



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

15 AUGUST 2024

Tour operator for blind and low-vision travellers is celebrating its 6th birthday with a brand refresh and opportunities for visitor economy businesses to join its 2025 tour schedule.

Six years ago, Cocky Guides Leader and Founder James (Buck) McFarlane tested an idea he had to develop a new way of travel he calls sensory tourism. Sensory tourism seeks to present destinations differently, without sight, for blind and low-vision travellers. Today Cocky Guides is an award-winning not-for-profit, accessible tourism business for blind and low-vision Australians.

Cocky Guides' success relies on collaboration with visitor economy businesses in destinations they visit to assist in providing service excellence for blind and low-vision travellers. Since its launch in 2018, Cocky Guides has returned over one and a half million dollars to the Australian visitor economy.

Five key statistics that highlight Cocky Guides contribution to Australia's visitor economy over the past six years include:

1. Facilitated over 1,500 individual passenger movements for blind & low-vision Australians
2. Delivered 385 tours
3. Visited 70 destinations across Australia
4. Contributed over \$1,500,000 to Australia's visitor economy
5. Worked with over 170 Australian visitor economy businesses

Cocky Guides Founder James (Buck) McFarlane says, "What makes Cocky Guides extra special, apart from the multi-sensory experiences we create for our travellers, is the power of our advocacy for accessible and inclusive travel. We advocate by being out and about with boots on the ground, in destinations and working with a wide range of visitor economy businesses across Australia. Our brand refresh includes a new logo as a shield, representing an ongoing team effort, plus simple contrasting brand colours on marketing assets for people with low vision who engage with us. "



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Right now, Cocky Guides has its sights set on engaging more visitor economy businesses and destinations for its 2025 tour Australian schedule. This is an excellent opportunity to partner with Cocky Guides and discover how most businesses are ready to welcome blind and low-vision travellers with the support of experienced trip leaders and support guides.

Are you an accommodation provider, tourism attraction, or hospitality venue operating within the Australian visitor economy that is interested in hosting a Cocky Guides group? An expression of interest can start by sending an introduction email to partnerships@cockyguides.com.au

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CONTACT

For further information, please get in touch with James (Buck) McFarlane at james.mcfarlane@cockyguides.com.au or call 0403 827 666

ABOUT COCKY GUIDES

Since launching on 15 August 2018, Cocky Guides have specialised in providing unique, multisensory adventures for the blind and low-vision community. More than 1,500 Australians have visited 70 destinations with Cocky Guides.

Cocky Guides purpose is to inspire blind and low-vision Australians to access new destinations and experiences, and they were the recipient of the Gold Award for Excellence in Accessible Tourism at the prestigious 2023 NSW Tourism Awards and finalist in the 2023 Australian Tourism Awards.

There are over 575,000 Australians who are blind or have low vision. Cocky Guides aims to be the leading support provider for adventure and travel, designed to increase independence, plus social and community participation for blind and low-vision Australians.

For more information, visit www.cockyguides.com.au