



Family Business Excellence Award 2025/26

PURPOSE

Family Business Association (FBA) celebrates success through the Family Business Excellence Awards.

This annual awards program highlights successful family businesses in each AU state/region and New Zealand across the Founder's, Established and Legacy categories. Open to both members and non-members, we applaud the vital contribution of the family business sector as a whole.

Unlike other awards programs, the Family Business Excellence Awards specifically acknowledge and showcase excellence in family businesses. We invite you to show us how your business displays best practice in a broad business sense, and in particular how family ownership helps achieve competitive advantage.

The awards in each category will be presented at each of the FBA Insights Conferences in September/October 2025.

The winners in each AU region/state and NZ category, will be judged against the other state winners to determine an overall winner of the Family Business Excellence Award for each business category, to be presented at the Family Business Conference – Asia Pacific, 2026.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

This award will be presented to a business, not an individual. To be eligible to enter –

Your business must:

- Be a family business, defined as 'a business in which related family members control the strategic direction by way of ownership, governance, and/or management; and which could be sustained across generations of the family.'

You must:

- Be a member of the owning family of an Australian or New Zealand-owned family business;
- Hold a role of significant influence within that business;
- Fulfil the criteria as set out in the Submission Form; and
- Provide a letter of financial stability (see [here](#) for an example) or an audited financial analysis from the previous financial year.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO START YOUR ENTRY.

CATEGORIES: Founder's, Established and Legacy Family Business

FOUNDER'S FAMILY BUSINESS

Founding Family Businesses navigate a unique landscape in which founders and family members are deeply entrenched in day-to-day operations, dedicating extensive hours to ensure success. These businesses are keenly aware of the necessity to harmonise family, business, and ownership dynamics. They actively cultivate systems to fortify these core pillars, aiming for financial stability and seamless integration for multiple generations. Their commitment often propels them to outpace industry growth, reflecting their resilience and dedication to long-term success.

A Founder's Family Business is typically defined as:

- A business in its early stages of development;
- Owned and operated by members of the same family;
- Characterised by their relatively recent establishment; and
- Still in the process of formalising their structures, systems, and governance processes.

ESTABLISHED FAMILY BUSINESS

In Established Family Businesses, the steady stream of profitability catalyses growth, fostering an environment of optimism and confidence. As the team expands to include new members, both family and non-family, there is a need for formal processes. Recognising the need for adaptation, founders embrace the importance of decentralising control and empowering others to make decisions.

Distinguished by their commitment to evolution, Established Family Businesses demonstrate the establishment of operational governance structures, albeit still in development, and the implementation of a strategic business plan. Guided by an effective leadership team, these businesses display tangible efforts in succession planning, ensuring continuity and longevity. Financial stability and robust cash flow underscore their resilience, with active engagement from multiple generations contributing to the business' enduring success.

An Established Family Business is typically defined as:

- A business that has solidified its position within its industry and community;
- Having undergone phases of growth, maturation, and succession planning;
- Often having formalised structures, systems, and governance processes in place;
- Having clear roles and responsibilities among family members and non-family employees; and
- Having protocols for decision-making and conflict resolution.

LEGACY FAMILY BUSINESS

Mature generational family businesses epitomise a legacy spanning multiple generations, marked by structured family gatherings and broader meetings supported by an Advisory Council or Board. These enterprises are distinguished by their effective processes, which harmonise family, business, and ownership dynamics that ensure financial stability and sustainability. Philanthropic endeavours are embraced across all participating generations, reflecting a commitment to community impact.

When founders and the family unite around the business' purpose, a productive synergy emerges, blending discipline with innovation. Agile operations yield consistent outcomes, propelled by robust processes. Maintaining its characteristic drive, the business matures, finding efficiency through ongoing process refinement.

With an expanded team comprising family and non-family members, operational efficiency improves. Many businesses balance nurturing family talent while seeking external expertise to meet evolving demands.

With a commitment to adaptability and continuous improvement, these mature family businesses navigate this phase with resilience, ensuring their enduring legacy in the marketplace.

A Legacy Family Business is typically defined as:

- A business that has been established by a family and has been passed down through multiple generations;
- Often having a rich history and tradition, with family members playing key roles in both ownership and management;
- Demonstrating the intention to sustain the business over the long term, with a focus on preserving the family's values, culture and heritage; and
- Often facing unique challenges related to succession planning, governance, and maintaining family harmony alongside business success.

