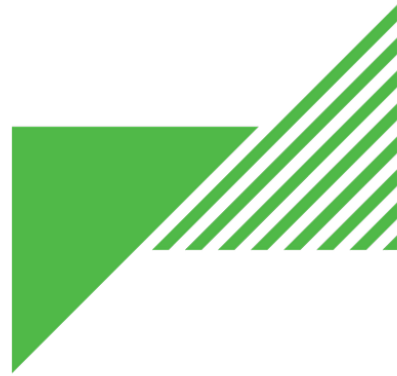


**VIBES
AWARDS**
2016



VISION IN BUSINESS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT OF SCOTLAND



CIRCULAR ECONOMY AWARD

GUIDANCE NOTES

2016



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1. The Competition

The *VIBES (Vision in Business for the Environment of Scotland) Awards* aim to raise awareness of environmental and sustainable development issues within businesses in Scotland.

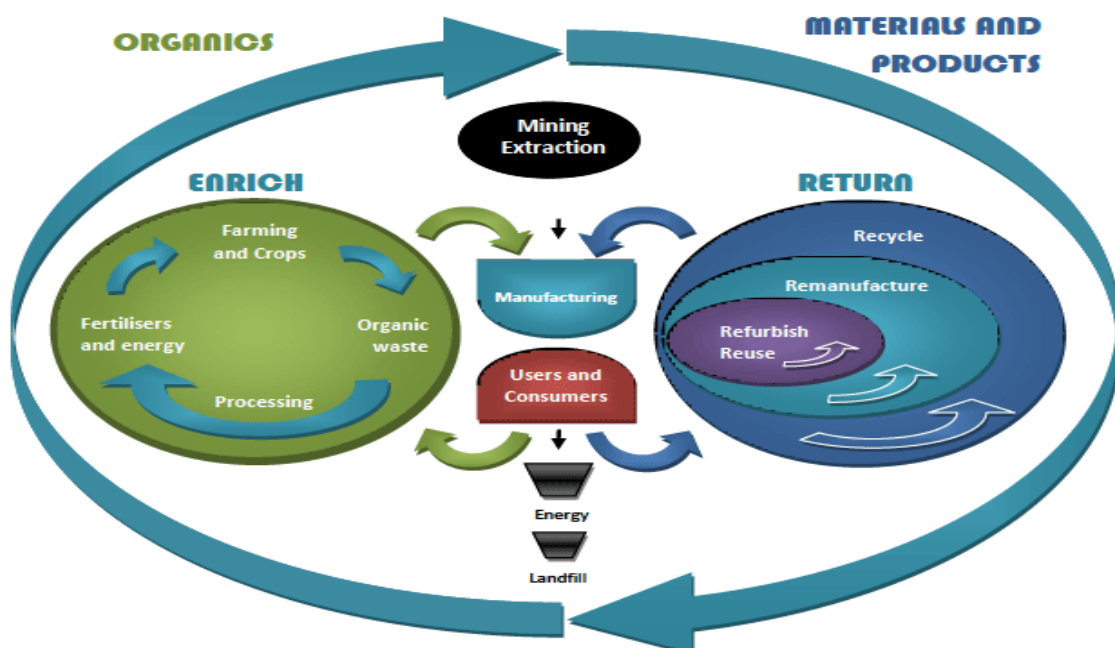
The competition emphasises that best environmental practice is not only good for business, the economy and competitiveness, but that it also benefits the surroundings in which we work, live and relax. VIBES rewards those who have addressed sustainable development issues in the work place and encourages others to follow their examples.

The **Circular Economy Award** recognises businesses that can demonstrate a circular approach to material use and business function.

This category is aimed at businesses that can demonstrate how their product or services address the principles of the Circular Economy, which should include one or more of the following elements:

- Circular product design and innovation
- Product re-use, repair and remanufacturing
- Innovative business models
- Materials substitution
- Effective supply chain and cross-sectoral collaboration
- Re-use of waste, heat and energy.

A Circular Economy approach ensures that materials are retained within productive use, in a high value state, for as long as possible. It focuses on reshaping business and economic systems so that waste is ‘designed out’ of how we live. This approach is illustrated below:





These awards act as a participating feeder scheme for the **European Business Awards for the Environment**. All winners have the option of going forward to be assessed as potential UK entries to these awards. Please indicate your interest in doing so in the application form.

2016 is Scotland's Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design. Therefore this year the **Innovation Award** was introduced to recognise businesses that have developed, innovative products, practices or services that bring environmental and business benefits. This category highlights the ability of businesses, partnerships, collaborations or individuals to promote sustainable consumption, reduce environmental impacts and create new business opportunities.

