



## 2025 Cook Islands People's Choice Awards

### Terms and Conditions

These terms and conditions ("Terms") outline the rules and guidelines for participating in the 2025 Cook Islands People's Choice Awards ("Awards"). The awards are organised by the Cook Islands Tourism Marketing Corporation (CIT), hereinafter referred to as the "Organiser". By participating in the Awards, you agree to abide by these Terms in their entirety.

### Nominations:

- **Nominator Eligibility (person making the nomination):**  
Nominations can be made by any person who has visited, is visiting, or resides in the Cook Islands. This includes visitors, community members, or industry stakeholders who wish to recognise outstanding businesses and/or individuals within the Cook Islands tourism industry and wider community.
- **Nominee Criteria (business or individual being nominated):**  
Nominees must be either businesses operating within the Cook Islands tourism industry or individuals who are residing in and a part of the Cook Islands community. Businesses must be CIQA (Cook Islands Quality Assured) accredited or in the process of becoming accredited to proceed to the voting period. Previous winners of the same category cannot win in the immediate following year. They can be nominated, but these nominations will not proceed to the voting period.
- **Nomination Process:**  
Nominations must be submitted online through the official Awards portal at [www.cookislands.travel/pca](http://www.cookislands.travel/pca) within the nomination period.

## Nomination Categories:

- **Meitaki Awards - Business Categories** Highlighting tourism operators that define exceptional service and memorable experiences.
  - **Large Business (50+ employees):** Honours organisations delivering consistently excellent service at scale.
  - **Medium Business (20 - 49 employees):** Celebrates medium sized operators known for professionalism, value, and quality experiences.
  - **Small Business (5 - 19 employees):** Acknowledges smaller enterprises providing personal, hands-on service and hospitality.
  - **Local Vendor:** Highlights small vendors, micro-enterprises, and market-based operators who contribute to visitor experiences in meaningful and memorable ways.
- Cook Islands Tourism reserves the right to reallocate nomination if business does not meet nominated business size category.
- **Kia Orana Champions - Individual Categories** Recognising passionate individuals who deliver authentic, personal interactions that turn visits into lasting memories.
  - **Tour Guide of the Year:** Recognises a tour guide who creates memorable visitor experiences in the Cook Islands.
  - **Hospitality Hero:** Celebrates an individual who consistently goes above and beyond to ensure memorable and quality service for guests.
  - **Rising Star (Ages 18 - 30 years old):** Celebrates a young tourism professional who shows promise for the future of tourism in the Cook Islands.
  - **Mana Tiaki Guardian:** Honours someone who helps protect the Cook Islands' environment, culture, and values through sustainable actions.
  - **Pa Enua Ambassador:** Celebrates someone engaged with tourism in the Pa Enua.
- Cook Islands Tourism reserves the right to reallocate nomination or remove nomination if the individual does not meet nominated category criteria.

## Nomination Criteria

- The following categories have specific eligibility requirements. Cook Islands Tourism reserves the right to verify eligibility, reassign nominees to a more appropriate category, or disqualify any nominee who does not meet the stated criteria.
  - **Large Business:** Nominees must have 50+ employees
  - **Medium Business:** Nominees must have 20 - 49 employees
  - **Small Business:** Nominees must have 5 - 19 employees
  - **Local Vendor:** Must be a small vendor, micro-enterprise and or market-based operator.
  - **Tour Guide of the Year:** The nominee must be currently employed and working as a tour guide within the Cook Islands.

- **Hospitality Hero:** The nominee must be currently employed in the hospitality industry or have prior experience working in hospitality.
- **Rising Star:** The nominee must be at least 18 years of age (or turning 18) on or before 26 September 2025. The nominee must not be older than 30 years of age, nor turning 31 on or before 26 September 2025.
- **Pa Enua Ambassador:** The nominee must currently reside in the Pa Enua and must have lived there continuously for at least 12 months, as of 25 July 2025.'

#### **Nomination Period:**

- **Nominations Open:** 09:00am (CKT), Friday 25 July, 2025
- **Nominations Close:** 09:00am (CKT), Friday 15 August, 2025

#### **Nomination Exclusions:**

- Staff of Cook Islands Tourism and their immediate family members are not eligible to submit nominations for any individual or business owner.
- Self-nominations are not permitted. This includes nominations submitted by individuals for themselves, their own businesses, their staff, or immediate family members.

