

**Company:** Small Businesses of Australia

**Nomination Submitted by:** Annette Densham, Award Writing Specialist

**Company Description:** Award Writing Specialist

**Nomination Category:** Company / Organization Categories

**Nomination Sub Category:** Company of the Year - Retail - Small

**Nomination Title:** Little Windmill Clothing Co

1. Which will you submit for your nomination in this category, a video of up to five (5) minutes in length about the achievements of the nominated organization since 1 January 2021, OR written answers to the questions for this category? (Choose one):

Written answers to the questions

2. If you are submitting a video of up to five (5) minutes in length, provide the URL of the nominated video here, OR attach it to your entry via the "Add Attachments, Videos, or Links to This Entry" link above, through which you may also upload a copy of your video.

3. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this first question: Briefly describe the nominated organization: its history and past performance (up to 200 words):

**Total 194 words used.**

Little Windmill started as a home-based business at our cattle station in 2017. I was on maternity leave with my firstborn. I just wanted to create the ideal outfits for our lifestyle and environment so I created a range of sun-safe cotton wear with a Western cowboy vibe. It grew into a business, largely on its own.

This look appeals to parents looking for practical yet stylish options for their children, making us different from fast fashion labels and the same old, same old from mainstream stores. Since people wanted what I was making, I created my own label and designs in 2020. Not easy – I was working nights around three children (now four) but it's been worth it.

Today, we have two shopfronts, a warehouse in town and a team that has grown from myself and Bec to eight employees working 5–6 days a week. We've expanded our range to include Western-style clothing for adults (unisex), accessories like bags, footwear, hats and beanies, bibs, rattles and mats and added a range of hampers packed with our products and other local businesses; great for baby showers and the birth of a new bub.

4. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this second question: Outline the organization's achievements since the beginning of 2021 that you wish to bring to the judges' attention (up to 250 words):

**Total 245 words used.**

Every collection we put out meets the high standards our customers love, so they keep coming back. Our return rate is less than 5%, compared to the industry average of 24%.

We were finalists in the Hunter Regional Business Excellence Awards and took out a win for Micro Business. Wholesale expansion has been another feather in our caps. We have over 22 wholesalers stocking our products, as far as the US.

We're at trade shows like Rockhampton's Beef Week, we love connecting with customers who want to touch and feel products before they buy.

Our customers started asking for adult clothing and accessories, so we diversified our range and now sell adult sizes, matching family outfits, backpacks, and footwear, boosting sales and giving our customers a one-stop shop for everything.

Financially, we've doubled in size, hitting the multi-million mark, growing from \$762k in '23, which still blows my mind. Our retail sales increased from \$230k in our first year to over a million last year.

Our business has doubled in size financially, reaching the multi-million mark, growing from \$762k in '23.

Retail sales have increased from \$230k in the first year to \$780k last year.

Visits to our online store have risen from 103k to nearly 140k last year, and the numbers continue to climb. Contributes 80% of sales - keeps our business. There's a vibe in-store and a lot of people come in to buy but stay because of the community feel we exude.

5. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this third question: Explain why the achievements you have highlighted are unique or significant. If possible compare the achievements to the performance of other players in your industry and/or to the organization's past performance (up to 250 words):

**Total 224 words used.**

Little Windmill Clothing changed the game. Nothing like it existed in Australia for kids—until we filled the gap. We created sun-safe, cotton clothing that's as practical as it is stylish. Our designs capture the Australian spirit, with a strong nod to Western heritage.

Cheap brands flood the market. Some look cute. Some seem like a bargain. But real quality, real sustainability? That's rare. Imitators try to copy our look, but they can't match our craftsmanship. You can feel the difference. Our clothes fit better, last longer, and get passed down—not tossed out.

Ethical sourcing isn't tokenism for us. It's the foundation of our business. The fashion industry needs more brands with heart, and we lead by example. Recognition isn't just deserved—it's necessary.

Community is everything. We back local events, from camp drafts to school fundraisers. We donate, sponsor sports teams, and show up. When a team needed support for the Nationals in Queensland, we were there. That's who we are.

We also create real jobs in regional and rural areas, giving people retail and customer service experience while growing something bigger than just a brand. In a world shifting online, our store stands strong. It's more than a place to shop, it's a space for connection. We believe in face-to-face conversations, in knowing our customers, and in keeping retail personal. Because real relationships matter.

6. You have the option to answer this final question: Reference any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words):

**Total 205 words used.**

This document offers a snapshot of Little Windmill Clothing Co's brand journey, community engagement, and business growth through the lens of founder Katie Eslick, a rural mother of four living on a cattle station in the Upper Hunter Valley, NSW. It provides judges with insight into the business's authenticity, values, and impact.

**Founder Story: Katie Eslick**

- Katie is a mother raising her children on a beef cattle station.

- The brand reflects her family's rural lifestyle, celebrating the outback, family time, and countryside values.

**Products & customer connection**

- The document showcases key clothing items and brand aesthetics.

- Emphasises how the products represent rural life and childhood adventure.

**Social media strategy**

- Strong presence on Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook.

- TikTok content blends product showcases with authentic rural life.

- Instagram reels and Facebook promotions connect with a loyal customer base.

- Focus on storytelling and building genuine customer relationships.

**Business Growth**

- Expanded from one retail store in Scone to a second in Tamworth.

- Customer reviews are consistently positive, reflecting high satisfaction and brand loyalty.

- Highlights include community-driven marketing and word-of-mouth momentum.

**Brand impact**

- Little Windmill Clothing Co is not just a business—it's a heartfelt reflection of regional life and motherhood.

- Successfully building a recognisable, authentic rural brand while growing sustainably.



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