Live Performances, are two trends creating enormous followings and media profiling for the destinations and events doing it well. Events such as Dark Mofo and Adelaide Fringe Festival are recent examples of prolific media profiling and cut-through born from cutting edge creativity and innovation.

Implications/Opportunities for Gladstone Region Events

The region could lead in this area for regional Queensland and long-term nationally. As an industry powerbase, cutting edge industrial arts combined with the region’s strength in performing arts, sustainability and STEM. Refer to The Festival of Curiosity (Dublin’s International Arts + Science event) and the new Curiosity event in Brisbane.



Social Media uptake across all demographics, interaction and sharing, with many events actively using social media advertising and e-mail marketing as primary marketing tools, with increasing livestreaming.

Implications/Opportunities for Gladstone Region Events

Quality and creative content creation incorporating stunning destination footage, actively incorporating social media advertising and developing e-mail data bases.



Smartphone responsive and Digital Retail, with 2/3rd of Australians using mobile internet for 90 minutes per day. APPs are increasing in use to convey event information and programing updates.

Implications/Opportunities for Gladstone Region Events

Events must be easily sourced and booked online, via a smart phone. Online ticketing services could be provided as part of in-kind package for eligible events.



Measuring + Monitoring in a competitive environment, understanding the event visitor, their satisfaction ratings to improve event delivery, understanding where they’re from, spending and how they purchase the event is increasingly important to remain competitive

Implications/Opportunities for Gladstone Region Events

The surveying and monitoring of event patrons will need to be given higher priority to meet changing consumer needs, increase visitor satisfaction and be more targeted for future marketing.

GOING GREEN

The meetings industry has a huge environmental impact.

Green culture is taking hold and event stakeholders are thinking carefully about environmental impacts, becoming keen to show their sustainability credentials.

Ian Cummings, vice president of EMEA for CWT Meetings & Events, is among those who see the trend towards sustainable meetings and events as much more than a passing fad. “It has certainly been growing every year as a

key buying factor,” he said, noting that some clients go as far as ensuring their events comply with the SO 20121 sustainable event standards.

Clients who have a strong company culture based on sustainability require it as part of any event, and this can influence the venues, activities, and even menus selected as a part of the event, according to Rose Squitieri-Strickland, senior project manager at BCD Meetings & Events.

Companies looking for low carbon footprint impacts are choosing venues close to their audiences to minimize flight miles, and may even

look to add carbon-offset to their overall flight budget.

“Hotels are being asked about their green initiatives and green programs prior to selection.”

Venues are actively promoting their environmental certifications and awards to win business. The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) in Australia’s second-largest city is a good example, boasting that it is the first convention centre in the world to be awarded a 6-Star Green Star environmental rating.

Source Skift

THE HEADLINE ACTS

{Our Competitive Advantage}

To create a dynamic and competitive event landscape, distinct and innovative events that build on the Gladstone Region's unique selling points and meet consumer demand will be essential into the future.

LEVERAGE ICON EVENTS + LOCATIONS

The seventy year history and profile of the Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race as one of Australia's flagship offshore yacht races offers potential to further leverage. It is an icon of Queensland and one of the state's highest profile Easter Weekend sporting events.

The Gladstone Region is home to several iconic locations, namely Heron Island and the Southern Great Barrier Reef and Town of 1770/Agnes Water.

Heron Island provides national and international tourism distribution and marketing, providing incredible brand profiling imagery, while Town of 1770/Agnes Water are often cited on travel bucket lists and the access point for Lady Musgrave Island and Fitzroy Lagoon. It is also the location for several emerging events, including the 1770 Festival with the Captain Cook reenactment.

FISHING + BOATING

Small recreational boating is growing. According to Marine Queensland, the number of recreational boats has increased significantly since 2010. The Gladstone Region boasts a high percentage of recreational boat ownership at 19% of the population, one of the highest percentages in Queensland.

The table below outlines coastal regions in Queensland with high percentages of boat ownership.

NUMBER OF RECREATIONAL SHIPS IN EACH REGION (2016)

REGION	No of Registrations	% of Ownership
Gladstone	47,576	19%
Mackay	19,736	8%
Townsville	23,674	9%

SOURCE: Recreational Ship Census June 2016 (Department of Transport and Main Roads)

Recreational fishing is a popular sport and social activity in Australia. According to a National Recreational Fishing Survey, nearly 20% of the Australian population participate in recreational fishing and their primary motivation to fish is not for extractive purposes, but for relaxation and sport.

