

Background and FAQs

The Queen's Awards for Enterprise: Business Awards

2012





Background

The Queen's Awards for Enterprise are highly prestigious awards for outstanding achievement by UK businesses in the categories of Innovation, International Trade and Sustainable Development.

The Queen's Awards for Enterprise – the categories

The three categories that your business can enter are:

- International Trade
- Innovation
- Sustainable Development

There is also an individual Award category – The Queen's Award for Enterprise Promotion. Details of this Award are available at www.businesslink.gov.uk/queensawards

Each Queen's Award category has different application criteria that you must meet before you apply.

Applicants should be aware of the competitive nature of the scheme

Applications are assessed against the criteria for the Award in question as well as against other businesses in their sector.

General eligibility criteria for The Queen's Awards for Enterprise

To be able to apply for any of the corporate categories, your business unit must:

- be based in the UK (includes the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man)
- be an identifiable and cohesive organisation operating regularly as a unit of the UK economy
- have at least two full-time UK employees or part-time equivalents
- be able to demonstrate commercial success

You can apply for more than one category as long as you meet the criteria for each category.

How do I apply for The Queen's Awards for Enterprise?

Application forms must be completed online and submitted electronically by 2pm on Monday 31st October 2011. You are required to present the assessors with a clear picture of your achievements so that these can be examined against the Award criteria. Supporting information can be uploaded with your application form – please do not send any information by post. Forms are available at www.businesslink.gov.uk/queensawards

Applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. If you have not received an acknowledgement within 14 days, please telephone the helpline to check that we have received your application.



Who can apply for these Awards?

Any 'business unit' in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man – whether large, medium or small – producing goods or providing services can be considered for the Award if it carries out activities which meet the criteria.

What is meant by the term 'business unit'?

'Business unit' means any identifiable and cohesive organisation operating regularly as a unit of the UK economy and having a number of directors, partners and/or employees (at least the equivalent of two working full time). A unit, which is not a registered company, such as a division or other part of an organisation, may be eligible if it can show that it is self-contained, constituted under distinct management and marketing its own distinct products or services.

It must be possible to define the unit precisely enough so that, if successful, it can be cited separately for the Award.

For Innovation and Sustainable Development categories

Where the development of a new product or service in larger organisations involves only part of the overall activity of the firm or group, the application should not normally be made on behalf of the whole organisation. Firms should identify the particular unit or units (e.g. branch, division etc.) deserving the credit.

Can I complete the application form by hand?

All applications must be completed online and submitted electronically, but you can download and print a blank copy of the form for drafting purposes; the information you gather will then need to be entered onto the online application form. The electronic forms can be completed in parts and saved as you go, so you don't have to complete it all in one go.

Can I send hard copies of additional information?

Hard copies of supporting literature or physical materials of any kind (such as CDs, annual reports, marketing materials or photographs) **are not required**. You will be contacted by the Queen's Awards Office if further information is required.

Can non-profit making organisations and/or charities apply?

Non-profit making organisations, including charities, are eligible **only** if they maintain an accounting system which enables them to identify their business performance and degree of commercial success. For example, where operating surpluses are not treated as profit but are reinvested in the organisation's activities, the applicant business unit will need to identify the amount of such surpluses (or losses) over the period of the claimed outstanding or continuous performance.

Can my business apply if it already holds a Queen's Award?

Current Award holders may apply and many have been successful in doing so, but priority is usually given to applicants who have not gained an Award in the preceding two years.



Is it possible to make a joint application with a partner organisation?

Yes but only in the Innovation and Sustainable Development categories – if the business unit producing or marketing a product, providing a service, or using a technology is separate from the unit which developed it, either or both may be eligible according to the contribution made.

The assessors will consider joint applications if the contribution of each party is clearly shown, **but each party must submit a separate, cross-referenced application.**

Who is not eligible to apply?

The Awards are not given:

- a) to individuals
- b) for prototypes, since the essential factor recognised by the Award is the achievement of commercial success
- c) to those who have not been trading for a minimum of three years for the International Trade Award
- d) to those who have not been trading for a minimum of two years for the Sustainable Development and Innovation Awards

Is there any help available to applicants?

If you have any questions about your eligibility or need advice on completing the application there is a range of help available:

- The Queen's Awards helpline on **020 7215 6880**
- email: **info@queensawards.org.uk**
- join our LinkedIn discussion group at **www.linkedin.com** and search for 'Queen's Awards'
- or visit **www.businesslink.gov.uk/queensawards**

How do judges ensure the Awards are only granted to business units that maintain the highest standards of propriety?

All applicants are required to give their consent in part 4 of the application form to all necessary enquiries being made by The Queen's Awards Office. All applicants must be (if asked):

- willing to provide an independent qualified accountant's or auditor's certificate confirming their commercial performance figures or estimates
- compliant with the applicable accounting standards in preparing their application.
- provide a Declaration of Corporate Responsibility detailing assurances of responsible conduct in managing the impact on society and the environment, in the selection and control of suppliers, management of the production process and of human resources, and customer service.

A request for this additional information does not mean that an applicant will necessarily gain an Award.

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What information are the assessors looking for?

The assessors will be looking for a clear picture of your achievements so that these can be examined against the Award criteria as set out in the eligibility and guidance notes.

What should I do if there are changes to the information I have provided?

You must notify The Queen's Awards Office promptly of any changes in the information provided, including changes in the name, ownership or structure of the organisation which occur, or are expected to occur, before 21st April 2012.

What is the process for assessing the Awards?

Following a technical assessment of your application you may be asked to provide an independent qualified accountant's or auditor's certificate confirming your commercial performance figures or estimates, and that you have complied with the applicable accounting standards in preparing the application. You will also be required to complete a Declaration of Corporate Responsibility. This request is usually made in mid-December but does not mean that an applicant will necessarily gain an Award. The Queen's Awards Office will also undertake health check enquiries as stated in Part 4 of the application form. This additional information will be used to inform the next stage of the assessment process.

The Queen's Awards Office will notify you in writing of the result of your application shortly before the Awards are announced on 21st April 2012. If your application is unsuccessful you will be informed of the reasons why.

If you have any queries, need further advice on any of the above points please contact us at info@queensawards.org.uk or telephone **020 7215 6880**.

Key dates:

Step 1: 31st October 2011.

Deadline for applications.

Step 2: October-November 2011.

Technical Assessment of all applications.

Step 3: mid-December 2011.

Companies that have passed the technical assessment will be asked to provide an Auditor's Certificate and a Declaration of Corporate Responsibility. The Queen's Awards Office undertakes healthchecks.

Step 4: mid-January 2012.

All information gathered during steps two and three is assessed and a shortlist drawn up for consideration by the Judging Panels.

Step 5: January-February 2012.

Judging Panels for each category meet to consider shortlisted applications and make recommendations to the Prime Minister's Advisory Committee.

Step 6: March 2012.

Prime Minister's Advisory Committee considers recommendations of Judging Panels and makes recommendations to HM The Queen.

Step 7: April 2012.

Winners announced and unsuccessful applicants receive feedback on their applications.

The next year's Awards are launched.