

Community Partners Award - Guidance Notes and Scoring Guide

Community Partners Award Information

The Community Partners Award recognises community organisations that are working with businesses in order to achieve excellence in social impact. Community organisations will need to demonstrate good practice and innovation in facilitating and building cross-sector partnerships that benefit Greater London. Community organisations may be charities, schools, community groups or social enterprises. Their partnerships must be with business or public sector bodies.

Eligibility

- For community organisations, schools, charities or social enterprises in Greater London.
- Social enterprises are only eligible to apply for the Community Partners Award since, unlike a private sector business, social impact is the core purpose of the business.
- Community organisations, schools, charities or social enterprises can apply themselves, or nominations are welcome from businesses or public bodies. The nominee must be informed before the application is submitted. In this category there will also be the opportunity for a small and a larger community organisation to be recognised.
- The same initiative cannot be submitted in more than one category. All partners involved in the same initiative must decide which category it best fits into and submit one application to that category only.
- If your initiative was shortlisted in 2017 you can apply again with the same initiative (or another) in any category, however the judges will be looking for ways in which your initiative has developed over the past year.
- If your initiative won an Award in (2017), it should not be entered in any category for three years following receiving the Award. For example, any initiative that won in 2017 should not be entered again until 2021. When submitting in following years the initiative should have had substantial changes made to it since winning the award. You may apply with a different initiative to this year's Dragon Awards.

Your Initiative

The initiative described in your application must benefit Greater London communities. Wider activity beyond Greater London will not be scored in your application, so should only be referenced to give wider context for your work.

Applications can focus on either a single partnership or wide-ranging business engagement.

Where two or more organisations are working in partnership on the same initiative, only one application should be submitted.

What are the Judges Looking for?

Judges will be looking for innovative and effective ways of working with businesses or public bodies that:

- Engage and manage business interest.
- Build and maintain relationships through effective communications and relationship management.
- Engage, manage and support business partners to make a social impact.
- Evaluate the value of the partnership and ways in which it can be strengthened.
- Have an eye to the future when the level of business involvement may change.
- Evidence that the initiative has had a positive impact on your business, e.g. improving company culture or making organisational practices more inclusive.

Examples of Partnerships May Include:

- Working with a business to engage, manage and support employee volunteers in different roles to address a social need.
- Working with a marketing business to run a campaign addressing a societal issue.

Judges' Tips

- Don't assume knowledge – ask someone who doesn't know the project to tell you where the gaps are.
- Inspire us – show how you have responded to a real need, leveraged your capabilities to respond to that need, and made an impact.
- Talk about the future – we want to know what happens next, how will the impact be sustained – often forgotten.
- For community partners – explain your role in managing the partnership, why are you the best partner to the business.

Previous Winners

Please follow the links to see videos of previous organisations who have won in this category:

- [The Bromley by Bow Centre](#)
- [Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership](#)

Completing the Application

Company Details - Section 1 (Not scored)

Your Application

Where two or more community organisations are working in equal partnership on a given initiative with businesses, one joint application should be made. In this case, please give the names of all the community organisations involved. In the event that a joint application should win, all parties will receive Awards.

If you are nominating an organisation for this Award this section should include the details of the organisation you are nominating.

Please ensure all names of community organisations and businesses are written as you would like them to appear in any written materials such as in press articles, on award trophies or certificates.

You must discuss this application with any organisations listed on the application form as well as your Chief Executive or equivalent before submitting the application.

Applicant Contact Details

If you are submitting a joint application please only provide one set of primary contact details (indicating which organisation they are for) and one secondary contact.

All correspondence regarding your application will be directed to the primary contact listed. If the primary contact changes any time after your application has been submitted please email us at DragonAwards@cityoflondon.gov.uk to let us know.

Twitter

Please list all relevant Twitter handles for you and your partner organisations. Please indicate who each handle is for. We may Tweet you throughout the Awards process. Please do follow us and engage via [@Dragon_Awards](https://twitter.com/Dragon_Awards).

Nominating Organisation

If you are nominating an organisation, please fill in your details here. If you are applying on behalf of your own organisation, please skip these questions. You must discuss the application with the organisation you are nominating before you make the application.

Organisational Profile

These questions are for the judges' reference only and are not scored. The judge's will use these questions to help put the application in context for them.

Case Study – please provide us with a short case study. This will not be scored but will be used to pitch your partnership to press. This should therefore tell an engaging story in less than 300 words, which summarises why and what you have done, with a focus on what has changed as a result, within the community organisation, the business and in society.