SOURCE: Coordinated national data collection for recreational fishing in Australia, CSIRO 2014

Combined with these trends, the Gladstone Region is home to Australia's largest family fishing tournament (Boyne Tannum Hook-Up) and the iconic Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race and related Easter celebrations (i.e. Harbour Festival, Line Crossing Party/Seafood Festival/Yachtsman's Long Lunch) provide a strong competitive advantage for the Gladstone Region to leverage and build on.

Fishing and boating related lifestyle experiences (including seafood), combined with the region's stunning Southern Great Barrier Reef, estuary and fresh water fishing locations offer strong destination profiling opportunities.

The growing cruise ship market provides significant destination profiling to further support the boating theme for the Gladstone Region and supported by the event, Feast on East with each cruise ship docking.

STRIKING JUXTAPOSITION

INDUSTRIAL ARTS + ENVIRONMENT + STEM

Like nowhere else, the Gladstone Region is a striking juxtaposition of industry and world heritage natural environment. With such an unusual contrast and resulting culture, its engineering expertise and stunning Southern Great Barrier Reef locations, the Gladstone Region has a prime opportunity to develop a unique and cutting edge industrial/natural environmental arts type experiences, combined with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). Imagine a quintessentially Gladstone/ Queensland coastal version of Dark Mofo.

These type of cultural experiences could be developed within existing and new events to further differentiate Gladstone Region events, whether they be leisure, sporting or business events.

CLIMATE + COASTAL LIFESTYLE

GRASS ROOTS MUSIC + ARTS

With its temperate year-round climate, coastal villages and laid back lifestyle, emerging open air art and music events, such as the Agnes Blues, Roots and Rock Festival and Under the Trees Arts & Music Festival have experienced organic attendance growth. Markets, such as BAM (Beach, Arts, Music) and Crow Street Creative (in the industrial heart of Gladstone) further reflect the region's lifestyle and culture.



COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES



LEVERAGE ICON
EVENTS + LOCATIONS



FISHING
+ BOATING



JUXTAPOSITION – INDUSTRY
+ PRISTINE ENVIRONMENT



CLIMATE + COASTAL
LIFESTYLE



A one-stop-shop approach will assist in becoming known as an event friendly destination

PERFORMANCE COMPARISON

{Local Government Benchmarking}

To further develop its competitive advantage, benchmarking with other local government councils was undertaken, including... **Mackay Regional Council, Sunshine Coast Council, Townsville Regional Council and Wollongong City Council.**

OBJECTIVE OF EVENTS

The key objectives of events for all councils included:

- Increase **visitation** and **length of stay**.
- Increase **economic benefit** for the region.
- Community **health and wellbeing**.
- **Supporting** local event organisers.
- **Attracting** events to the region.

COUNCILS' ROLE IN EVENTS

The councils' roles in events varied from the delivery of community to major/signature events, capacity building and supporting event organisers in the delivery of events.

ONE-STOP-SHOP

Wollongong City Council operate using a concierge system, where one person is assigned as an account manager to an event organiser. The other councils assist event organisers to navigate the approval process.

INDUSTRY TRAINING

Industry training provided by each council varies. Providing opportunities for tourism and events to network and participate in training facilitates collaboration and packaging products.

SPONSORSHIP

- Sponsorship assessment criteria is aligned to the council objectives and potential economic benefit.
- Multi-year sponsorship agreements are offered to some events.
- Event acquittals are required post-event identifying total visitors, visitor origin and length of stay to receive ongoing funding.

EVENT ATTRACTION

- The councils have dedicated human resources to secure events. Destination Wollongong and the Sunshine Coast Events Board work with the council to attract and secure events.
- The event attraction budgets are significant and in excess of 10x more than Gladstone's attraction budget.
- Tracking the number of event bids, conversion rate and the reason the bid was unsuccessful can identify trends and the potential need to upgrade infrastructure.

DESTINATION PROFILING

- Over time, the perception of the benchmarked regions has shifted, and they are now known as event friendly destinations.
- The demonstrated economic benefits of events are often the catalyst to attract funding to build and invest in infrastructure.
- Hosting successful events and being known as an event destination is an impetus for repeat visitation.

