

# 2023 Lismore Friendship Festival Event Report



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Authored by: Jo Mackellar

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## Event Impact Survey

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact 2023 LisAmore! had on the local community, in terms of the economic, community and tourism impacts. The results suggest this event provides important cultural and economic contribution to the Lismore City and surrounding local region through its connections with the local Italian heritage.

LisAmore! attracted just under 5000 people to the area over the weekend of 17-18 June to the Lismore CBD and Lismore Turf Club. The event program is focussed upon enriching and celebrating the cultural links between the local Italian community, and the wider Lismore community. This year featured displays from Ferrari and Ducati enthusiast clubs, and all-day live performers.

Analysis of survey data from over 200 attendees found the following key results for the 2023 event:

- An estimated 5,000 people attended - 33% from outside the local government area.
- Special guests were invited including the Consul General of Italy.
- 67% of the audience were from Lismore LGA.
- 9% from interstate (8% Queensland, >1% from the VIC and SA).
- 92% came for a day trip while 8% of the audience stayed overnight or longer.
- **\$87,300** contribution to local economy from visitor expenditure.
- 66% heard about the event through social media and 52% from word of mouth.
- 59% had been to at least one event in previous years.
- 86% attended the event as a spectator.
- 47% intended to go to the Lismore Lantern Parade.
- 98% rated the atmosphere as excellent or very good.
- 95% rated the entertainment as excellent or very good.
- 94% rated the organisation as excellent or very good.
- 94% felt the event met their expectations, with 3% unsure.
- 79% rated the new Waste World experience as excellent or very good. Although it did receive nice feedback in the form of comments.
- 95% felt the overall experience was either very good or excellent.
- 98% believed the festival benefited the broader community.



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## Survey design and methodology

The research utilised a visitor survey that has been specifically designed to assess visitor profile, behaviour, and expenditure in the Lismore LGA. Visitor surveys were designed by Destination Research and collected on-site (#85) and on-line (#115) for a total of 200 responses.

## Visitor Profile

The postcodes of respondents were sorted into regions to examine the variety of places in which visitors reside. Analysis of these regions shows the majority of attendees are from local areas, as well as from neighbouring regions and interstate.

**TABLE 1: RESIDENCE OF AUDIENCE**

Over half of the audience are from the local Lismore LGA (67%) with the remaining 33% from a wide range of regions.

The main visitor market segments are within NSW including Lismore (67%) Ballina (12%) and Casino (7%) as well as New England.

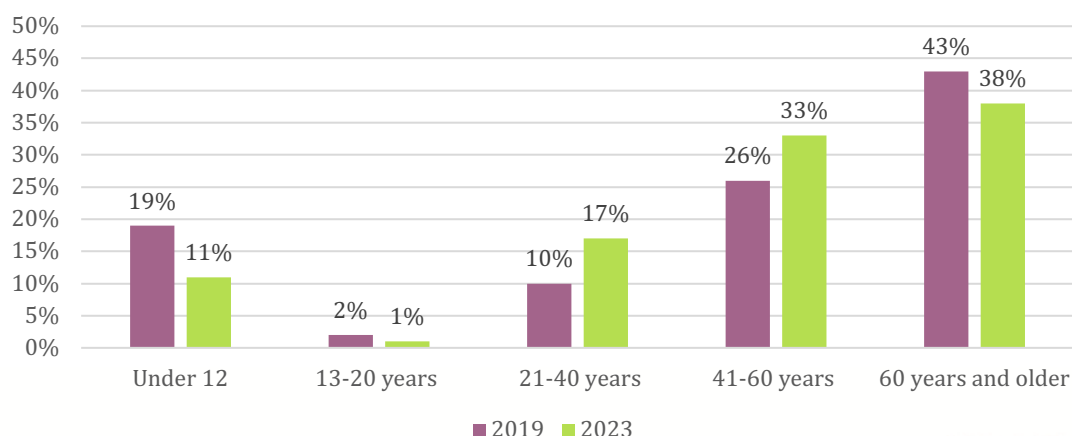
8% were from Queensland from both Brisbane (5%) and the Gold Coast (3%).

	2019	2023
Lismore	63%	67%
Other Northern Rivers	27%	23%
Ballina	14%	12%
Richmond Valley	3%	7%
Clarence Valley	1%	2%
Kyogle	1%	1%
QLD	4%	8%
Other NSW	4%	<1%
Interstate		
Overseas	2%	<1%

## Age and children

Visitors were asked to provide details of the number of people they were attending the event with, and the ages of those visitors. As shown in Figure 1 the event is mainly attractive to older segments with 71% over 41 years. Families with children under 12 years also made up 11% of the audience showing a solid attraction to this segment.

