



yorb

Manawatū Business
Awards 2026

Entrants Information

Why Enter The Awards?

MANAWATŪ BUSINESS
C H A M B E R

WHY ENTER THE AWARDS?

Development.

For you and your business begins at entry. Entering creates an opportunity to focus on your business in a structured way and identify core strengths and competitive advantages as well as areas that may benefit from more focus in the future.

Improve.

All entrants receive an independent assessment and feedback from experienced judges providing the business with advice on how to grow, develop and improve the business in general and for entering in future awards.

Goal setting.

Judges feedback supports internal goal setting for even further development for the business, its owners and employees.

Your network is your net worth.

Participation in the awards provides networking opportunities with other business leaders and professionals, who are all striving for excellence.

Recognition of success.

Award winners receive public recognition of business success being acknowledged as the best in the Manawatū in your industry by your peers, the business community, media and potential employees.

Appreciation.

The award process provides a platform that acknowledges the contributions made by your employees, suppliers, clients, and others to your organisation's success.

Publicity.

Award participation provides another dimension for showcasing your service and products to a wider audience and enhances your reputation in your customers' eyes.

To inspire others.

All finalists and winners will join past Manawatū Business Award alumni and will gain recognition from the business community - promoting their achievements and assisting in growing the Manawatū business success story

WHO CAN ENTER THE BUSINESS AWARDS?

All Manawatū businesses are welcome to enter the Yorb Manawatū Business Awards provided they have been in business for 12 months or more.

You **do not** have to be a member of the Manawatū Business Chamber to enter.

WHAT CATEGORY SHOULD I ENTER?

How to Enter: Category Guidelines

Categories A & B: Entrants are welcome to enter one (1) award from Category A and one (1) award from Category B.

- *Please note:* Not-for-Profit organisations and Entrepreneurial/Emerging Businesses are exempt from entering Category A.

Category C: You can select up to **two awards** to enter within this category. Entry to Category C is open to all and may be entered with or without entry to another category.

The Supreme Award: To be in the running for the ultimate Supreme Award, your business must submit entries for both Category A and Category B.

Based on the judging criteria in Categories A and B, it is recommended that entrants in these categories will have been in business for a minimum of three years.

WHEN DO ENTRIES OPEN?

Entries open on Wednesday **1 July 2026**

HOW DO I ENTER THE AWARDS?

1. Go to www.manawatubusinessawards.co.nz
2. Please read Important Information, Eligibility, Terms and Conditions of Entry and FAQ's.
3. Complete the online entry form and submit. This information will be supplied to your Judges prior to your interview and helps to provide an overview of your business.
4. Within 48 hours you will receive an email with confirmation of your entry.

WHEN DO ENTRIES CLOSE?

Entries close at 5:00pm on **31st July 2026**.

IS THERE A COST TO ENTER THE BUSINESS AWARDS?

There is **no cost** to enter the Awards. However, entrants must purchase at least one ticket to attend the Awards Gala Evening.

The Awards Gala Evening will be held on Friday 30 October 2026. Tickets are \$185 + GST per person. This includes a complimentary arrival beverage, a three-course dinner, and wine served on tables upon arrival only. Additional beverages will be available for purchase throughout the evening.

Finalists will not be announced until the night of the Awards — it could be you stepping into the spotlight.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

You will be contacted by your judges who will arrange an interview/s. Entrants must be prepared to be available for judging interviews between Monday 10 August through to Wednesday 7 October.

Please note: There is a different panel of judges for each category. If you enter the maximum number of four categories, then you could have four separate interviews.

WHAT DO THE JUDGES REQUIRE FROM ENTRANTS?

Please have the following information available for the judges to view during your interview:

1. Your Business/Strategic Plan
2. Financial reports or a supporting business viability/profitability statement from your external professional accountant is required for Categories A and B. This is also required for the Entrepreneurial and Emerging and Not for Profit Business Excellence Awards in Category C.
3. Any additional materials that will help the judges evaluate your entry.

The judges are independent, and all commercially sensitive information will be treated with strict confidentiality.

WHAT HAPPENS FOLLOWING THE JUDGING PROCESS?

ALL the results will be announced at the Awards Gala Celebrations Evening.

All entrants will receive written feedback from the judges following the Awards presentations.

The judges' decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

Following the completion of the Awards, all entry and judging information will be securely destroyed to ensure confidentiality.

FINAL INFORMATION

You are eligible to enter more than one category.

Please ensure all contact details are entered accurately. It is also important that your business name is correct, as this will be used in the Awards presentations.