KEY LEARNINGS

- A **one-stop-shop** with exceptional **customer service** to streamline the approval process for event organisers will assist in growing the **event destination brand**.
- **Event acquittals** are mandatory in order to receive ongoing funding, and provide data to assist in future planning, budgeting and marketing.
- **Event Attraction** – events are selected that are aligned to the destination image and council objectives and have strong budgets.
- Industry **training** and **networking** opportunities assist in growing a **united** tourism and events industry within the region.
- Training assists in **event sustainability**, and networking provides opportunities for operators to collaborate and **package** products and experiences to ultimately **enhance the visitor experience**.

CHALLENGES + OPPORTUNITIES



In developing this strategy, consultation was undertaken with Gladstone Region events and tourism representatives, council and key stakeholders through workshops, face-to-face meetings and an online industry survey.

The key findings from the consultation are summarised as follows:

CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination profile perception. • Internal human resources. • Historically managed sponsorship – sense of entitlement events will automatically receive funding. • Limited number of skilled event specific resources for lighting and staging technical support. • Cost to run events. • Short-term funding. • Event dates clashing for the same event attendees. • Cross promotion – fear of threat. • Industrial pollution. • Local perception events should be free. • Limited collaboration between events. • Infrastructure capacity. • Quality of services and business supporting events. • Business’ working with events. • Occupancy used during the booms. • Communication between event organisers, GAPDL and council. • Collaboration to deliver regional dispersal. • Limited business support for events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events that build on natural assets. • Development of a Gladstone Region signature event/s. • Scheduling and growth of reputation with cruise ships. • Economic benefit – opportunity for events to leverage cruise ships, – Feast on East. • Community participation – ambassador for Gladstone. • Collectivism – shared knowledge. • Celebrate local produce. • User friendly regional events app. • Development of online events toolkit. • Streamlined council processes– less red tape. • Building event organiser capacity. • Industry networking and training opportunities for tourism and event operators. • Reinvigoration of events to meet changing consumer needs. • Branding, marketing and promotion. • Packaging events, conferences, accommodation and tourism attractions/experiences with ticketing. • Attraction of sporting events from regional to state level. • Development of indigenous events- cultural awareness. • Development of youth events. • Development of a one-stop-shop process. • Festival to celebrate the reef – Great Southern Barrier Reef – to celebrate nature, change perceptions and environmental education. • Bulk buying together – suppliers, ticketing (Gladstone plastic coins). • Cross promotion of events at events. • Activation of youth spaces, racecourse and sporting grounds. • Upgrading existing infrastructure. • Capturing data and stats – know market and how to grow event. • Embrace industrial identity. • Image sharing library. • Growing arts – performing and creative arts.

Throughout the consultation and online survey, the common themes identified were:

- Use events to improve destination perception/profile
- Desire for signature event/s
- Desire for multi-year funding to improve long-term planning
- Limited cooperation/networking/sharing resources between events
- Fishing, boating, arts, environment provide strong event opportunities
- STEM is an opportunity for MICE market

THE MAIN EVENT

{Vision}

THE 5 YEAR VISION

The Gladstone Region will be famous for events that celebrate the region’s iconic locations and events of nautical themes (fishing, and boating), emerging grass-roots music and arts that reflect its coastal lifestyle and cutting edge arts that project its unique contrast of industry and stunning natural environment.

It will be home to nationally recognised Signature events, well-known as an event friendly destination and featured in the Queensland events calendar.

Recognised as a leader for, hosting regional sporting events and conferences and meetings in the key focus areas of industry (STEM), arts and environment.

It’s diversified and innovative events calendar will increase overnight visitor expenditure (OVE) creating a strong economic impact and return on investment for the region.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

The strategic approach for the region is to develop events that build positive destination profiling for the Gladstone Region and increase overnight visitor expenditure.

The attraction of new events, both leisure and business, that are aligned to the region’s brand and competitive advantages.

