

Heart of the City Award – Guidance Notes and Scoring Guide

Heart of the City Award Information

The Heart of the City Award recognises businesses that have recently started to have a social impact in Greater London. Business of all sizes, including SMEs, should apply. We want to reward businesses which have taken a strategic approach to addressing a social issue(s) for the first time within the last three years (since February 2015) and we encourage you to be brave and apply for this Award. The business may have previously engaged in ad hoc fundraising or one-off volunteering activities, but will now have made a strategic organisational commitment to identify a relevant social issue and set out a plan for tackling it through its influence and resources. This may include staff volunteering, pro bono advice, fundraising, gifts in kind or a shift to more inclusive business practices which address a societal need. As this award is for those new to this area, we are primarily interested in seeing how you have put the foundations in place to deliver social impact into the future. We are looking for some evidence of impact, but this carries a lower scoring weight than other categories as we recognise you are at the start of your journey. Please include details of the totality of your strategic approach, including all individual initiatives, provided they are addressing a social impact (environmental initiatives are not eligible).

For this Award, 'strategic' is characterised as a deliberate and structured plan for social impact, with aims and objectives set at an organisational level.

Eligibility

- This award is open to applications from private sector businesses and public bodies having an impact in Greater London. Businesses and public bodies may use this form to make an application for their own organisation or to nominate a third party business or public body. Charities, schools, community groups and social enterprises are not eligible to apply in this category but may nominate a business or public body.
- The Lord Mayor's Dragon Awards recognise and celebrate organisations going beyond their core business product or service to have a social impact. Applications will be disqualified if the initiative described is judged to form part or an extension of the organisation's core commercial and/or delivery activities, e.g. a local authority providing a statutory service to the community or a business whose purpose is to broker employee volunteering.
- Prior involvement in ad hoc fundraising or volunteering will not make a business ineligible for the Award e.g. your company organised a fun run in 2013, provided a more strategic, organisational approach has only been initiated within the last three years (2015).
- Businesses that have previously implemented a strategic approach as defined above are not eligible for this award, even where this may have diminished over time and then been restructured again within the last three years. This is to ensure that this award is reserved for new entrants to the responsible business arena.
- Businesses that have NOT previously won in any of the categories can apply to the Heart of the City Award as many times as they wish within the three year time frame. Businesses that have won a Lord Mayor's Dragon Award in any category previously, may not apply for this award.
- If your initiative was shortlisted in 2017 you can apply with the same initiative, however the judges will be looking for ways in which your programme has developed over the past year.
- Your business does not need to be a member of Heart of the City to apply, any eligible (as explained above) business within Greater London is welcome to apply. We warmly welcome applications from SMEs.

- 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.

If you are unsure whether your organisation is eligible for this award, please get in touch by emailing DragonAwards@cityoflondon.gov.uk or calling 020 7332 1762.

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.

We are interested in how your organisation is addressing a social issue by using your influence and resources to benefit Greater London communities e.g. residents, charities, schools, community organisations, small businesses and social enterprises, etc. This may be through changes to your business practices, pro bono advice, volunteering, fundraising, gifts in kind etc. These lists are not exhaustive.

If your initiative is part of a wider programme with other organisations, you should focus on the impact your business has made specifically rather than the programme as a whole.

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

Applications are encouraged from organisations that work with a number of different community partners, and from organisations that have chosen one partner to invest significant time and resources into.

What are the Judges Looking for?

Depending on your initiative, not all of the below may apply but a majority of these indicators should be in place:

- Support from senior management and/or progress reported to senior manager(s).
- The social impact activities have relevance to your core business activities and stakeholders.
- A strategy exists to demonstrate your purpose and how you will achieve it.
- A policy for volunteering and/or fundraising exists (including, for example, guidance around volunteering time off or matched fundraising).
- Qualitative and/or quantitative measurements to track progress are in place and demonstrate impact.

- A strong, long-term commitment to social impact and, if relevant, one or more community organisations.
- The activity is linked to staff learning and development.
- The impact is communicated internally and externally.
- Evidence that the initiative has had a positive impact on your business, e.g. improving company culture or making organisational practices more inclusive.

Judges' Tips

- Don't assume knowledge – ask someone who doesn't know the initiative 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.

Previous Winners

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

- [Impact Creative Recruitment](#) (SME)
- [Assael Architecture](#) (SME)
- [Penguin Random House UK](#)
- [Alium Partners](#) (SME)

Completing the Application

Company Details - Section 1 (Not scored)

Your Application

Where two or more private sector business or public sector organisations are working in equal partnership on an initiative, only one joint application can be made. In this case, please give the names of all the companies 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. If we are unable to get in touch with the primary contact, we will try the secondary contact.

Organisation Overview

If available/applicable, please break down your total number of employees by London, UK, global.

If available/applicable, please break down your company turnover by UK, EMEA and global.

The Lord Mayor's Dragon Awards evaluate a business' achievements relative to their size and resources; as a result, we've awarded twelve small or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the last six years, averaging 2 SME winners a year. As well as the option for awarding one category winner, all categories carry the possibility for two Dragons to be awarded - one for an SME business winner and one for a larger business winner.

An SME is a business with fewer than 250 employees and less than €50 million (£44.2 million) turnover across the whole company ([full description here](#)).