**Figure 1: Age groups**



## Group size and composition

Most people attend the event in groups/families of four people, couples also make up 19% of the audience. The event also attracts larger groups of between 10 and 15 people. The average group size of the audience is 4.6.

## Accommodation

Details of visitors' accommodation choice and their length of stay were analysed, showing the majority of visitors attended the event on a day trip from Lismore and the local regions.

While some day visitors came from the local Lismore area (67%), other “day trippers” came specifically for the event (25%) from as far as the Grafton, Gold Coast and Byron Bay.

A smaller proportion of visitors stayed overnight or longer (8%), coming from as far as Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

**Table 2: Day Visitors and Overnight Stays**

	Local residents	Day trippers	Overnight visitors	Total
In Lismore for the event		25%	8%	33%
Live in Lismore	67%			67%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The majority of overnight visitors stayed with friends/family (5%) as well as in local hotel/motel (3%).

## Purpose of Visit

For those travelling for the event 33% stated they came to Lismore specifically for LisAmore!

**Table 3: ‘Did you come to Lismore specifically for this event?’**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>No - I live/work there</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>2%</b>

Additionally, 47% of participants said they would be attending the Lismore Lantern Parade.

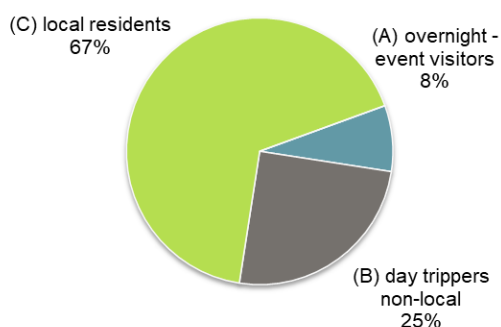
**Table 4: ‘Will you also go to the Lismore Lantern Parade??’**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>46.94%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>23.98%</b>
<b>unsure</b>	<b>29.08%</b>

## Economic Impact Assessment

'Direct visitor expenditure' is a reliable method to determine the direct economic impact of an event to its host community. It is calculated on visitors to the event who are bringing new money to the region, using (A) overnight event visitors" determined through analysis in previous sections to be 8% of all visitors. These visitors have come into the area for the purpose of engaging in the event and have stayed overnight or longer in the area.

Figure 2: Expenditure segments



Day trippers who have come from outside the LGA (B) are included in the estimate, but the calculations do not include "(C) local residents" who reside in the local government area as their money is assumed to exist in the local economy. The average expenditure as provided by survey respondents for overnight and day visitors varies dramatically, and as such they are calculated separately as shown below.

Table 5: Visitor expenditure

	2019	2023
<b>Overnight visitors</b>		
Total event visitors	4,500	5,000
overnight tourist %	3%	8.0%
overnight tourist #'s (A)	135	400
PP spend per event	\$169	\$112
Subtotal	\$22,815	\$44,800
<b>Day visitors</b>		
Total visitors	4,500	5,000
day trippers (excl local) (B)	25%	25%
# day trippers	1125	1,250
visitor spend for the day	\$26	\$34
Subtotal	\$29,250	\$42,500
<b>Total visitor contribution</b>	<b>\$52,065</b>	<b>\$87,300</b>

