



MARLBOROUGH BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

AWARDS 2025



2025

ENTRANTS INFORMATION



Overview:

The 2degrees Marlborough Business Excellence Awards 2025 are here, and we want you to be part of it!

From big-name businesses that now call Marlborough home to solo entrepreneurs hustling from their spare rooms, our region is bursting with talent, creativity, and drive. These awards are all about shining a light on that.

No matter how long you've been in business, 6 months, or 60 years this is your moment to share your journey, your wins, and the challenges you've overcome. It's a chance to hit pause, look back at how far you've come, and get excited about what's next.

And while the night itself is all about celebrating, entering the awards is also a great way to take stock, get some fresh insights from experienced judges, and find new opportunities for growth.

This is one of the biggest events on the local business calendar and a brilliant way for the Chamber to back our amazing business community.

So go on, step into the spotlight. This is your year. Let's celebrate excellence, together!



Why Should You Enter?

- **Benchmark** your performance against the region's best.
- Increase **media exposure**, brand visibility and community recognition.
- Motivate your team by reflecting on successes and planning ahead.
- Gain **external insight** on your strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- Entry is **FREE**



Award Categories:

SECTOR AWARDS

- MDC Excellence in Manufacturing and Construction
- MARLBOROUGH WEEKLY Excellence in Hospitality and Tourism
- RANGITĀNE O WAIRAU Excellence in Primary Industries
- FORSYTH BARR Excellence in Retail and Professional Services

SPECIAL CATEGORY AWARDS

- BDO Best Emerging Business
- Excellence in Customer Experience
- KIWIBANK Excellence in Sustainability
- MARLBOROUGH LINES Excellence in Innovation
- NEW ZEALAND KING SALMON Culture and Belonging Award
- Young Businessperson of the Year
- MEDIAWORKS Business Personality of the Year

SUPREME AWARD

- 2degrees SUPREME BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Key Dates:

25 July	Registrations of Interest Open
1 August	Entries OPEN, including nominations for Business Personality & Young Businessperson
15 September	Entries & Nominations CLOSE at 5pm
October	Site Visits by independent judges begin
6 October	Business Personality & Young Businessperson VOTING Opens
31 October	Voting Closes
Early November	Judges Final Decisions Made
Friday the 21st of November	Awards Gala Dinner CELEBRATION

How to enter:

- Register your interest by emailing events@mcoc.org.nz
- MCoC will send you an application pack, including all entry forms.
- Choose your category/ies, and complete the relevant entry form/s.
- Email your entry to events@mcoc.org.nz – BEFORE 15 September
(Remember to include supporting documents, your business logo and two hero images of your business)
- You will receive acknowledgement of your entry within two business days.



Judging Process:

The judging team will be made up of local and national business leaders.

- Judging Team will review and rank all applications per category (excluding Business Personality & Young Businessperson of the Year).
- Applicants may be contacted by the category lead judge to provide clarification over information provided.
- Finalists will be shortlisted and contacted to arrange a site visit, judges will spend at least one hour onsite to better understand the business. Financial records may be requested at this point.

Please note: The top scoring entrants in each category/award will become finalists; however, entrants must score over 60% to become a finalist.

- Judges score each entry and decide winners.
- Final panel selects Supreme Business of the Year.
- Winners are announced at the Gala Awards Dinner.
- Applicants are provided with detailed, constructive feedback after the awards night.



- Business Personality and Young Business Person of the Year finalists are shortlisted via nominations and community voting.
- Judges will arrange to interview each finalist and will select a winner for each category.
- Winners are announced at the Gala Awards Dinner.



Conditions of Entry

- The Awards are open to all businesses operating within the Marlborough Region – you do NOT need to be a Chamber member to enter.
- There is no cost to enter.
- Past winners from previous awards can re-enter.
- You may enter multiple categories (i.e. Sector & Special Category Awards).
- Entries must be submitted on the official entry form/s. Additional material may be supplied as follows: Attach JPEG or PDF files. Maximum file size is 3MB per piece. A maximum of three pieces (plus requested images) can be attached with your entry.
- Video attachments may be hosted on a video site such as YouTube or Vimeo. Provide website URLs to the publicly accessible campaign or active URL of a landing page.
- You must provide a high-quality business logo, plus two hero images of your business to be used for promotional purposes.
- By entering you give permission to the Marlborough Chamber of Commerce to publicise the name of your business. If you are a finalist, you agree to allow your images to be used in promotional materials.
- All entrants must provide true and accurate information and disclose any liabilities such as business and/or tax-related and/or current pending litigation which could compromise the judge's analysis of the business, and/or adversely affect the integrity and reputation of the Business Excellence Awards.
- Winners from all categories will be eligible for the Supreme Award.