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](#).

Nominating Organisation

If you are nominating an organisation, please include your details in this section. 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.

Business and Initiative Overview

These questions are for the judges' reference only and are not scored. The judges 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 project or programme 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 your 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.

Question 1. How and why was this initiative chosen and how has it been implemented?

This question will count for 70% of your total score. [1000 words maximum]

Judges will want to understand the thinking behind your initiative and how you have or will ensure successful implementation.

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

- How the initiative was selected and why (i.e. how you identified the need). The judges will look for evidence that your initiative is based on, and trying to address, community need(s).
- The aims and objectives of your initiative.
- Why you chose to work with any partners involved.
- Who has been involved in decision making.
- How are you measuring success? e.g. monitoring and evaluation processes.
- Any KPIs or targets that have been set.
- Any processes that have been put in place to make the initiative successful e.g. how you will communicate with employees or partners, processes for collecting feedback.
- What resources (employee time, money, in-kind donations) have been dedicated to the initiative.
- Whether any training will be provided.
- How the programme has been/will be co-ordinated/managed.
- How the initiative feeds into your core business objectives.

Question 2. What difference has this initiative made to your business, your beneficiaries and wider society (qualitative and quantitative)?

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

We know that you are at the early stages of your initiative but we need to understand the impact you have made so far. This information may have been gathered, for example, through surveys completed by your participants both within the company and from beneficiaries. Further information about measuring impact can be found [here](#) including top tips on measuring success from Heart of the City.

The judges will be looking for the impact of your initiative and the benefits to your community partners, beneficiaries, your business, staff and any others relevant e.g. other businesses impacted as a result. Where possible, this should include how much progress has been made since the initiative started ie. Where you started and where you have got to so far. Please focus your answer on the impact made. Inputs and outputs will also be given consideration but organisations who are able to provide more information on impact, e.g. the difference made, will receive a higher score. If you do not have quantitative or qualitative data to illustrate an important impact point please explain what you are measuring now in order to measure impact in the future, and supply anecdotal evidence instead.

Judges will always evaluate overall impact relative to inputs (i.e. how much resource is dedicated to the project), so smaller companies will not be disadvantaged.

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

- Impact on people and society (e.g. change in people's behaviour, skills, wellbeing, life circumstances, increased opportunities, increased employment opportunities).
- Impact on community organisations (e.g. change in services or reach, change in systems and processes, change in public profile, change in staff, culture or volunteers).
- Business impact on employees (e.g. change in staff skills, well-being, behaviours).
- Business impact on the organisation (e.g. change in staff loyalty, retention or productivity, recruitment practices or diversity, change in reputation, brand awareness, commercial outcomes, change in operations, culture).
- Impact on relevant others (e.g. change in behaviour of other businesses, piloting a new approach for the sector, encouraging other businesses to get involved).

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 3. What are you most proud of?

This question will count for 10% of your total score. [200 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 – Heart of the City 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 Heart of the City 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>
Q.1 – How and why was this initiative chosen and how has it been implemented? <i>70% of final score</i>	<p>There is strong evidence of a robust and thorough process for developing the initiative, which identified both the societal and business needs and selected appropriate initiatives and partners to address these. The aims and objectives are clearly defined and strategically linked to core business objectives and values. There has been vast engagement at all levels of the business, with exceptional support and leadership at a senior level. There are a number of practices in place to ensure effective working, communication and monitoring, and evaluation of the initiative. The initiative is well thought through, exciting and ambitious, and has the ingredients in place to achieve future impact.</p>	<p>There is reasonable evidence of the rationale for choosing specific initiatives and partners, and the initiative has defined aims and objectives. A strategic approach to defining these has been attempted. There are practices/processes in place, which enable the initiatives to run day to day, including plans to monitor and evaluate activities in future. Partners communicate with one another effectively, but internal engagement is limited, particularly at a senior level.</p>	<p>There is no clear evidence of the process behind selecting the initiative and no rationale is provided for why the initiative or partners were chosen.</p> <p>The aims and objectives of the initiative have not been clearly communicated and there is no clear indication of a link to strategic priorities or business values.</p> <p>There is no clear evidence that sufficient practices have been put in place to ensure successful implementation and delivery of the initiative.</p>

<p>Q.2 - What difference has this initiative made (qualitative and quantitative)?</p> <p><i>20% of final score</i></p>	<p>There is strong evidence of the community, beneficiary and business impact, which clearly links to the initiative's aims and objectives, and may go further, producing unexpected benefits.</p> <p>The evidence provided is robust and convincing; with a vast amount of quantitative and qualitative data from a range of sources that illustrates the positive impact on all 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 is satisfactory, but inconsistent, i.e. there is no quantitative data, distance travelled (where the initiative started and where it is now) is not being measured, or data has primarily been collected to demonstrate business impact. The evidence is mainly focused on outputs, but the business has systems in place which will show the impact in the future.</p>	<p>There is no clear evidence of the community, beneficiary or business impact. The answer focuses on outputs, rather than impact and no information has been given with regards to what they are measuring now to show impact in the future.</p> <p>It is unclear whether the initiative is making any positive difference and there are no plans to improve impact measurement in future.</p>
<p>Q.3 – What are you most proud of?</p> <p><i>10% 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>		