

# 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	<b>Registrations Open &amp; Morning Networking Over Coffee</b> <i>ATDW check in with Kylie Bushby, Industry Development Manager, DSSS</i>
9:25am	<b>Intro from MC</b> <i>Felicia Mariani - Felicia is a highly regarded industry expert, proven facilitator and someone who's deeply passionate about the industry.</i>
9:35am	<b>Welcome to Country</b>
9:45am	<b>Our Role and Vision for Success</b> <i>Lyndel Gray, Chair, DSSS</i>
9:55am	<b>Making the Most of DSSS Support</b> <i>Shannan Perry-Hall, General Manager, DSSS</i>
10:10am	<b>Data and Your Decision-Making</b> <i>Peter Firth, Director, <a href="#">FiftyFive5</a></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	<b>New Partnerships – Get Ready for Collaboration</b> <i>Despina Karatzis, Founder, <a href="#">Institute of Excellence</a></i>  This session is designed to identify new partnerships and create more opportunities for collaboration with businesses in the room.
11:20am	<b>Taking Business to the Global Stage!</b> <i>Rob Pennicott, Founder, <a href="#">Pennicott Wilderness Journeys</a></i>  Rob has taken his business from strength to strength. He is a highly respected multi-award winner and 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 he does.
11:50am	<b>Telling Your Story</b> Media is one of your most powerful partners. Learn how to engage them effectively in this candid panel discussion with industry insiders.  <i>Fairlie Hamilton, Radio presenter, Podcaster, Content Creator, <a href="#">The Presenting Coach</a></i> <i>Ali Longhurst, General Manager, <a href="#">Wave FM, Wollongong</a></i> <i>Rob Pennicott, Founder, <a href="#">Pennicott Wilderness Journeys</a></i>  <i>Facilitated by Coralie McCarthy, Director, <a href="#">Business Illawarra</a></i>

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12:30pm	<b>LUNCH – A great opportunity to build your network. Remember to sign up for your afternoon Deep Dive!</b>		
1:15pm	<b>Welcome Back</b> <i>Felicia Mariani</i>		
1:20pm	<b>Hear from the CEO of DNSW</b> <i>Karen Jones, CEO <a href="#">DNSW</a></i>  <b>Followed by a Fireside Chat</b> <i>Facilitated by Lyndel Gray, Chair, DSSS</i>		
1:50pm	<b>Deep Dive Sessions</b>		
	<p><b>Session 1: Packaging for Profit</b></p> <p>Join Despina Karatzis, <a href="#">Institute of Excellence</a> 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><i>Facilitated by Dave Campbell</i></p>	<p><b>Session 2: Workforce Solutions in Action</b></p> <p>Join a panel of federal, state and regional workforce experts as they discuss the programs, partnerships and practical initiatives helping attract, train and retain tourism and hospitality workers. This session will provide insights, opportunities and practical ways businesses can connect and benefit.</p> <p><i>Facilitated by Roger Stephan</i></p>	<p><b>Session 3: Leveraging the Power of Tourism Managers</b></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><i>Facilitated by Libby Cupitt</i></p>
1:55pm	<b>Round 1 of Breakout Sessions (Session 1, 2 and 3 running concurrently)</b>		
2:40pm	<b>Grab &amp; Go Afternoon Tea - Mini Break – 15mins</b>		
2:55pm	<b>Round 2 of Breakout Sessions (Session 1, 2 and 3 running concurrently)</b>		
3:45pm	<b>Welcome Back</b> <i>Felicia Mariani</i>		
3:50pm	<b>Local Government Supporting Visitor Economy Growth</b> <i>Local Government CEO Panel</i>  Hear from Local Government leaders on how they are working to attract investment that will benefit the Visitor Economy.		
4.30pm	<b>WRAP UP – Key learnings from the day</b> <i>Felicia Mariani</i>  Networking over refreshments with event concluding at 6pm.		