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## Professional Services Firm Award 2024

Presented by Are-Able.

Designed to recognise professional services offering B2C/B2B solutions and customised, knowledge-based services. Some example businesses include those operating in legal services, real estate, accounting and financial advisory, architecture, engineering, information technology and consulting. Applicants for this category should have an established business and strong client base.

### Entry Criteria

- To enter this category, your business must be located in the the Greater Bendigo Local Government Area
- The business must have been trading for a minimum of three years as of April 2, 2024.

If you are a new business, trading for between 12 months and three years, you may wish to enter the Emerging and Energised category. Businesses who have been trading for less than 12 months are not eligible to enter.

**For queries about eligibility, please contact awards support at [bbea@lostcauseevents.com.au](mailto:bbea@lostcauseevents.com.au)**

### 1. Outline the vision, values and purpose of your business.

*More information / What the judges are looking for: Clearly detail the vision for your business, the values your business aspires to operate within and why your business exists. Make sure you explain why these answers are important to you and your business partners.*

a) Vision:

b) Values:

c) Purpose:

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## 2. What does your business do? Detail your products and/or services:

*More information / What the judges are looking for:* Assume the judges know nothing about your business and product, and explain exactly what your business does, who it services and the product it sells. Detail who your customers are and how your business fits within the local business community.

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## 3. Describe the background to your business and how it generally operates.

*More information / What the judges are looking for:* Where has your business come from? What has made your product or service relevant? What is the core business structure and how does this support your daily operations? What systems do you need to be effective and efficient?

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## 4. What do you consider your greatest business achievement or learning experience to date and why?

*More information / What the judges are looking for:* Is there something that has happened to you or to the business that has elevated your success, or been a valuable learning experience? What happened, and why is it important?

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## 5. Outline how you market the business traditionally and digitally:

a) How do you attract new customers/clients?

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Clearly detail who are your target customers, how you identify them, how do you plan your marketing activities, and how you deliver them to attract new clients or customers. Explain how you measure the success of your activities.

b) How do you communicate with / retain existing customers/clients?

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Explain the communication channels or processes you use, and why. What messages are most effective for your business? How do you measure the success of your communication processes and retention? If your business a community service or not within a traditional customer model, explain how you ensure your stakeholders know you exist and want to connect with you.

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## 6. Describe how you use information you know about your customers to shape your business?

This can be data and information you collect internally, or externally through industry reports and trends.

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** What information is collected and why is it important? How do you analyse it? How do you apply it to your business and why? Provide an example.

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## 7. Tell us about your people and culture

(if you are the only person in your business, tell us about how you work with your contractors/partners)

a) How do you recruit new team members? What do you look for to ensure a good fit in your team?

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** What is your recruitment process, and why does it work well for your business? What specific areas align with your business and people culture to ensure a good fit? How does this impact your business?

b) What steps do you take to ensure your staff are engaged in and with the business?

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Is there a process you have implemented to keep staff actively interested in the business? How do you know you have been successful? Do you monitor this? Provide an example if relevant.

c) From a leadership and strategy perspective how do you align your team and recruitment with the strategic goals of your business?

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Examples of how your recruitment processes, and/or your leadership style supports your team to achieve the goals of the business.

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## 8. Tell us about training in your business:

(if you are the only person in your business, tell us how you train and educate yourself)

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Detail both the training/education provided, and why it is important to the employee and the business. Explain how you actively remain abreast of industry trends, and how you monitor employee professional development in your organisation.

a) Outline the types of training and development you offer or program for employees.

b) How often do you provide or deliver training?

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## 9. How do you construct your annual budget?

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Demonstrate sound financial knowledge of the business and budgeting whilst demonstrating how likely future financial impacts are factored in.

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## 10. Business risks:

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Demonstrate your understanding of the key risks for your specific business and industry, and if there is a framework or structured approach you use to identify, assess, minimise and monitor them.

a) Describe what are the key risks to your business?

b) How do you assess the size of these risks?

c) What do you do to minimise these risks?

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## 11. How do you measure and manage your business performance?

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Outline your general management practices, which key measurement indicators do you use and why, and how do you use these for decision making and planning?

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**12. Tell us something special about your business. What one story would you tell that highlights the best aspects of your business?**

*More information / What the judges are looking for: This is your chance to set your business apart from the other applicants! What is one story or highlight that is compelling and unique? This could include - your success story or business journey, an experience that changed your business, something that sets you apart for your competitors or how you are leading your market or industry.*

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**13. If you won an award for business excellence, what would this mean for you and your business?**

*More information / What the judges are looking for: How will you leverage the award to benefit your business? What will this mean for your team and clients?*

### 14. What processes do you have in place to minimise disruption to service delivery in evolving and unpredictable environments?

(Eg: changing economy, workplace disruptions, dispersed teams, technology, cyber security etc)

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Explain the processes you have in place and why they are important specifically to your industry and team size (small or large). How are these processes implemented, how do you ensure they are understood and how often are they reviewed/updated to keep pace with change?

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### 15. How do you gain your client's trust? What practices do you undertake to maintain this?

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Detail any process for both new and existing clients that you use to ensure your clients feel connected and respected by your firm. Do you measure satisfaction, trust and connection? Consider including client testimonials or feedback to demonstrate.



## EXTRA QUESTIONS – CLIMATE LEADER AWARD

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### Presented by Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration.

This award acknowledges business leaders in Greater Bendigo on the road to a zero emissions future. It aims to encourage all businesses to investigate how they can benefit from reduced power bills, solar power, electric vehicles and resource recovery.

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### 16. Tell us how your business is preparing for a zero emissions future?

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** What climate goal and targets do you have in place? How are you planning to transition to electric vehicles and renewable energy? How you planning to electrify everything, get off gas and use less power? How are you planning to avoid landfill? How are you communicating this journey with your staff and customers?

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### 17. Tell us about an emissions reduction project your business has completed in the last 12 months.

**More information / What the judges are looking for:** Tell us what you did, how you did it, the carbon emissions saved and the return on investment. The project could be in transport (electric vehicles, e-bikes, avoided trips), energy (solar power, batteries, electrification, energy efficiency) or circular economy (supply chain waste reduction, waste avoidance on site, recycling and reprocessing of waste streams).