

# OPERATOR OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2023 GUIDELINES



## About the TECNZ Awards

Each year, the Tourism Export Council of New Zealand (TECNZ) presents its “Operator of the Year” awards to outstanding tourism businesses. These are prestigious and much-sought after awards which recognise excellence in terms of quality, professional development for team, health and safety, sustainability, business systems and outstanding visitor experiences by peers within the industry. The “Operators of the Year” are presented with their awards at the annual Tourism Conference and therefore acknowledged by their industry peers. Following the success of the Good Sort Award that was held as part of the one-off Achievement Awards in 2022, we have included this as part of the Operator of the Year Awards going forward.

## Categories of awards

1. Inbound Tour Operator of the Year
2. Allied Operator of the Year
3. Small Business Operator of the Year
4. Good Sort of the Year (new)

## Criteria and Eligibility

1. The nominating company and nominee company must be financial members of TECNZ.
2. If a company has been nominated for a TECNZ Award in the past, whether or not they received an award, new information must be presented for the TECNZ Board to consider this nomination. A list of past winners is available below.
3. An individual cannot nominate an operator with which he or she is directly associated for Inbound Tour Operator of the Year and Allied Operator of the Year.
4. Self-nomination can only occur for Small Business Operator of the Year.
5. Those nominated for Small Business Operator of the Year need to have no more than 10 fulltime equivalent employees and/or annual turnover of less than \$3 million.

## Timeline

Thur 18 May 2023	Online nomination opens (multiple nominations permitted)
Fri 26 May 2023	Online nomination closes
Wed 31 May 2023	Nominees advised & request for business profile
Wed 14 June 2023	Submission of nominee supporting information closes Shortlisting process commences to determine finalists
Wed 28 June 2023	Finalists announced & member online voting commences
Weds 12 July 2023	Online voting closes
Wed 2 August 2023	Last day to submit Finalist videos to TECNZ
Wed 9 August 2023	Winners announced at TECNZ Tourism Conference 2023

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## Selection Considerations

### Inbound, Allied and Small Operator of the Year awards

The nominations will be considered using the following guidelines and any others considered relevant by the TECNZ Board. For ranking, the TECNZ Board will give consideration to the following factors:

CRITERIA	WHAT THE JUDGES WILL BE LOOKING FOR
<b>Overview of Operation</b> (max 200 words)	Background on your company (start date, no. staff, no. visitors hosted) What makes you stand out from other operators? What is your future vision for the business?
<b>Innovation (Product &amp; Marketing)</b> (max 250 words)	An example/s of how innovation of your product, service or marketing function has provided a step change for your organisation and where you have achieved a competitive advantage.
<b>Customer Service/Professional Development/Working with your partners</b> (max 300 words)	Explain how you achieve and maintain quality customer service? Example of how you work with inbound tour operators / allied product suppliers. What professional development do you have in place for your staff? (full and part-time). Do you encourage your younger team members to join YoungTEC or other networking organisations?
<b>Responsible, Safe and Sustainable Tourism</b> (max 300 words)	What health and safety practices and monitoring systems do you have in place? What sustainable practices/approach do you have and how do you measure carbon emissions? Outline areas where your business has demonstrated having a positive impact on local communities, contributing to the restoration and protection of our natural environment, and rebuilding the economic sustainability of the sector.

### Good Sort of the Year

Those nominating need to provide:

- A brief summary on why you consider this company/individual should be nominated
- Areas to consider could include supported others in the industry and/or helped fellow members, overcame adversity, introduced new activities or initiatives, supported you personally etc.

### Process

To be considered for the annual TECNZ awards, a 'nomination' must be submitted **online** no later than **Friday 26 May 2023**. This nomination is to be submitted by an individual or organisation in the belief that the nominee has fulfilled the criteria and eligibility requirements outlined in this policy.

The nominees will be contacted to advise they have been nominated and will be requested to provide additional information to support their nomination (see selection considerations). With the exception of the Good Sort Award.