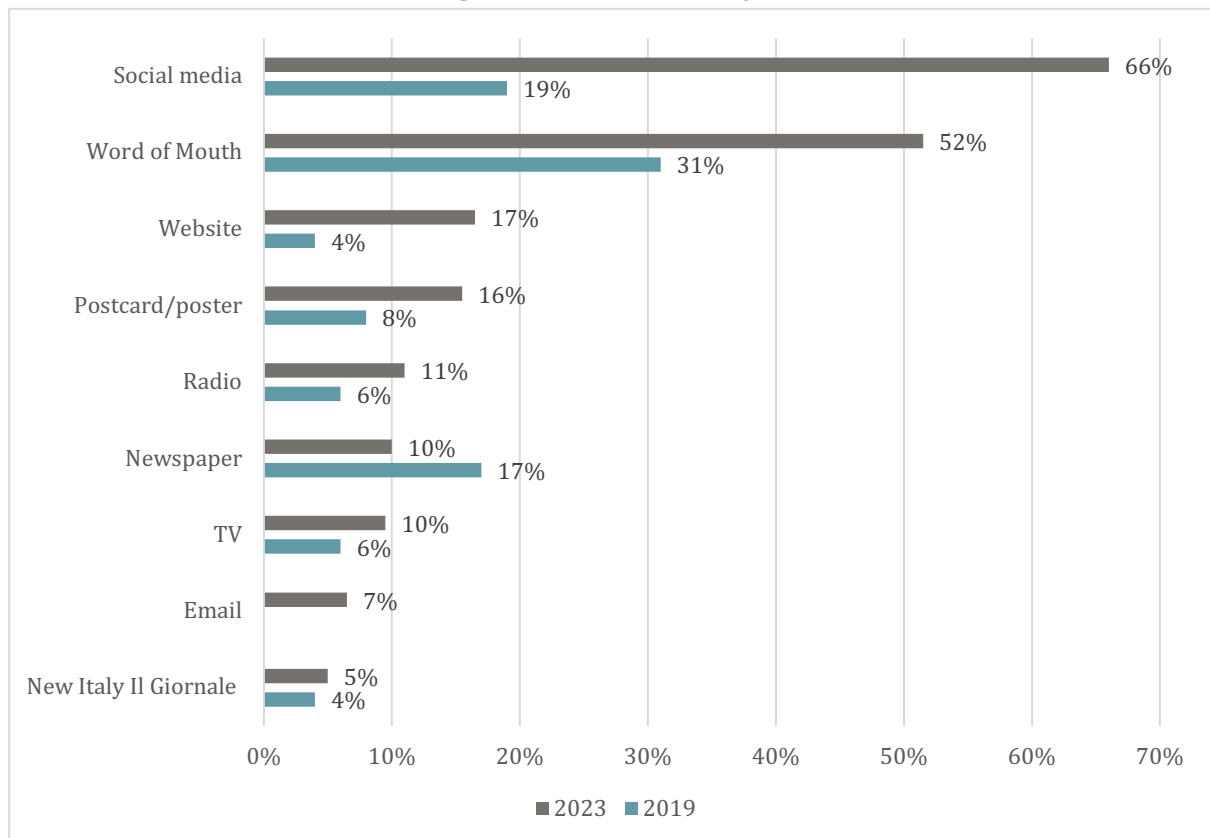


## Promotion Analysis

Respondents were asked how they heard about the event, with **'Social media' the highest response at an impressive 66%**, a huge increase from 19% in 2019. Promotion through **'Word of mouth' was also popular** through friends and family (52%). Traditional channels of promotion such as radio (11%), TV (10%) and newspaper (10%) maintain a lower influence which is in line with industry wide trends. It is important however to maintain a presence across multiple media types to ensure contact with a broad community audience.

Word of mouth advertising is often facilitated by satisfied visitors who return to the event each year, with **59% having been to at least one event before**.

**Figure 3: Promotion Analysis**



*\* Respondents could choose more than one response*

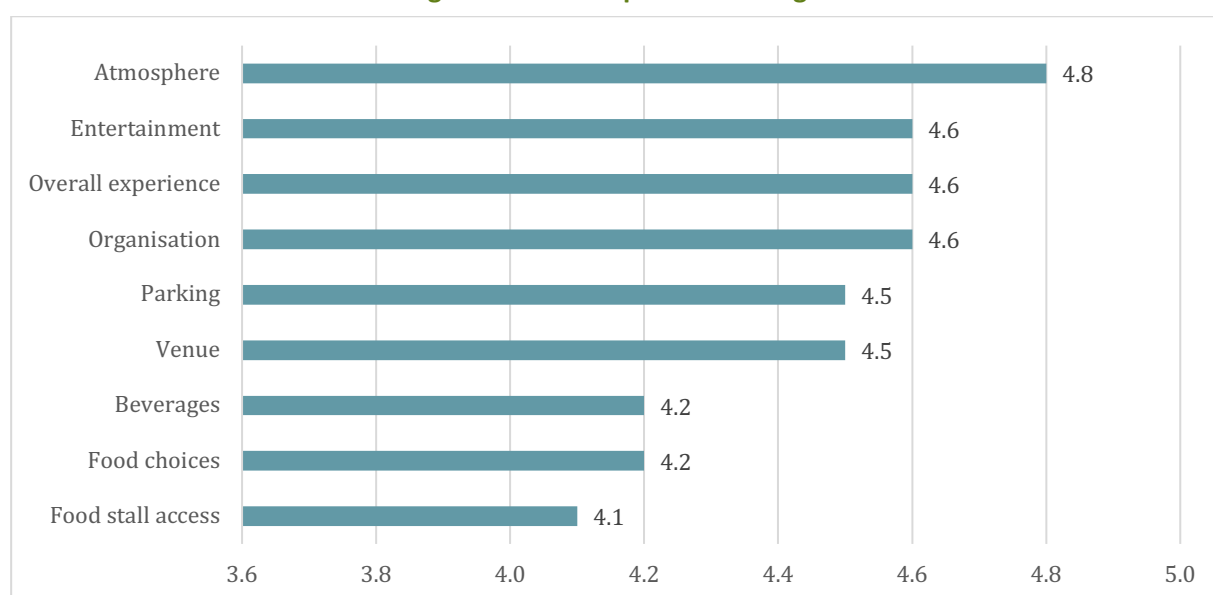
*\*\*2019 surveys did not include 'email' as a response answer*

## Event Experience Ratings

Respondents to the survey were asked to describe and rate their event experience, both on a rating scale and in open-ended responses. Satisfaction with aspects of the event were rated from 1 to 5, with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'excellent'. As can be seen most aspects of the event rated very well receiving positive results of either **very good** or **excellent**.