For full details on the entry process and judging phases, please refer to our Frequently Asked Questions.

Any further questions, please contact awards@familybusiness.org.au.

STEP 1: Choose the best fit category for your family business

- Founder's Family Business
- Established Family Business
- Legacy Family Business

STEP 2: Identify your state/region

- New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory
- New Zealand
- Queensland
- South Australia/Northern Territory
- Victoria/Tasmania
- Western Australia

STEP 3: Note key dates for 2025/26 awards program

KEY DATES

Entries open:	1 May 2025
Entries close:	13 July 2025
Announcement of State Winners:	State Insights Conferences – Sept/Oct 2025
Awards Dinner:	The Family Business Conference – Asia Pacific 2026

STEP 4: Answer the questions relevant to your nominated category and expand your response to assist the judges' understanding of your business.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA – FOUNDER'S FAMILY BUSINESS
<p>Business Performance (<i>maximum 500 words</i>)</p> <p>Vision, mission, strategic plan, growth, entry and activity in interstate and/or export markets (if applicable), productivity, financial performance, risk management, ATO (<i>AU only</i>) and HR compliance - please expand and elaborate on all components. How were these developed, how and when are they reviewed, by whom, and how do they support the management of the business on a daily basis?</p>
<p>Unique Family Business Qualities (<i>maximum 500 words</i>)</p> <p>FBA understands that family businesses are somewhat unique. We ask here that you please describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant challenging/difficult issue(s) which the business has faced and how this was dealt with, both at family and business levels; • Support systems that you have put in place for the family in stressful personal and business circumstances; • The strengths and weaknesses that you have identified as a result of being a family business; • Examples of entrepreneurialism shown as a family business; and • How you identify with the spirit of family business pioneers.
<p>Corporate Social Responsibility (<i>maximum 500 words</i>)</p> <p>Contribution to community, philanthropy, equality, representation, participation in your industry association or sector, staff benefits/opportunities – please elaborate.</p>
<p>Reputation (<i>maximum 500 words</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brand, product or service that is highly regarded within its market or sphere of activity. • A history of business activity that reflects quality, value, competitive spirit, integrity and professionalism. • In relation to your brand and business activity, please describe your influence on employment, the economy and the community.
<p>Sustainability Initiative(s) (<i>maximum 500 words</i>)</p> <p>Describe the approach your business has taken to incorporate a sustainability focus in its operations (maximum 350 words).</p>
<p>Additional Information:</p> <p>Please include a summary of up to 500 words maximum, if you feel you have not been able to adequately represent your submission by answering the questions above. (optional)</p>

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA – ESTABLISHED FAMILY BUSINESS OR LEGACY FAMILY BUSINESS

Succession/Stewardship (*maximum 500 words*)

Successful transition to a succeeding generation(s), or demonstration of best practice planning for succession OR transition of the equity and/or management of the family business.

- Has your family business already had a succession event? Please elaborate.
- Does your family business have a succession plan in place? If yes, when was it developed, how and by whom, and how is this plan working in the daily context of the business?
- What is the process for family members joining the business?
- Outline any professional development plans in place for family members.
- How do you foster stewardship in your family business?

Business Performance (*maximum 500 words*)

Vision, mission, strategic plan, growth, entry and activity in interstate and/or export markets (if applicable), productivity, financial performance, risk management, ATO and HR compliance - please expand and elaborate on all components. How were these developed, how and when are they reviewed, by whom, and how do they support the management of the business on a daily basis?

Governance (*maximum 500 words*)

- Do you have a Family Constitution/Charter? A Family Council? Or other family bodies designed to assist management of the family business? If yes, when were they developed, how and by whom, and how are these governance tools working in the daily context of the family business?
- Do you have a Board and, if so, does it include non-family executives or non-executive directors? If yes, please explain the composition, when appointed and why, and what is the impact of non-family executive directors on the Board's deliberations? If no, please discuss.
- Do you use external consultants? Please elaborate.
- What management processes do you have in place?
- Please include copies of any documents about governance mechanisms that you are willing to share in the Attachments section at the end of your submission.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA – ESTABLISHED FAMILY BUSINESS OR LEGACY FAMILY BUSINESS (continued)

Unique Family Business Qualities (*maximum 500 words*)

FBA understands that family businesses are somewhat unique. We ask here that you please describe:

- Significant challenging/difficult issue(s) which the business has faced and how this was dealt with, both at family and business levels;
- Support systems that you have put in place for the family in stressful personal and business circumstances;
- The strengths and weaknesses that you have identified as a result of being a family business;
- Examples of entrepreneurialism shown as a family business; and
- How you identify with the spirit of family business pioneers.

