

Innovation Award – Guidance Notes and Scoring Guide

Innovation Award Information

The Innovation Award is for companies developing new ways to benefit Greater London communities, whether by utilising their unique position to address an often overlooked social issue, by challenging the way we think about an entrenched issue, or by finding new ways to achieve impact on an issue, for example, through technology or collaborating with others. The Award is for those that understand the benefits of innovation - both as an important driver for long-term social impact and for engaging their workforce. Business of all sizes, including SMEs, should apply.

Eligibility

- One or more of the following should be true of the initiative entered in this category:
 - Your initiative changes the way in which social impact is achieved in your chosen area/issue e.g. through collaborating with others.
 - Your initiative challenges others, people or organisations, to think and act in new ways about your chosen social area/issue.
 - Your initiative addresses a social issue rarely addressed by businesses.
- 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.
- Public bodies must be able to demonstrate that their project is outside of their normal business mandate.
- 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

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.

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.

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.

Examples of Innovation Award Initiatives (this list is not exhaustive):

- Programmes can include work such as using technology to scale a response to a problem.
- Running programmes to support staff or people in the wider community who might be dealing with a social issue rarely addressed by businesses such as domestic abuse
- Influencing other businesses in your supply chains to think in new ways about a social issue such as domestic violence by making research available to others and sharing learning so other businesses can benefit from it and replicate it.

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.
- 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

This is the second year we will be awarding an organisation in the Innovation Award category. Please follow the link to see last year's winning video.

- [Keytree](#) (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.

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. How and why was this initiative chosen?

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

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

- How the need was identified.
- Your aims and objectives for the initiative.
- How these link to your business objectives.
- Your innovation and why it is important/necessary.

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. [450 words maximum]

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 i.e. Where you started and where you are now. Please focus your answer on the impact made.

Further information about measuring impact can be found [here](#).

Please feel free to use bullet points. Companies unable to complete Question 2 in quantitative business terms (e.g. staff retention rates increased by x %) should explain why they do not have quantitative evidence and instead supply anecdotal evidence.

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

You **MUST** include evidence of the impact on your business and your community partner at a minimum. 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. How is your initiative distinctive or fundamentally different from other approaches?

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

This is your opportunity to tell the judges why your initiative is eligible for the Innovation Award category. They will be looking for evidence of the following when scoring this question:

- What is different and innovative about the initiative.
- How your initiative changes the way in which impact is achieved in your chosen area/issue AND/OR.
- How your initiative addresses a social issue rarely addressed by businesses.
- What, if any, gaps in other existing interventions your initiative fills.
- What about your approach makes it more successful than others.
- What you are most proud of.

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

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

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

- How you are using monitoring and evaluation.
- How you have resolved any challenges so far and any improvements you plan to make.
- Any plans to scale the initiative.
- If the initiative will be used to inform future decision making.
- If you will influence others to adopt your innovative approach.

Scoring Guide – Innovation Award

- This guidance is for the Innovation Award.
- Each Award category has its own Scoring Guide that can be found on the relevant category page.
- 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>Q.1 – How and why was this initiative chosen?</p> <p><i>20% of final score</i></p>	<p>There is strong evidence of a robust and thorough process for choosing the initiative, which identified both the societal and business need and selected an appropriate initiative that addresses these. The rationale for choosing this specific initiative is convincing with aims and objectives that are clearly defined and strategically linked to core business objectives and values. The importance of the innovation has been convincingly expressed with use of evidence.</p>	<p>There is reasonable evidence of a process for choosing the initiative, though it is unclear how the need was identified as part of this. The rationale for choosing this specific initiative is clear and the aims and objectives defined. The importance of the innovation has been expressed but not convincingly.</p>	<p>There is no clear evidence of the process behind selecting the initiative and no rationale is provided for why the initiative was 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>The importance of the innovation has not been expressed.</p>
<p>Q.2 - What difference has this initiative made (qualitative and quantitative)?</p> <p><i>20% of final score</i></p> <p><i>Please see p.6 for examples</i></p>	<p>There is strong evidence of the community, beneficiary and business impact, with a clear link to the project's aims and objectives.</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 impact on each of the three stakeholder groups, in more than one way. 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 convincing and includes both quantitative and qualitative data but is not consistently robust i.e. the data provided for beneficiary impact is vast, whereby the business impact is not well supported</p>	<p>There is no clear evidence of the community, beneficiary or business impact. There is likely to be details of the project outputs instead of the impact of these activities.</p>

		by the data. Some evidence may still focus on outputs more than impact.	
<p>Q.3- How is your initiative distinctive or fundamentally different from other approaches</p> <p><i>40% of final score</i></p>	<p>There is clear and convincing evidence that the initiative applies significant innovation in its approach and is successful as a result. This may be through tackling an entrenched social issue in a convincingly new and improved way, purposefully and ambitiously addressing an issue that is often overlooked and making some progress in it, or challenging and inspiring others to think about issues in a new way, which has led to innovation elsewhere. There is strong evidence, with use of examples and data showing that the initiative is filling gaps in other approaches and the reasons behind the initiative's success in comparison to others are clear, convincing and can be used as a best practice example.</p>	<p>The initiative has some distinctive attributes, which are not widely seen in other initiatives. There has been an attempt to be innovative in the approach and to fill a gap in the market, though this could be better supported by evidence. There has been limited success in tackling an entrenched social issue in a new way, purposefully addressing an issue that is often overlooked, or challenging others to think about an issue in a new way. No convincing evidence has been provided to show why the initiative is more successful than others in this area.</p>	<p>The initiative has no distinct features, does not fill a gap in the market, and lacks innovation in its approach. As a result, there has been no success in tackling an entrenched social issue in a new way, purposefully addressing an issue that is often overlooked, or challenging others to think about an issue in a new way.</p>
<p>Q.4 – What plans do you have for the future?</p> <p><i>20% of final score</i></p>	<p>Future plans have been clearly defined and agreed by partners with the potential impact on all stakeholders in mind. There is a clear strategy for continuing or ending the initiative, as appropriate, and partners have a clear rationale for how they will proceed, be that by scaling or modifying the programme or by moving on to new areas. The business is sharing their innovation with others to multiply impact and influence others. Whatever the future plan, the impact of the initiative is sustained through knowledge sharing and use of learning from monitoring and evaluation in order to inform future decisions, overcome challenges, and improve impact.</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 initiative. Use of monitoring and evaluation to overcome challenges and improve impact is limited.</p>	<p>There is no clear evidence of a future plan for the initiative.</p>