- **Atmosphere was rated most highly** at 4.8 out of 5. This was an increase from 2019's rating of 4.7. Additionally, 98% of respondents rated atmosphere either very good or excellent.
- **Entertainment and organisation were also rated well** at 4.6 out of 5. Both scoring very high 'excellent' ratings of 67% for organisation and 69% for entertainment.
- **Food stall access received the lowest average rating** at 4.1 out of 5, although, this was a 2-point increase from 2019's results. 4% rated food stall access as poor or very poor.

**Figure 4: Event experience ratings**



Other results showed that:

- **94% felt the event met their expectations**, with 3% unsure and 3% felt it did not.
- **95% felt the overall experience was either very good or excellent.**
- When asked about attendance to free workshops held June 17, **only 6% of respondents said they attended.** Comments from this section noted that some visitors were unaware these workshops were available.





## Waste World Rating

Participants were similarly asked to rate their experience of the new Waste World concept from a scale of from 1 to 5, with 1 being 'poor' and 5 being 'excellent'.

- **The average rating was 4.1 for Waste World which scales relatively low** compared to other surveyed event experiences.
- While this was a lower rating than other experiences, **it must be noted that the majority (44%) of responses rated Waste World as 'very good'** (4 on scale). Only 1% rated Waste World 'poor' or 'very poor'.

**Table 6: Waste World Comments**

Comments:	Respondent's Rating
A great idea-probably needs to be "explained" more clearly in the advertising but it will catch on.	Satisfactory (3)
Anything that can save on waste benefits everyone. Let's keep it up and do more every year.	Very good (4)
I brought all my own cutlery and plates and it felt really good to do so.	Very good (4)
I just think it's a great initiative	Excellent (5)
This should be embraced at all festivals. Well done	Excellent (5)
Great idea not to use plastic and to bring your own.	Very good (4)
I noted we were asked to byo plates and cups which we did, but noticed majority did not.	Very good (4)
It takes time and effort. Drums in a very important message about waste disposal and recycling.	Excellent (5)
Yes anything to minimise our waste footprint. And less cleaning up after lazy people. And lower event cost.	Excellent (5)
Great idea but we took all our plates cutlery etc but when buying food bamboo was offered cups etc	Satisfactory (3)
Hope to see it more often, we liked it very much	Excellent (5)
Education about what we use and ultimately do with our rubbish can only be good!	Excellent (5)
I think it's a fabulous idea just need to educate the general public	Satisfactory (3)
I brought all my own cutlery and plates and it felt really good to do so.	Very good (4)
I just think it's a great initiative	Excellent (5)
This should be embraced at all festivals. Well done	Excellent (5)
Great idea not to use plastic and to bring your own.	Very good (4)

It can be concluded from the comments, that those more passionate about the issue of waste were more inclined to leave comments. While those who rated Waste World lower, described issues of the concept not being explained thoroughly enough.

## Suggestions for Improvement

Survey respondents were asked for suggestions to improve the event. Compared to 2019, the majority of suggested improvements had decreased in percentages, with a high increase of those suggesting that nothing needed to be improved at all (23%). This is an overall great response demonstrating high satisfaction of visitors.

Other responses were categorised into themes where most responses related to:

- Food (29%) – e.g. more food stalls, increased variety of food and coffee stalls. Overall decrease in comments from 2019.
- Entertainment systems (14%) – e.g. more variety of entertainment options. Overall decrease in comments from 2019.
- There were increases of suggestions relating to access, stalls and timing in 2023.
  - Access (7%) – better accessible parking and wheelchair-friendly areas
  - Stalls (9%) – more varieties and specific interests requested.
  - Timing (7%) – better scheduling of entertainment.

A full list of comments has been given to the event organiser.

**Table 7: Suggested improvements**

Areas to Improve	2019	2023
Food	34.9%	29.2%
Seating	16.9%	1.5%
Nothing	14.5%	22.6%
Entertainment systems	14.5%	11.7%
Venue	6.0%	5.8%
Other	4.8%	4.4%
Italian culture	3.6%	2.9%
Access	2.4%	6.6%
Stalls	1.2%	8.8%
Timing	1.2%	6.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>