#### **Nomination Review**

- Cook Islands Tourism will review and compile a shortlist of the top five (5) Finalist Nominees for each category after the nomination period ends.
- Finalists are vetted for eligibility and alignment with award criteria by Cook Islands Tourism.
- All shortlisted finalists will be contacted and given the opportunity to accept or decline their nomination before proceeding to the public voting stage.
- Nominees must confirm their acceptance within 24 hours of being notified. If a nominee does not respond within the given timeframe or declines the nomination, the next highest-nominated eligible nominee will be offered the place in the finalist list.

#### **Voting Period:**

- **Voting Opens:** 12:00pm (CKT), Tuesday 2 September, 2025
- **Voting Closes:** 12:00pm (CKT), Tuesday 16 September, 2025
- **Voting Platform:** Voting for the 2025 Cook Islands People's Choice Award will take place exclusively on the official Cook Islands Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/theCookIslands/>

#### **Voting Instructions:**

1. To cast your vote, visit the official Cook Islands Facebook page during the voting period (12:00pm (CKT), Tuesday 2 September, 2025 and 12:00pm (CKT), Tuesday 16 September.
2. Navigate to the Individual and Business Finalist Nominees photo albums on the official Cook Islands Facebook page.
3. For each finalist nominee you wish to vote for, simply react to their respective image by clicking the desired reaction (e.g., like, love, care, etc.). Each reaction counts as one (1) vote for that nominee.
4. You may vote for multiple finalist nominees, but you can only vote once per finalist nominee using your Facebook account.

#### **Vote Criteria:**

1. Only reactions (e.g., like, love, care, etc.) on the finalist nominees' images within the designated photo album on the official Cook Islands Facebook page will be considered valid votes.
2. Reactions made on shared posts, comments, or other unrelated content will not be counted as votes.
3. Any votes received after the closing of the voting period (09:00am (CKT) 16 September 2025, CKT) will not be considered in the final tally.
4. In the event of a tie, the organiser will implement a fair and transparent tiebreaker procedure to determine the winner of the People's Choice Award. Details of the tiebreaker procedure will be announced if a tie occurs.
5. Only genuine Facebook users' interactions will count towards final votes. Any votes found from paid or "bot" accounts will be removed from the final count and may result in disqualification for the finalist(s).
6. The organisers reserve the right to disqualify and exclude votes that do not adhere to these instructions and limitations.
7. Final results are at the discretion of the organiser. The organiser's decision is final and binding.

#### **Awards and Prizes:**

##### **Business Category Winners**

- Title: Meitaki Business of the Year (per size)
- Prize: Marketing & Promotional package valued at approx. NZD \$5,500
- Includes digital exposure, feature content, and tourism platform highlights

### Individual Category Winners

- Title: Kia Orana Champion (per category)
- Prize: 'Experience' Package valued at approx. NZD \$500
- Includes local experience package from local operators
- All prizes and awards are made up of value in kind, promotional activity, and/or tourism experiences. These are determined by the organiser and advised to the category winner.
- All prizes and awards are non-transferable and not redeemable for cash.
- Prizes will be awarded to the recipients on Awards day or at the discretion of Cook Islands Tourism.
- Pa Enua Ambassador winner will receive a \$500 flight voucher from Air Rarotonga. Flight voucher and return tickets from home island to Rarotonga to attend People's Choice Awards 2025 Ceremony held on 26th September. Voucher must be used in accordance with Air Rarotonga terms and conditions.
- Return flight for Pa Enua Ambassador winner is limited to the Southern Group.
- Cook Islands Tourism will provide 3 nights accommodation for Pa Enua Ambassador Winner to attend People's Choice Awards 2025 Ceremony in Rarotonga. Final duration of stay is at the discretion of Cook Islands Tourism.

### Announcement of Winners:

Winners will be announced on Friday, 26 September 2025 at an official PCA event, and later on Cook Islands Tourism's official Social Media channels and [cookislands.travel/pca](https://cookislands.travel/pca).

### General:

1. **Disqualification:** Cook Islands Tourism reserves the right to disqualify any nomination or participant found in violation of these Terms or engaged in fraudulent activity, or activity that goes against the Kia Orana Values.
2. **Amendments:** Cook Islands Tourism reserves the right to modify or amend these Terms at any time without prior notice.
3. **Exclusion:** Employees of Cook Islands Tourism and their immediate family members are ineligible to make nominations. However, they can be nominated by any eligible nominator. Family members and staff members cannot nominate each other.