The focus for existing events is to grow events of all genres and sizes to better reflect the Gladstone Region’s competitive advantages, meet changing consumer trends and grow the capacity of event organisers for long-term sustainability.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES



**LEVERAGE ICON
EVENTS + LOCATIONS**



**FISHING
+ BOATING**



**JUXTAPOSITION – INDUSTRY
+ PRISTINE ENVIRONMENT**



**CLIMATE + COASTAL
LIFESTYLE**

GOALS



1 POSITIVE DESTINATION PROFILE

Build positive destination profile for the Gladstone Region through events that attract external visitors and media coverage and contribute to the region’s liveability profile.

2 ECONOMIC GROWTH

Long-term positive economic growth including increased overnight visitor expenditure and flow-on economic impacts including employment creation and investment attraction.

3 COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS

Grow civic pride, community connectivity and participation in diverse events staged throughout the region.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Encourage environmental best practice in the delivery of events.

HITTING THE RIGHT CHORD

{Critical Success Strategies}

1

AMPLIFY DESTINATION PROFILE

2

GROW ROI – STRATEGIC FOCUS + INVESTMENT

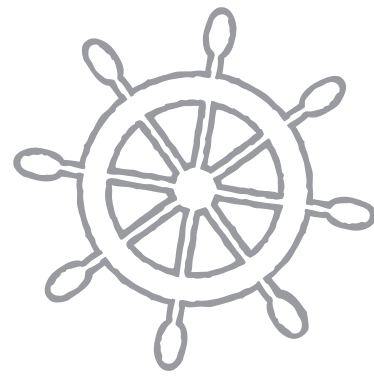
3

FACILITATE SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

4

INCREASE OVERNIGHT VISITOR EXPENDITURE (OVE)

1. AMPLIFY DESTINATION PROFILE



SIGNATURE EVENTS

Signature and major events will play a pivotal role in amplifying a positive destination profile for the Gladstone Region and increasing overnight visitor expenditure. They have the potential to be a catalyst for repeat visitation, contribute to the destination profile, infrastructure development and community connectedness.

A prevalent theme throughout all consultation, revealed a strong desire for larger and higher quality events with a signature event that could establish a brand name for the Gladstone Region.

Leadership by council and its strategic partners will be instrumental in facilitating and attracting signature and major events that deliver on the strategy's event vision and goals.

To give a genuine competitive advantage, these events should build on the Gladstone Region's unique selling points. This includes leveraging the region's iconic locations and unique selling points, fishing and boating, contrast of industry and pristine environment, climate and coastal lifestyle.

ATTRACT MAJOR EVENTS

The region has the capacity to attract major events, particularly performing arts, conferences and state sporting events (motor sports, tennis, rugby league, touch football) and nationally (cruise, fishing and boating).

In addition to major conferences, its iconic locations (Heron Island,

Agnes/1770) cater for boutique meetings and conferences and ideal opportunities for delegates to extend their trip into a holiday – a key component delegates consider essential in selecting attendance at a conference.

Increasing the event attraction budget and partnerships with key venues and accommodation providers will require consideration to compete with other regional destinations, as evidenced in the local government benchmarking undertaken.

EVENT FRIENDLY DESTINATION

Developing the Gladstone Region's reputation as an event friendly destination will be an essential component in attracting major events and elevating existing events.

The development of a one-stop-shop approach with council, strategic partners and the greater tourism industry should be a key priority for the region.

This includes the development of a corporate culture across the region with a "can do" attitude and seamless team approach that can respond in an agile way to event enquiries and major event attraction.

ELEVATE + REINVIGORATE EVENTS

Some existing events have potential to develop into signature events, through reinvigoration, innovation of their event experience and elevating their projected image to increase media profile and external visitation.

TOURISM AUSTRALIA - ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE DELEGATE BEHAVIOUR.

Offering a social program that includes networking events in scenic or iconic settings, choosing event venues that make leisure activities such as shipping, dining and sight-seeing convenient, and providing opportunities to discover the destination are all highly appealing to delegates.

Events need to constantly change and evolve with consumer trends, including attendees expecting to see something they haven't seen before and to have more meaningful and immersive experiences where they actively participate in the event.

Events with strong attendance and profile, such as the Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race and affiliated events (e.g. Harbour Festival, B2G Village and cross the line party), Luminous and the Boyne Tannum Hookup provide platforms for Signature potential.

Emerging events with strong destination potential include Under the Trees Arts & Music Festival, Agnes Blues, Roots and Rock Festival and Town of 1770 Festival.