Confidentiality and Judging Ethics

- All entries remain strictly confidential, and all material provided will be limited to the Marlborough Chamber of Commerce and the judging panel. Entry documentation will NOT be returned to entrants.
- Financial statements may be requested. Supplying these is not compulsory, however, not doing so could potentially affect the judging process. Any financial data provided is only visible to judges who have signed a confidentiality agreement and details will be securely destroyed after judging.
- Applicants are not expected to provide or reveal proprietary information regarding products, processes, or services.
- Judges will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest and if necessary, alternative judging arrangements will be made.
- Each judge has volunteered their time without compensation and is committed to assisting with the success of the awards.
- Judging scores remain confidential and no correspondence will be entered into regarding the outcome of the awards. Please do not contact the judges for any comment.

Tips for a winning application

- Avoid using AI to complete the application. We want you to be personable and authentic.
- Be interesting: tell us about your business in a captivating way. What makes your business extraordinary? Assume the judges know nothing about your business, so tell them the basics: who you are, what you do, and the people involved. Then tell them about your journey, including challenges, innovation and impact.
- Use facts and figures; financials, growth metrics, customer feedback.
- It's okay to include up to three attachments, e.g.: Client letters; staff comments; product examples, a promo example etc. Attachments are not marked but can support and demonstrate points of your entry.
- Answer every question like it is the only one. Each section is attributed points, so should stand on its own. Answer all questions.
- Avoid repetition, use each question to show a different touchpoint of your business.
- Stick to the word limits. This ensures fairness for all entrants and is not too overwhelming for judges. Be clear and concise.
- Involve your staff in the entry. Make sure they know you are entering and why. Consult with your team, as they may suggest things you haven't considered. It's a good opportunity for staff feedback. Include staff (and client) quotes if relevant.
- When detailing actions, ensure you tell us the outcomes. Highlight the impact on customers, staff and community.
- Although we do not specifically ask for your Business Plan or Strategy, ensure you can convey to judges you do have a plan and give them a flavour of it. This may be in your application (if applicable) or in person during site visit/interview. You can do this by providing a summary of key strategies, examples of action plans and how they are implemented. Judges will also be interested to know you understand your strengths and weaknesses (ie SWOT Analysis).
- Be prepared to answer questions about how governance is managed in your business. What expertise do you tap into for specialist advice in making key decisions, strategic planning, risk management etc. Do you have regular board meetings or strategic sessions?
- Have a fresh set of eyes look over your application – they may spot something you have overlooked or not clearly explained.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: Do I need to be a Chamber member?

A: *No—non-members are welcome.*

Q: How many categories can I enter?

A: *As many as are relevant to your business. Multiple entries allowed.*

Q: How long does preparing an entry take?

A: *Varies—if you have existing business plans, drafting takes less time. Some entrants build their own documents; others seek help.*

Q: Is entry confidential?

A: *Yes—both entry content and judges' feedback remain confidential. Judges sign a confidentiality agreement.*

Q: Do I need to attend the gala dinner?

A: *Finalists and winners are expected to attend, and recipients are not informed in advance. Dress code typically black tie; includes a multi-course meal.*

Q: Will a small business with a loss be disadvantaged?

A: *No—for Emerging Business, judges consider early investment timelines and lean financials.*

Q: How do I submit?

A: *Register your interest by emailing events@mcoc.org.nz. MCoC will send you an application pack, including all entry forms. Choose your category/ies, and complete the relevant entry form/s. Email your entry to events@mcoc.org.nz – BEFORE 15 September.*

Q: When will judging feedback be shared?

A: *After the Awards night, judges provide written feedback to all finalists.*

**For further information, please contact:
events@mcoc.org.nz**

These awards are made possible with the support of:

