



Local business woman named as a finalist for National Awards

Nicole Kirkwood of Australian Visa and Immigration Experts has been named as a finalist for the 2021 AusMumpreneur Awards in two categories **Emerging Entrepreneur Award** and **Service Business Award**.

The AusMumpreneur Awards presented by The Women's Business School celebrate and recognize Australian Mums in business achieving outstanding success in areas such as business excellence, product development, customer service and digital innovation. The awards are designed to recognize the growing number of women who successfully balance motherhood and business in a way that suits their life and family.

Nicole's career in migration began over 15 years ago when she volunteered to assist refugees. She then worked in medium and large corporate firms for more than a decade before starting her own company. For Nicole, assisting people with migration is not just a service, it is about personal connection and changing lives. Nicole understands that immigrating to Australia is more than getting a visa. For many, becoming an Australian permanent resident or citizen is realising a dream and brings life-long change for individuals and families.

Nicole founded Australian Visa and Immigration Experts (AVIE) to provide an advice and immigration business that provides a truly personalised service. In the 18 months since she started, she has employed three staff and assisted hundreds of people in understanding, planning and realising their dream to live in Australia, all with Australian borders effectively closed.

"I wanted to provide a migration service that was unique and personal. The transactional nature of the industry did not appeal to me - our clients are real people. I wanted to provide a more personal approach to migration advice. For most of our clients, English is a second language, and it was important to me to provide often complex advice in a way that is easy to understand."

Nicole is delighted to be named as a finalist and is proud of her achievements, particularly

1. Managing a successful immigration business in a global pandemic. AVIE has seen over 500% growth since the 2019/2020 financial year.
2. Employing three staff directly and several other people indirectly.

There are many benefits to balancing business and motherhood as Nicole explains, "What I love about running my own business is showing my son what can be achieved when you work hard and believe in yourself. My son is eight and I also have two stepsons aged 22 and 17. Recently my son had watched a documentary program about how sometimes women in history were not respected as equals. He said he did not understand how anyone could feel like that about women because he



really respected me. His opinion could be slightly biased, or perhaps he sees how hard I work as a Mum and a businesswoman. I will take this as a win for working Mums regardless!”

It can be challenging to be a successful business woman whilst raising a family and Nicole Kirkwood gives this advice for others thinking about starting their own enterprise It is vital to understand the industry and develop networks in the lead up to starting your business. Connect with like-minded people, listen to their advice and experiences, and then take away what works for you.

I sought out practical advice from two successful entrepreneurs on financial management, outsourcing, and what to expect in the first 12 months of running a business. Their advice was invaluable in setting myself realistic goals and expectations.

Read more at www.ausmumpreneur.com. The winners of the 2021 AusMumpreneur Awards will be announced at an online event in September.

For more information on the AusMumpreneur Awards visit: www.ausmumpreneur.com or contact awards@ausmumpreneur.com

For an interview with Nicole Kirkwood contact 1300 387 975, <https://www.avie.com.au/news> and Nicole@avie.com.au