The staging of existing events, including business events, meetings and conferences in iconic and distinctly Gladstone locations is encouraged to further grow their destination appeal.

BRANDING, MEDIA PR + DIGITAL

Existing events need to amplify their content, messaging and digital distribution to create cut-through in a competitive market place and gain greater share of media voice.

Strategies to amplify destination profiling include:

- Integrating Gladstone Region destination images into event marketing, linking the regional visitor website and social media channels to event/festival websites.
- Subject to privacy laws, developing a database of visitors from event online ticketing systems to provide targeted visitor insights.
- Encouraging event organisers to participate in tourism marketing and leverage the Southern Great Barrier Reef destination brand with strategic partners (e.g. GAPDL, Tourism & Events Qld and Tourism Australia).
- Developing an event brand toolkit that aligns with the destination brand could improve the quality and consistent messaging projected by events.
- Maximising Gladstone Region exposure at events, e.g. with signage placement, provision of destination images and footage to event organisers for social media and television broadcasts.
- Encouraging established events to enter business, tourism and event awards could further profile Gladstone Region events on a regional, state and national stage.

GLADSTONE REGIONAL EVENTS SURVEY 2019

63% of survey respondents indicated their business or event was not listed with the ATDW (Australian Tourism Data Warehouse)



2. GROW ROI – STRATEGIC FOCUS + INVESTMENT

To grow return on investment, the following hierarchy of events has been developed for council to support and invest in events.

The strategic focus is to identify and support events that contribute to council's objectives and funding priorities. These criteria are also aligned with Tourism & Events Queensland event funding programs.

The following is provided as recommendations and are not confirmed council policy.

EVENT HIERARCHY



CRITERIA

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
1. Destination Profile	Enhances the profile and appeal of the Gladstone Region.
2. Economic Impact	Generates economic activity in the Gladstone Region.
3. Overnight Visitation	Attracts external visitation specifically generating overnight visitor expenditure.
4. Sustainability	Demonstrates financial and environmental sustainability.
5. Social & Community	Drives social and community outcomes, including community pride and cohesion.
6. Regional Dispersal	Demonstrates regional equity and dispersal.
7. Shoulder Season	Is staged in a shoulder/low season and does not conflict with other event dates.

POTENTIAL FUNDING	APPLICATION ROUND	FOCUS AREA	CRITERIA
Signature + Major Events - Funds over \$50,000 (from Subvention Fund)	On demand	Destination profile, economic impact and overnight visitor expenditure. 25% out of region visitors. Meets 5 criteria.	Meets min 5 criteria.
Destination Event –up to \$50,000 (5,000+ total attendance)	Quarterly	Demonstrates regional profiling and economic stimulus. 5,000+ total attendance. Over 10% out of region visitors. Meets 4 criteria.	Meets min 4 criteria.
Impact Events –up to \$25,000 (2,500+ total attendance)	Quarterly	Demonstrates regional profiling and economic benefit. 2,500 – 5,000 total attendance. 5-10% out-of-region visitors. Meets 3 criteria.	Meets min 3 criteria.
Ignite Events –up to \$10,000 (Up to 2,500 total attendance)	Quarterly	Events that contribute social + community benefit. Contribute to community pride and social outcomes. Up to 2,500 total attendance. Meets 2 criteria.	Meets min 2 criteria.
Australia Day Community Event	Annually	Support for community led Australia Day events that are run by community organisations for broad public benefit.	Organisation to submit required information when advertised annually.

POST EVENT REPORTING

Destination, Signature and Major Events should undertake a standardised visitor survey, with substantiated attendance records to successfully acquit their funding. With funding paid upon delivery of:

- 30% on confirmation of signed contract/partnership agreement.
- 60% on submission of preliminary program and marketing strategy.
- 10% on completion of Post Event Report.

EVENT EVALUATION

To effectively measure ROI against key criteria, post event reporting needs to identify:

- **TOTAL ATTENDANCE** - aggregated total attendance (i.e. daily attendance x number of days). It includes visitors, participants (competitors, performers, stall holders, volunteers).
- **ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE** – for free events, estimated attendance can be based on police/security/SES estimates of crowd based on number per square meter x geographic footprint of event.

