

Regional Impact Award – Guidance Notes

Regional Impact Award Information

The Regional Impact Award is open to businesses with a Greater London presence that are using their influence and resources to strengthen communities and have an impact beyond the capital. It seeks to recognise initiatives that both respond to local need and tie in to a strong overall social impact strategy. Business of all sizes, including SMEs, should apply (environmental initiatives are not eligible).

Eligibility

- Your company must be a UK based business with a meaningful presence in London.
- Your initiative is having a positive social impact outside of London within the United Kingdom.
- Applications can focus on either a single project or a wide-ranging initiative. If your programme is wide-ranging or nationwide, you should highlight the impact made in specific regions (you may choose to just highlight one or two regions) as well as the overall reach.
- This award is open to applications from private sector businesses and public bodies with a meaningful presence in London but making an impact outside of London. Businesses and public bodies may use the application 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.
- 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 2018 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 and you should make this clear in the application.
- If your initiative won an Award in (2018), it should not be entered in any category for the three years following receiving the Award. For example, any initiative that won in 2018 should not be entered again until 2022. 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.

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

- Working with your supply chain to support initiatives or businesses in local communities.
- Launching a national employee volunteering programme whereby each regional office tailors volunteering opportunities to local needs.
- Delivering a regional social impact strategy through local teams across the United Kingdom, for example, to encourage local recruitment or procurement practices.
- Working with schools in different regions across the United Kingdom to raise aspirations, ensuring a diverse future pipeline of employees.

Your Initiative

We are interested in how your organisation is addressing a social issue by using your influence and resources to benefit UK communities beyond London e.g. residents, charities, schools, community organisations, small businesses and social enterprises, etc.

If your programme is wide-ranging or nationwide, you should highlight the impact made in specific regions (you may choose to just highlight one or two regions) as well as the overall reach.

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. Please make it clear if you are making a joint application.

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.

Your application will be judged on the social impact achieved outside of London/Greater London, any impact achieved within London/Greater London will not be taken into account when assessing your application,

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 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 link to see videos of previous winners.

[Winners videos](#)

Completing the Application

Company Details - Section 1 (Not scored)

Guidance for this section can be found within the online application form itself. If you have any further questions, please get in touch with us at DragonAwards@cityoflondon.gov.uk.

Your Initiative - Section 2 (Scored)

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.

- 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.

Question 1. How and why was this initiative chosen?

This question will count for 25% of your total score. [400 words maximum]

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

- How the geography, scope and need were identified.
- Your aims and objectives for the initiative.
- How these link to your business objectives.
- How this initiative contributes to your overarching social impact strategy whilst responding to local need.

Question 2. What difference has this initiative made to your business, your beneficiaries 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 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.

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

Please feel free to use bullet points. Companies unable to complete this question 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 this initiative managed and delivered?

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

Judges will be looking for evidence of a well-managed initiative, taking into account the challenges of deploying programmes at a regional level that respond to local need, complement the overarching strategy and engage all employees. Please consider the following when answering this question:

- Who is involved in the delivery of the initiative? i.e. charity champions, regionally-based employees, central functions.
- Where and how is the programme administered?
- How are you engaging your employees in this initiative?
- How are you communicating the importance and relevance of your organisation's role in this region?

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 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, including to other regions.
- If the initiative will be used to inform future decision making.