Corporate Social Responsibility (*maximum 500 words*)

Contribution to community, philanthropy, equality, representation, participation in your industry association or sector, staff benefits/opportunities – please elaborate.

Reputation (*maximum 500 words*)

- A brand, product or service that is highly regarded within its market or sphere of activity.
- A history of business activity that reflects quality, value, competitive spirit, integrity and professionalism.
- In relation to your brand and business activity, please describe your influence on employment, the economy and the community.

ESG Sustainability Initiative(s) (*maximum 500 words*)

ESG stands for Environmental, Social, and Governance and is a framework used to evaluate a company's sustainability and ethical impact beyond just financial performance.

Environmental factors assess how a company manages its environmental impact, such as its carbon footprint, resource usage and waste management practices.

Social factors focus on how a company manages relationships with its employees, suppliers, customers and communities. This includes issues like labour practices, diversity and inclusion, community engagement and human rights.

Governance factors examine a company's leadership, internal controls, transparency and adherence to ethical business practices. This includes aspects like Board diversity, executive compensation and shareholder rights.

ESG Sustainability Initiative(s) question continued:

Describe the approach your business has taken to incorporate a sustainability focus in its operations, and examples of how you are working towards the ESG framework (maximum 550 words).

- Name, nature and objective of the initiative(s);
- How the initiative aligns to the values of the family and the business;
- The stage of the initiative (% complete or completed, including completion date, either past or planned);
- Outcomes of the initiative to date – environmental or social impact, financial investment, sustainable achievements; and
- How the family business has adapted/changed/developed sustainable business practices and inspired others to follow suit.

Additional Information:

Please include a summary of up to 500 words maximum, if you feel you have not been able to adequately represent your submission by answering the questions above. (optional)

You may add any attachments you believe will support your entry for this award, including videos, images, references and other relevant resources or content. Testimonials or referrals from customers, clients, suppliers, advisors or key stakeholders can also be included (limited to 3 and no longer than 1 page each).

DECLARATION

In submitting this form, I declare:

- ☐ If recognised as the winner of this award, to the best of my knowledge, there is no legal or other reason why FBA might be brought into disrepute.
- ☐ I have attached a letter of financial stability/audited financial analysis from the previous financial year with this entry.
- ☐ Winners of Family Business Excellence Awards for 2025/26 agree to act as ambassadors for FBA through public and media appearances.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

1. The Family Business Excellence Awards are open to ALL family businesses in Australia and New Zealand.
2. One Family Business Excellence Award is presented each year, in each AU state/region and NZ, in the 3 separate categories – Founder's, Established and Legacy family businesses.
3. Each AU state/regional and NZ winner becomes a Founder's, Established or Legacy Family Business Award finalist, with an overall winner in each category announced at the Family Business Awards Dinner. Held as part of the Family Business Conference – Asia Pacific, 2026, attendance is strongly encouraged as winners will be presented during this event.
4. The business that achieves the highest collective score across all categories will receive The Family Business of the Year Award.
5. AU State/regional and NZ finalists in each business category will receive a 20% discount to the Family Business Conference. Discount will be applied at the standard full delegate rate for a maximum of two tickets and no further discounts will be applied.
6. Winners will be chosen from the entrants; however, if no entrant is considered to adequately meet the criteria, the Award may be withheld.
7. Entries are to be lodged in electronic format only and will be judged on the information provided, together with any supporting documentation and an interview with the entrant if required (at the judges' discretion). Entries and supporting materials will not be returned.
8. FBA will select a panel of appropriately qualified and experienced judges to assess nominations for the Award. The judges will be bound by a code of conduct. FBA will not disclose the identity of the judges.
9. The judges will consider entries received and may seek external expert advice to make their final selection. In all cases, this decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
10. Entrants are not to have any direct contact with judges.
11. FBA is not liable, under any circumstances associated with this Award, for any damage, infringement or violation affecting the property rights of the entrant, an organisation or an individual.
12. Entrants acknowledge and agree that the Family Business Excellence Awards provides a promotional opportunity for their business and also for FBA, and will cooperate wherever possible with all media opportunities and marketing initiatives led by FBA. This may include providing photos, video, quotes and testimonials to promote alignment with FBA and the Awards program.