If you require further information, please contact:

Liane Anderson – businessawards@manawatuchamber.co.nz

Ph: 027 337 6122

CATEGORIES

SUPREME BUSINESS AWARD

This award recognises the business that displays overall business excellence. Judging for this award is based on the winners from Categories A and B.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

Air New Zealand Travel Voucher \$1,000

Please Note: Based on the judging criteria in Categories A and B, it is recommended that these categories entrants will have been in business for a minimum of three years.

CATEGORY A – Business Size

Enter only **ONE** Award in this section

LARGE BUSINESS AWARD

Recognises excellence in large organisations which have demonstrated outstanding overall growth, performance, and industry leadership through innovative strategies and effective management.

Entry requirements: minimum of 26 full-time equivalent employees **OR** annual turnover exceeding \$5 million (excluding GST).

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

Manawatū Standard Voucher \$2,000

Air New Zealand Travel Voucher \$500

MEDIUM BUSINESS AWARD

Recognises excellence in organisations which have achieved significant overall growth or performance through effective planning and delivery.

Entry requirements: between 5 – 25 full-time equivalent employees **OR** annual turnover between \$1 million and up to \$5 million (excluding GST).

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

Air New Zealand Travel Voucher \$500

SMALL BUSINESS AWARD

Recognises exceptional enterprises and businesses that have demonstrated all-around excellence through innovation, outstanding service, and dedication.

Entry requirements: up to 5 full-time equivalent staff **OR** annual turnover up to \$1 million (excluding GST).

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

Air New Zealand Travel Voucher \$500

CATEGORY B – Business Type

Enter only **ONE** Award in this section

AGRICULTURAL & FOOD AWARD

This award recognises outstanding businesses in the agricultural and food sectors, including rural/farming contractors, food producers and manufacturers, growers, and sellers that demonstrate excellence through innovation, sustainability, quality, and economic impact. Entrants should showcase leadership in addressing industry challenges, implementing best practices, and contributing positively to their local communities.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

DISTRIBUTION & LOGISTICS AWARD

This award recognises outstanding businesses primarily engaged in distribution or logistics, including freight forwarders, warehousing operators, transportation companies, and supply chain management firms. Entrants should demonstrate excellence through efficient operations, innovative technologies, reliable service delivery, and adaptability to market challenges, while also showcasing commitment to sustainability, customer satisfaction, and positive economic impact on their region.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

EDUCATION, TRAINING, RESEARCH, & SCIENCE AWARD

This award recognises organisations whose primary focus is on education, training, research or science. This includes educational institutions, training providers, businesses delivering workshops or skills development, research centres, scientific organisations and laboratories. Entrants should demonstrate excellence through innovative teaching, training or research, meaningful contributions to their field, a commitment to developing knowledge and skills, and a positive impact on individuals, businesses or the wider community. Judges will also consider collaboration, ethical practices, continuous improvement and the organisation's overall contribution to advancing learning, research or scientific understanding.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

HOSPITALITY, TOURISM & RETAIL AWARD

This award recognises outstanding businesses engaged in accommodation, food and beverage, tourism, and retail sectors, including hotels, restaurants, cafes, tour operators, attractions, and retail stores. Entrants should demonstrate excellence through exceptional customer service, innovative experiences or products, adaptability to market trends.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AWARD

This award recognises outstanding businesses primarily engaged in providing professional services or consulting to other businesses or consumers, including law firms, accounting practices, management consultants, marketing agencies, and financial advisors. Entrants should demonstrate excellence through innovative solutions, exceptional client service, industry expertise, and ethical practices, while also showcasing adaptability to market changes and positive impact on their clients' success and the broader business community.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

TECHNOLOGY AWARD

This award recognises outstanding organisations driving innovation in technology, including software developers, digital solution providers, IT services, and tech-enabled businesses. Entrants should demonstrate excellence through innovative solutions, technological advancement, and measurable impact for clients or users. Consideration will also be given to leadership in digital transformation, strong ethical and security practices, and a commitment to collaboration and positive industry or community impact.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

TRADES & SERVICES AWARD

This award recognises exceptional businesses in the construction, engineering, manufacturing, and trades sectors, including automotive, hairdressers/beauty, chefs and other skilled trade professionals. Entrants should demonstrate excellence through innovative practices, quality workmanship, safety standards, and significant contributions to infrastructure development or product manufacturing, while also showing commitment to sustainability and workforce development.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$1,000

CATEGORY C – Business Speciality

Enter up to **TWO** Awards in this section.