- **ESTIMATED VISITOR SPEND** – estimated spend can be calculated based on daily and/or overnight visitor expenditure with total attendance. Visitor expenditure figures can be sourced from the Local Government Area Profile report Gladstone Region published by Tourism Research Australia (TRA).
- **MEDIA MONITORING** – can be undertaken by a paid 3rd party, such as iSentia, or through Google Alerts and monitoring number of interviews undertaken.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA INSIGHTS** and website analytics can provide audience insights.

To overcome limited economic data to measure the impact and effectiveness of Signature and Major Events, an event tourism impact model could be undertaken by firms specialising in event analysis.

This analysis is conducted for events that receive Significant Destination Event Funding and Major Event Funding from Tourism and Event Queensland and could potentially be shared with Gladstone Regional Council to assist with event evaluation.

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Council has current and potential resources that could be offered to event organisers as part of in-kind support including:

- Box office and online ticketing.
- Event evaluation (including online surveys, event tourism impact study).
- Event training and networking.
- Event marketing in existing council communications and/or potential marketing partnerships with GAPDL/industry/sponsors.
- Development of an online event toolkit.
- Initial incentives for event organisers to stage innovative and engaging events in council venues and public spaces

MULTI-YEAR FUNDING

Where events have successfully acquitted funding for 2 or more consecutive years, eligibility to apply for a three-year partnership agreement could be considered, whereby funding is committed for up to three years to allow for longer-term, strategic planning.

INCUBATOR FUND

To encourage new and innovative events that meet key criteria, the development of an Event Incubator Fund to offer seed funding for new events in their first and second year could be considered.

SUBVENTION FUND

It is recommended to further enhance the Subvention Fund to re-name it the Major Events Fund, where the fund is used for bidding for Major Events (including conference/business events) and developing Signature events.

ATTENDANCE NUMBERS

A final consideration to grow return-on-investment is the need consider high value event travellers (not just total attendance). For an example, a conference that attracts 500 out-of-region visitors may generate a greater economic impact than a community event that attracts 5,000 people. An example is the Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Townsville, which attracts a modest total number of visitors, but those visitors are high value (high spend, overnight visitors with a long length of stay).

Positive media profiling benefits may also out way total attendance, in the case of events that generate significant national and/or international media coverage in key target markets.

EVENT TOURISM IMPACT MODEL

TOURISM METRICS

- The number of visitors to the LGA/Queensland
- The number of direct (event related) visitor nights
- Total attendances and the number of attendees (breakdown into attendee categories of participants, spectators and accompanying persons)
- The visitor profile (breakdown of visitors from intrastate, interstate and overseas)
- Day trip visitors compared to overnight stays
- The total number of visitor nights (within the host region and other parts of Queensland)

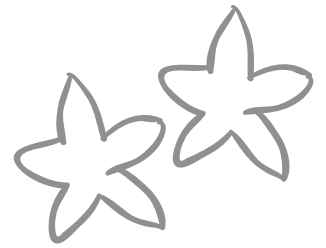
ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Event organiser income and expenditure
- Total overnight visitor expenditure
- The direct and incremental spending
- The economic impact of the event to LGA/Queensland

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL VALUE

- The community pride generated by the event
- Social Impacts

3. FACILITATE SUSTAINABLE EVENTS



GLADSTONE REGIONAL EVENTS SURVEY 2019

72% do not package their events, festivals, and/or conferences with accommodation.

76% indicated interest in “Promoting with other tourism and event operators”.

73% in “Networking with tourism and event operators”

and deliver regular facilitated and engaging networking and training opportunities for event organisers, and wider industry.

ENVIRONMENTAL BEST PRACTICE

To further grow a positive profile for the region and capture green consumer demand, events should be encouraged to use environmental best practice in the delivery of their events. This may require in-kind assistance in “how to” and initial financial incentives.

EVENT TOOLKIT

Develop an online event portal for event organisers and professional conference organisers that could include a ‘clash calendar’, event templates, brand guide and toolkit including destination images/ footage, conferencing information, such as unique locations, settings and venues, venue/accommodation capacities and, packages, event suppliers and support networks.

The portal could act as a central, “one stop shop” for event organisers to seek government approvals with links to relevant departments.

GROW EVENT ORGANISER CAPACITY

Grow event organiser capacity through training, networking and in-kind support resources.