Highlights in Numbers

This information will be used by the Awards team to measure the aggregated impact of each year's applicant cohort. It will also be used by the judging panels to gain a further understanding of an initiative's impact by taking into account the relative size of an organisation and resources available.

Your Initiative - Section 2 (Scored)

Please also refer to the scoring guide at the bottom of this document for a guide on what will score highly for each question in this section.

The Awards judges will only be able to take into account the information you supply in your application in the scored questions. With a tight word count, it is important to make every word count.

To do well you must be able to demonstrate substantial impact. Generally, if your programme has been running for less than one year you may not have sufficient data.

Question 1. Please describe the partnership and your role in setting it up.

This question will count for 20% of your total score. [300 words maximum]

This question focuses on the role of the community partner in the development of the partnership and assesses the strategic fit of the partnering organisations.

To score highly in this question, please try to include information regarding as many of the below points as possible:

- When the partnership was set up and who with.
- Why you chose this business(es) to partner with.
- Why your organisations are a good fit e.g. shared values and mutual benefit.
- What the partnership aims to achieve.

- How beneficiary groups and activities are selected.

Question 2. What makes the partnership successful?

This question will count for 20% of your total score. [300 words maximum]

This question looks at the ongoing support provided by the community organisation to enable effective and impactful partnership working that achieves maximum impact.

To score highly in this question, please consider the following and provide examples:

- How are the relationships managed and maintained?
- Do you have an agreement, MOU or partnership plan in place?
- What processes are in place e.g. monitoring and evaluation?
- How are volunteers from the business supported by the community organisation, including induction, training, and communications with them?
- How are problems resolved if they arise?
- What is innovative about your partnership?

Question 3. What difference has this initiative made to your organisation, your business partner and wider society (qualitative and quantitative)?

This question will count for 40% of your total score. [800 words maximum]

The judges will be looking for the impact of your partnership, how social impact has been achieved collaboratively with your partner(s) and the benefits to your beneficiaries, your business partner(s) and you as an organisation. Where possible, this should include how much progress has been made since the partnership started i.e. where you started and where you are now. Please focus your answer on the impact and only give a very brief indication of your partnership inputs and outputs if you feel it is necessary. Further information about measuring impact can be found [here](#).

To score highly in this question, try to include quantitative and qualitative evidence of as many of the following as possible:

- The difference made to the community as a result of the partnership (e.g. number of people with increased confidence, number of people who learnt new skills, number of jobs gained etc).
- Any benefits to your charity, such as lessons from the partnership being applied to other projects.
- Any benefits to the business as a result of the partnership (e.g. the number of employees who felt that their communication skills had improved as a result of volunteering), enhanced company reputation (e.g. reputation amongst clients).
- Any of the partnership's aims that have been achieved.

Qualitative evidence of impact

- Short case studies from community beneficiaries.
- Quotes from employee volunteers.
- Quotes from business or community leadership, such as CEOs.

Quantitative evidence of impact

- Statistics that demonstrate improvements for the community, such as the percentage of people in the project who reported improved skills or the percentage increase in procurement spend going to social enterprises who in turn have a social impact.
- Statistics that demonstrate improvements for the community partner, e.g. money saved from a new IT system brought in on the advice of employee volunteers or increased visibility through a business campaigning on an issue to audiences not normally reached by the community organisation.
- Statistics that demonstrate improvements for the business, e.g. the percentage of employee volunteers who reported an increase in their communication skills as a result of volunteering or a shift in company policy to become London Living Wage accredited with details of increased staff engagement and improved external reputation as a result.

Question 4. What plans do you have for the future?

This question will count for 15% of your total score. [200 words maximum]:

The judges will be looking for evidence of a partnership with sustainable social impact. Please consider the following when answering this question:

- Do you plan to scale the partnership or apply learning to other partnerships?
- Are there any future collaborations planned?
- Are there any plans in place for after the partnership has ended in order to sustain the social impact made?

Question 5. What are you most proud of?

This question will count for 5% of your total score. [100 words maximum]

This is your opportunity to really make your application stand out from others in this category and tell the judges anything you feel has been missed out.

Scoring Guide for the Community Partners Award

Please note:

- This is a guide to help applicants understand how answers will be scored by the judges and what kind of content will achieve a high score.
- This information is for the Community Partners Award only.
- Each question will be scored on a scale from 0 – 10.
- If a question is left unanswered, zero points will be awarded.
- Please be aware of the weighting for each question.

