



Strategy 2026

*A leading voice for
Newcastle's visitor economy.*

**Advocating for growth and
commercial success.**

**Supporting industry
education and networking.**

**Fostering sustainability,
accessibility and cross-
regional collaboration.**

Looking back at 2025

2025 has seen the strengthening of key trends that had been emerging for some time. NSW leads the nation in visitor numbers, nights and expenditure in the 2024/2025 financial year. 8.5 million international arrivals in 2025 reflect a 5.4% YoY growth. There is a rise in the number of FITs, Free Independent Travellers, over larger group tours – coupled with an increased interest in regional Australia driven by a quest for more space and unique experiences.

As one of our speakers put it at a recent members meeting, “it’s stories over stuff.” Bookings are up by 8.4% YoY for experiences like whale watching, wellness or indigenous tours with a noticeable shift towards higher value travellers, longer stays and deeper regional engagement. There is a particularly strong demand from Asia Pacific and for experimental tourism in the wine and food space.

All of this bodes well for our local visitor economy. Our region is superbly positioned for nature and culture driven travel, for adventure activities, to experience wildlife, stunning landscapes and exquisite culinary delights. Newcastle Airport has launched connections to Bali, Perth and Tasmania, with more routes to follow soon.

To take full advantage of these trends, it is more important than ever that we continue to drive our readiness for international arrivals, increase our offering of attractive bookable products and collaborate closely across the entire region.

As a committee we were thrilled to see the success of our first cross-regional event, held in July at Brokenwood Wines. Yet it was but one of a dozen well-attended member meetings, all of which featured expert speakers and in-depth networking opportunities.

2025 also saw a significant expansion of the breadth and depth of our Newcastle Hospitality & Tourism Awards. The Awards Gala has truly come into its own as the visitor economy’s night of nights.

With an ever-growing number of member businesses, we are committed to continuing our advocacy work and close collaboration with major stakeholders in a whole-of-industry approach. The recently released NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2035 has provided us with a framework for our work in 2026 and beyond. As we translate this overarching strategy into activities and support for our members, the overall quality of the Newcastle visitor experience and opportunities for our member businesses remain at the core of everything we do.



\$5.5B

VISITOR SPEND
P.A. IN DSSN
(Dec 2024).



3.2M

VISITORS TO THE
HUNTER REGION
(April - June 2025).



10,669

TOURISM RELATED
BUSINESSES IN DSSN
CREATING **25,875** DIRECT &
13,220 INDIRECT JOBS.



3M

NIGHTS SPENT IN HUNTER
ACCOMMODATION
(April - June 2025).



167,000

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS TO
THE HUNTER REGION,
UP 9.6% YOY,
SPENDING \$234M
(year ending June 2025).

Sources: Value of Tourism 2024, report
by Destination Sydney Surrounds North;
Domestic Tourism Statistics & International
Visitor Survey, Tourism Research Australia.

Strategic pillars 2026 and beyond



Newcastle Tourism Industry Group (NTIG) provides a unified voice for the local visitor economy, bringing together the tourism sector and businesses and services.

NTIG is a lean, agile organisation led by a group of diverse, passionate volunteer committee members. Our strategy for 2026 will be centered around seven focus areas:

Industry Education and Networking

Acting as an active conduit between our education partners and the local visitor economy we help to build and expand sustainable programs and research to increase industry knowledge and standards.

Advocacy

As we help to promote the visitor economy and drive demand for NTIG members, we work closely with City of Newcastle and all industry stakeholders, giving a voice to our member businesses from day-to-day operational issues to longer term, strategic discussions including a new Destination Management Plan.

Event activation and unified marketing initiatives

We support events that help activate precincts and are committed to raising awareness for Newcastle's stunning natural beauty, its rich history and vibrant arts scene. We actively encourage collaborative marketing, product development and overall industry collaboration.

Industry recognised awards program

We will expand our judging panel and elevate the submissions process for the Newcastle Hospitality & Tourism Awards, turning them into a pathway for regional, state and nationwide visitor economy awards.

Sustainability

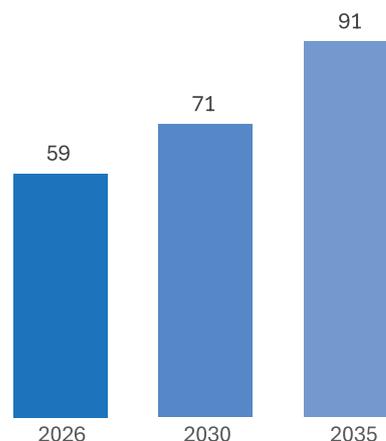
In ever increasing numbers, consumers are actively seeking out businesses with a demonstrable commitment to sustainable, environmentally friendly operations. We assist our members by highlighting possible solutions and fostering pragmatic discussions.

Cross-regional collaboration

After a highly successful inaugural cross regional members meeting in 2025, we will continue to expand this platform for networking, and a vibrant exchange of ideas, nurturing collaboration and partnerships with next year's event to be held in Port Stephens.

Inclusiveness

We will continue to educate members on how to reconcile the need for inclusiveness and accessibility with the commercial requirements of running a business, highlighting the resulting benefits to member businesses.



NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2035
Expenditure Goals in \$b

Thank you TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS



Membership Benefits

- ✓ Receive industry updates and education through monthly meetings, member forums, surveys and our monthly digital newsletter.
- ✓ Link up and network with key industry professionals and get access to major tourism stakeholders.
- ✓ Raise crucial local industry issues and opportunities.
- ✓ Give input on tourism planning, development and marketing initiatives.
- ✓ Receive discounted entry to NTIG hosted events: Newcastle Hospitality & Tourism Awards, and Hunter regional event for tourism operators. Access to sponsorship opportunities.
- ✓ Only NTIG members are eligible to win the Industry Leader of the Year Award at the Newcastle Hospitality & Tourism Awards.
- ✓ Share newsworthy information about your business with NTIG members at meetings or through our digital communication channels.
- ✓ Access tourism product development opportunities and be included in regional event activations.
- ✓ Receive invitations to and FREE entry to monthly membership meetings.
- ✓ Host a membership meeting at your venue and showcase your business to peers and colleagues.
- ✓ Listing on the NTIG website.



JOIN US AS WE CREATE CONNECTIONS AND PROMOTE NEWCASTLE

Cover image by Brittany Millen Photography
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