

Visitor Economy Symposium 2026

From Strategy to Success

Knowledge and Collaboration in Action

From Strategy to Success: Knowledge and Collaboration in Action reflects the next stage in strengthening the visitor economy across our region. As the industry works to deliver the ambitions of the NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2035, success will depend on how effectively we share knowledge, build capability, and work together.

This year's Symposium will focus on practical insights, collaboration and real-world examples that support Industry to turn strategy into action. By bringing people together to learn, connect and share ideas, the event will help ensure our region is well positioned to grow a strong, sustainable and competitive visitor economy.

TIME	DETAILS
8:30am	Registrations Open & Morning Networking Over Coffee <i>ATDW Check In - Meet an ATDW expert to create or improve your own listing</i>
9.25am	Intro from MC <i>Felicia Mariani</i> Felicia is a highly regarded industry expert, proven facilitator and someone who's deeply passionate about the industry. Her past executive roles included CEO, Tourism Tasmania; GM, Tourism Sydney; Director of Marketing, Tourism NSW; CEO, ATEC; Director of Marketing, Tourism Victoria, and CEO, Victoria Tourism Industry Council.
9:35am	Welcome to Country
9:45am	Our Vision for Success <i>Lyndel Gray, Chair, DSSS</i>
9:55am	How we are Supporting You <i>Shannan Perry-Hall, General Manager, DSSS</i>
10:10am	Data and Your Decision-Making <i>Peter Firth, Director, FiftyFive5</i> Harness the power of data to uncover your best prospects and craft the experiences that keep them coming back, then explore the DNSW resources designed to help you do it better.
10:50am	Group Interactive Exercise <i>Despina Karatzis, Founder, Institute of Excellence</i> This session is designed to identify new partnerships and create more opportunities for collaboration with businesses in the room.
11:20am	Taken his business to the Global Stage! <i>Rob Pennicott, Founder, Pennicott Wilderness Journeys</i> Rob has taken his business from strength to strength, highly respected, multi-award winner. A champion of eco-adventure and conservation projects across Australia. His reputation as a Hall of Fame tourism product on the national stage has been cemented through the continual re-invention of his operation and his ongoing commitment to excellence in everything they do.
11:50am	Telling Your Story Media is one of your most powerful partners. Learn how to engage them effectively in this candid panel discussion with industry insiders.

Visitor Economy Symposium 2026

From Strategy to Success

Knowledge and Collaboration in Action

	<p>Fairlie Hamilton, Radio presenter, Podcaster, Content Creator, The Presenting Coach Ali Longhurst, General Manager, Wave FM, Wollongong Rob Pennicott, Founder, Pennicott Wilderness Journeys</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BUSINESS ILLAWARRA</p> <p>Facilitated by Coralie McCarthy, Director, Business Illawarra</p>		
12:30pm	LUNCH – A great opportunity to build your network. Remember to sign up for your afternoon Deep Dive!		
1:15pm	Welcome Back Felicia Mariani		
1:20pm	<p>Hear from the CEO of DNSW Karen Jones, CEO DNSW</p> <p>Followed by a Fireside Chat Facilitated by Lyndel Gray, Chair DSSS</p>		
1:50pm	Move to Deep Dive Sessions (Concurrent Discussions - choose two to attend)		
	<p>Session 1: Packaging for Profit</p> <p>Join Despina Karatzias, Institute of Excellence to dive into smart targeting and bigger impact. Explore practical strategies for getting your product seen by the right audience at the right time.</p> <p>Facilitated by Dave Campbell</p>	<p>Session 2: Western Sydney International Airport</p> <p>With a new 24-hour international airport opening in October 2026, learn how our region is working together to ensure new markets and opportunities are maximised and how to get involved.</p> <p>Facilitated by Roger Stephan</p>	<p>Session 3: Leveraging the Power of Events</p> <p>Hear directly from Tourism Managers across our region as they share how they're leveraging the event calendar to spread opportunity and marketing to support your business.</p> <p>Facilitated by Libby Cupitt</p>
1:55pm	Round 1 of Breakout Sessions (Session 1 and Session 2 running concurrently)		
2:40pm	Grab & Go Afternoon Tea - Mini Break – 15mins		
2:55pm	Round 2 of Breakout Sessions (Session 2 and Session 3 running concurrently)		
3:45pm	Welcome Back Felicia Mariani		
3:50pm	<p>Local Government Supporting Visitor Economy Growth Local Government CEO Panel</p> <p>Hear from Local Government leaders on how they are working to attract investment that will benefit the Visitor Economy.</p>		
4:20pm	WRAP UP – Deep Dive session key takeouts & key learnings from the day Mark Bourne and Felicia Mariani		
4.30pm	Symposium Concludes Networking over refreshments with event concluding at 6pm.		