(You will be judged separately for each category)

BRAND & MARKETING AWARD

This award celebrates businesses that demonstrate exceptional creativity and effectiveness in branding, marketing, and design. Entrants should showcase innovative campaigns, impactful brand strategies, and outstanding visual communications that have delivered measurable results for their clients or their own organisation. Judges will look for originality, strategic thinking, and the ability to connect with target audiences across various media platforms, while also considering the overall impact on business growth and market positioning.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$500

COMMUNITY OUTCOME AWARD

This award recognises an organisation that demonstrates outstanding corporate social responsibility through a meaningful and mutually beneficial partnership with a community group, charity, school, iwi, or not-for-profit organisation. Entrants should demonstrate excellence in collaboration, shared purpose, and delivering measurable outcomes that create lasting value for the community. Consideration will be given to partnerships that go beyond traditional sponsorship or donation, reflecting genuine engagement, long-term commitment, and sustained social impact.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$500

EMPLOYER OF CHOICE AWARD

This award recognises businesses that prioritise investing in their workforce. It's open to companies that understand their success is built on their people. This award seeks to highlight organisations with strong employee development programs, positive workplace cultures, and initiatives that demonstrate how they value their staff.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$500

ENTREPRENEURIAL & EMERGING BUSINESS AWARD

This award recognises entrepreneurial and new businesses that have been operating for more than 12 months but less than three years, as at the July 1, 2024. It's specifically designed for entrepreneurial ventures and start-ups, highlighting their early-stage achievements.

Entrants in this category are not eligible to enter Category A.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$500

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

This award recognises businesses that show a continuous commitment to environmental stewardship, particularly focusing on zero waste initiatives and overall sustainability in New Zealand. This award aims to highlight companies that are taking concrete actions to reduce their environmental impact and contribute to a more sustainable future for the country.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$500

INCLUSIVE BUSINESS AWARD

This award recognises businesses that actively embrace and promote diversity within their operations and management. It aims to highlight companies that are taking steps to create more inclusive work environments, likely through policies, practices, and initiatives that value and integrate diverse perspectives and experiences. This award emphasises the importance of inclusivity as a key component of business excellence.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$500

MĀORI BUSINESS AWARD

This award celebrates exceptional businesses with 50% or more Māori ownership, recognising their commitment to excellence across all sectors while honouring tikanga Māori. Entrants should demonstrate outstanding business practices that blend commercial success with cultural values.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$500

NOT FOR PROFIT BUSINESS AWARD

The Not-for-Profit Award is open to organisations such as associations, foundations, charities, and trusts that demonstrate tangible societal benefits. It recognises non-profit entities that are making concrete, measurable impacts in helping society. The award seeks to highlight organisations that go beyond good intentions to achieve practical, positive outcomes in their communities or chosen areas of focus.

Award Prize: Cash Prize \$500

ELIGIBILITY

- Any sole proprietor, partnership, incorporated society, or limited liability company with its principal place of business and trading operations based in the Manawatū region is eligible to enter.
- Businesses or organisations owned or operated by officers or employees of the Business Chamber are excluded from entering.
- Officers or employees of Awards sponsors may enter the Awards, but not the category sponsored by their organisation.
- Entrants must have been trading for 12 months or more as at **1 July 2026**.
- Government-funded enterprises are not eligible for the Yorb Supreme Award.

TERMS OF ENTRY

These terms apply to all entrants of the Yorb Manawatū Business Awards.

- All guidelines and deadlines for all areas of the entry process will be adhered to.
- An organisation that is part of a larger national or international organisation must be able to demonstrate that it operates as a separate business unit.
- All entrants agree to participate in an interview with the judging panel at their premises or at a venue and time advised by the judges.
- Entrants in Category A or B, and Entrepreneurial and Emerging Business or Not for Profit entrants in Category C, will be required to provide a Business/Strategic Plan, Financial Reports, or a Business Viability/Profitability Statement prepared by their external professional accountant.
- All other entrants in Category C will be required to provide supporting documentation relevant to their Award entry.
- Entrants and judges will be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement at the time of interview. All information and documentation will be treated in strict confidence.
- Repeat judging visits may be required in some cases.
- All finalists for the Supreme Award will be selected from Categories A and B.
- The judges will provide written feedback to all entrants.
- All entrants agree to cooperate with their respective category sponsor and/or promotional partners for publicity purposes and must ensure only the official Yorb Manawatū Business Awards branding is used for any publicity.
- All entrants must provide true and accurate information and disclose any liabilities (including business, tax-related issues, or current or pending litigation) that may compromise the judges' assessment or the integrity and reputation of the Yorb Manawatū Business Awards.
- All entrants must purchase a minimum of one ticket to attend the Gala Awards Celebration Evening on Friday 30 October 2026.
- Please note: No finalists will be announced prior to the Gala Awards Celebration. All results will remain embargoed until announced on the night.
- Judges reserve the right to disqualify any entrant not complying with the conditions of entry.
- Judges' decisions are final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

www.manawatubusinessawards.co.nz

The Manawātū Business Chamber gratefully acknowledges the following sponsors for their support of the Yorb Business Manawātū 2026 Awards.