	Excellent <i>(10 points)</i>	Satisfactory <i>(5 points)</i>	Poor <i>(1 points)</i>
<p>1. Please describe the partnership and your role in setting it up</p> <p><i>20% of final score</i></p>	<p>There is strong evidence of a strategic fit between partnering organisations and the reasons for partnering are clear, convincing and innovative. The partnership has been formally set up with the following in place at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership aims and objectives • Clear roles for partners and reasoning for partnership • Beneficiary groups and activities are being selected appropriately to achieve outcomes. Ex. through volunteering or campaigns <p>The community partner has not only contributed to the partnership development but has taken a lead role, be it as the relationship instigator or by continually presenting their partner with new ideas, supporting them with their business case for addressing societal issues.</p>	<p>There is reasonable evidence of a strategic fit between partnering organisations and the reasons for partnering have been made clear. There are elements of a formal partnership set up, with at least two of the following in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership aims and objectives • Clear roles for partners • Beneficiary groups and activities being selected appropriately to achieve outcomes. Ex. through volunteering or campaigns <p>The role of the community partner in the development of these has been communicated.</p>	<p>There is no clear evidence of a strategic fit between partnering organisations and the reasons for partnering have not been explained. The partnership has no formal set up, with no evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership aims and objectives • Clear roles for partners • Beneficiary groups and activities being selected appropriately to achieve outcomes. Ex. through volunteering or campaigns <p>Where there is evidence of the above, the role of the community partner in the development of these has not been communicated.</p>

<p>Q.2 – What makes the partnership successful?</p> <p><i>20% of final score</i></p>	<p>The partnership has exceptional practices in place which are innovative and ensure effective partnership working that can be replicated for other partnerships and used as a best practice example.</p> <p>The formal partnership has some form of partnership agreement and plan in place such as an MOU, project plan and communications plan.</p> <p>As a result, there is good evidence of effective communication between partners, overcoming challenges collaboratively (where relevant), keeping volunteers and employees informed and supported, monitoring the project at regular intervals and incorporating learnings from monitoring and evaluation to inform future plans.</p>	<p>There are practices in place which enable the partnership to run day to day but does not show innovation in its approach. Some effort has been applied to monitoring and evaluating the initiative, and the partners communicate with one another and with stakeholders effectively.</p>	<p>There is no clear evidence of the practices in place to ensure effective partnership working. The partnership may achieve success, but the reasons why have not been communicated.</p>
<p>Q.3 – What difference has this initiative made (qualitative and quantitative)?</p> <p><i>40% of final score</i></p>	<p>There is strong evidence of the community, beneficiary and business impact. There is a clear link to the project's aims and objectives.</p> <p>The evidence provided is robust and convincing when scrutinised; with vast amounts of varied quantitative and qualitative data from a range of sources that illustrates the impact on each of the three stakeholder groups. The data conveys the significant difference the project has made to all stakeholders.</p>	<p>There is reasonable evidence of the community, beneficiary and business impact with a satisfactory attempt at linking these to the project aims and objectives.</p> <p>The evidence provided contains both quantitative and qualitative data but is not consistently convincing or robust. For example, the data provided for beneficiary impact is vast, but the business impact is not well supported by the data.</p>	<p>There is no clear evidence of the community, beneficiary or business impact. The answer provided is likely to focus on project outputs instead of the impact of these activities.</p>

<p>Q.4 – What plans do you have for the future?</p> <p><i>15% of final score</i></p>	<p>Future plans have been clearly defined and agreed by partners with the impact on stakeholders, including beneficiaries or society in mind. There is a clear strategy for continuing/exiting the partnership, as appropriate and partners have a clear rationale for how they will proceed, be that by scaling or expanding the initiative or by moving on from the partnership. Whichever the future plan, the impact of the partnership is sustained through knowledge sharing and use of learnings from monitoring and evaluation to inform future decisions and other work.</p>	<p>Information regarding future plans has been provided and these are clearly defined. There is no evidence that the impact of these decisions on stakeholders has been taken into account or that these plans will contribute to the sustained impact of the partnership.</p>	<p>There is no clear evidence of a future plan for the partnership.</p>
<p>Q.5 – Please use this section to tell us anything else you feel is significant but have not had the opportunity to share.</p> <p><i>5% of final score</i></p>	<p>Over to you. This is a good opportunity to tell the judges something you have felt unable to express throughout the rest of the application.</p>		