- The TECNZ ITO Board members will review Allied of the Year nominations and provide a shortlist of three nominees in each category using a point system.
- Allied Board members will review ITO of the Year nominations and provide a shortlist of three nominees in each category.

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- All Board members will review nominations for Small Business of the Year and Good Sort of the Year Award

The top three companies will become the finalists for each category (except Good Sort of the Year). Each nomination will be scored on the basis of information contained in the online nomination form and nominee provided supporting documentation. The decision of the TECNZ Board will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Members will then have an opportunity to vote on the top three finalists to determine an overall winner in each category.

1. Allied Members vote for Inbound Operator of the Year
2. Inbound Members vote for Allied Operator the Year
3. All members can vote for Small Operator of the Year and Good Sort of the Year

All three finalists in each category will be asked to prepare and submit a short video (2 mins max) on what winning the award would mean to their company, team and community.

The winners of each award category will be announced at the awards evening held at the annual TECNZ conference. The three finalist videos in each category (9 in total) will be played at the awards evening.

## Awards Q&A

### ***When was the TECNZ Awards programme established?***

The TECNZ awards programme was introduced in 1982 to acknowledge Inbound Tour Operators for the outstanding work they do. The structure of the awards programme was updated in 2016 to include the Small Operator of the Year Award. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, no awards were presented in 2020. In 2021 we held our 50<sup>th</sup> celebration and in 2022 five achievement awards were presented in place of operator awards. The usual Award categories returned in 2023.

### ***Who is eligible?***

Nominees company must be financial members of TECNZ.

### ***Who can make a nomination?***

The nominating company must be financial members of TECNZ.

### ***How do I make a nomination?***

Submitting an online nomination form.

### ***Can a previous winner be nominated again?***

Yes. Each company will be judged only on achievements since the previous award was received. For those who have been nominated in the past (and have not won), previous nomination information can be updated and will be considered for the present nomination.

### ***How many awards are given out each year\*?***

Three awards are given out each year:

1. Inbound Tour Operator of the Year
2. Allied Operator of the Year
3. Small Business Operator of the Year
4. Good Sort of the Year

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***Do I have to fill out separate forms for each nominee?***

No. When submitting online you will be asked if you wish to nominate another company.

***Where can I find the names of previous recipients?***

See below.

***Are the nominations confidential?***

Yes. Unless you indicate at the time of nomination that your information can be shared with the nominee, if requested.

***When do nominations close?***

Friday 26 May 2023.

\*with the exception of 2022

## Previous winners

Year	Inbound Operator of the Year	Allied Operator of the Year	Small Business Operator of the Year
<b>2022*</b>	Achievement awards		
<b>2021</b>	50 <sup>th</sup> Celebrations took place		
<b>2020</b>	No awards held	No awards held	No awards held
<b>2019</b>	Pan Pacific Travel	The Rees Hotel	OGO Rotorua
<b>2018</b>	General Travel	Scenic Hotel Group	Ecozip
<b>2017</b>	NZ Journeys	Rotorua Canopy Tours	Fiordland Trips and Tramps
<b>2016</b>	Southern World	Scenic Hotel Group	Bush & Beach
<b>2015</b>	Pan Pacific Travel	Real Journeys & Southern Discoveries	N/A
<b>2014</b>	Pacific Destinations	Hobbiton Movie Set Tours	N/A
<b>2013</b>	Pacific Destinations	Real Journeys	N/A
<b>2012</b>	Pacific Destinations	Scenic Hotel Group	N/A

\*Alternative awards took place. The 2022 Achievement Award winners were as follows:

New Community/Charity Initiative - EcoZip Adventures, Waiheke Island

New Sustainability Initiative - Ziptrek Ecotours New Zealand

Innovation in Visitor Experience - Fiordland Trips & Tramps

Good Sort/Unsung Hero - Ben Thornton, Bush and Beach

Emerging Tourism Leader - Zac Watson, Maverick Digital Tourism Marketing