Collaboration through training workshops and networking functions for the event and tourism industry would assist in uniting the industries and provide operators with an opportunity to increase capacity by packaging events with accommodation, transport, attractions, tours and dining experiences.

Event organisers were surveyed as part of the Gladstone Regional Events Survey to indicate what areas of training they would attend.

INCOME DIVERSIFICATION

The need to further develop income diversification and profitability is required for long-term event financial sustainability.

Increased income, sponsorship and reliance on funding was identified by many events as a major inhibitor to growth. Strong financial training, understanding non-profit doesn’t mean break-even and the need to generate surplus to innovate event programs is required.

HUMAN RESOURCING

Following income and funding, human resourcing and overstretched volunteers was cited by many event organisers as another major inhibitor to growth.

SHARING OF RESOURCES

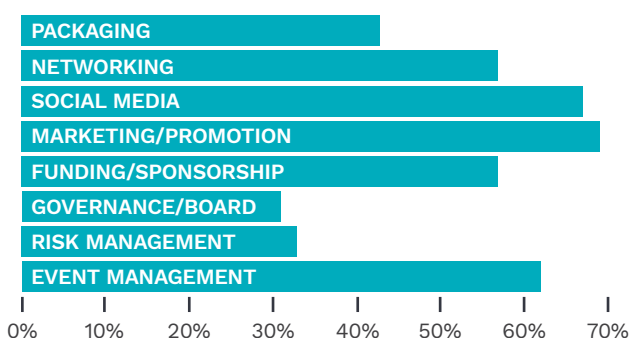
Greater networking between events and the wider tourism industry and community could facilitate the sharing of information and resources, including:

- Co-promotion at events to enhance the experience e.g. Under the Trees music stage at a conference, food, marketing or sporting event.
- Volunteer exchanges at events.
- Skills exchanges e.g. one event shares sponsorship skills in exchange for risk management skills.
- Co-marketing on websites, social media and potential data base sharing.

FACILITATE NETWORKING

To facilitate the process of sharing resources, it is recommended for council to lead and work in partnership with GAPDL and industry partners to coordinate

WHAT AREAS OF TRAINING WOULD YOU ATTEND?



4. INCREASE OVERNIGHT VISITOR EXPENDITURE (OVE)

INCREASE CONVERSION

Packages can create a higher conversion rate; making it easier for visitors to purchase with one click or one phone call.

EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT + VALUE-ADD PACKAGING

Encourage the development of Gladstone Region signature experiences to meet changing consumer trends.

Developing new and tailored experiences within events, such as distinct Gladstone Region behind the scenes and VIP experiences could increase profit margins for events to assist with income diversification.

TOURISM AND EVENT PACKAGING

Increase length-of-stay with event passes packaged with accommodation and iconic Gladstone Region experiences through online event ticketing.

Encourage packaging with existing tours will help to ensure wider distribution.

Packaging should include the wider visitor economy, e.g. attractions, tours, dining, beauty therapy and retail.

Developing and packaging dawn, dusk and evening experiences, such as yoga at sunrise, business breakfasts, sunset cocktails and industry light tours, could further convert regional event day-trippers into overnight stays.

CROSS-REGIONAL PACKAGING

Consideration of cross-regional packaging within the greater Southern Great Barrier Region could provide opportunities to appeal to the mid to long-haul drive market.



MEETINGS + CONFERRNCING

{The Consultation Process}

This Event Strategy has been prepared by listening and engaging with the Gladstone community. A great number and diversity of people have been involved in providing feedback on events in Gladstone by attending community workshops, cross-departmental workshops, and councillor meetings. Face-to-face meetings were conducted with key stakeholders such as GAPDL and event organisers.

In addition to in region workshops and face-to-face meetings, the strategy development process included a desktop audit of reference materials and benchmarking Mackay Regional Council, Sunshine Coast Council, Townsville Regional Council and Wollongong City Council.

Mystery shopping was undertaken as an outside event organiser to potentially bring an event to the Gladstone region.

Both the events and tourism industries were invited to participate in an online event survey distributed to participants by the council and GAPDL. The survey was sent to over 300 tourism and event operators and strategic partners with 73 respondents.

Gladstone Region Event Strategy Process



GLADSTONE
ENTERTAINMENT
CONVENTION CENTRE

THE FINE PRINT

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