If you would like to be considered for this award category please see Innovation Award guidance notes and fill in section 4 on your Circular Economy Award application form.

Another new award this year - the **Green Team Award** rewards teams that have recognised the importance of working as a team to deliver environmental improvements. A green team can be within an organisation or between organisations.

If you would like to be considered for this award category, please see Green Team guidance notes and fill in section 5 on your Circular Economy Award Application form.



2. Judging Criteria

The Circular Economy Award recognises businesses that can demonstrate a circular approach to material use and business function.

A Circular Economy approach ensures that materials are retained within productive use, in a high value state, for as long as possible. It focuses on reshaping business and economic systems so that waste is ‘designed out’ of how we live.

The main body of the application form is divided into an executive summary and six criteria. These six criteria should expand on the information provided in the executive summary.

The criteria are presented below:



You are encouraged to complete all criteria, if possible, but it may be that some criteria are not relevant to your entry. Please be concise and limit the information provided in each criterion to a maximum of **250 words** (unless otherwise instructed by the application form).



Use the following guidance notes to help complete your application form.

For further advice and support with your application, please email vibes@sepa.org.uk.

2.1. Executive Summary

An executive summary is required. This summary represents your chance to grab the judge's attention and stand out – make sure it is a clear, strong message that conveys what you have done and engages the reader. Make it clear why you think you should win this award – what is unique to you?

This summary is looking for:

- Why you are applying for this award
- An outline of what you have achieved
- Innovations, originality and inspiration for change
- How do you think your approach exemplifies a Circular Economy approach
- This could also include your experiences with implementation of the product/service, the barriers, benefits and lessons learnt.

Please provide information on any novel approaches or practices that your business has taken to promote sustainable business practices to your staff and/or customers/suppliers. For example, you may be able to demonstrate how your business goes above and beyond standard practice.

Information should also be included on one or more of the following:

- How your efforts will assist Scotland in becoming more resource efficient
- How your practice helps to address the aims of the Circular Economy and Scotland's transition to a low carbon economy
- How your approach encourages the use of alternative methods to reduce reliance on raw materials
- How you monitor and respond to environmental impacts

This summary is limited to **500 words**.



2.2. Commitment



Senior management must be clearly committed to the development and marketing of the product or service. The importance in the context of the organisations overall strategy must be clear.

This section will be evaluated on the following:

- Evidence of the organisation's broader commitment to sustainable development, e.g. an established company environmental policy, details of an environmental management system (EMS). The Environmental management system could be any of the following; sector scheme e.g. GTBS, Green ticks; ISO14001, BS8555; company specific scheme.
- A demonstration that the commitment exists within your organisation to reducing environmental impacts through a Circular Economy approach
- Evidence of the importance of the principles of Circular Economy within your organisation's overall operations
- A demonstration of a wider commitment to the Circular Economy throughout your supply chain.
- A demonstration of future plans for continuous improvement in both the product/service and market penetration.



2.3. Innovation



Innovation in the product or service must bring improvements in environmental performance over comparable alternatives and promote more eco-efficient design and production.

This section will be evaluated on the following:

- A summary of the circumstances leading to the development/implementation of the product/service/business model and how these approaches meet the aims of the Circular Economy.
- Details of the specific innovative elements that distinguish your efforts from what was being undertaken previously or other products/services already on the market
- Evidence that your products/services perform at least as well as comparable alternatives and meet relevant safety standards

This section is looking for evidence of how the business has been innovative in implementing/developing the product/service/business model through a Circular Economy approach to ensure the maximum value of the product is maintained.

The innovation does not have to be a large investment in an expensive technology. It could just be a novel approach to, for example: product design; production processes in order to re-use waste, heat, energy, water; product re-use, repair and remanufacture; innovative business models to promote lease or hire over ownership of products; effective supply chain and cross-sectoral collaboration to reduce waste and/or use of raw materials.



2.4. Environmental Benefit



Clear and quantifiable analysis must demonstrate the reduced environmental impacts over the complete life-cycle of the service or product (for example through life cycle assessment).

This section will be evaluated on the following:

- Details of targets and/or KPIs in relation to environmental monitoring/improvements and who has responsibility for these.
- Quantitative evidence of how you are achieving environmental improvements.
- Information on how monitoring data is used to inform and improve your products/services
- Evidence of positive impacts you may have had on local biodiversity
- A demonstration of environmental benefits over the lifecycle of your product/service in the following areas:
 - o Energy, material and water inputs
 - o Waste generation
 - o Emissions to air, water and land

The lifecycle of the product includes how value is added and how this is kept circulating within the economy.

How you measure environmental improvements could include the following:

- Evidence of reductions in consumption of resources, i.e. materials, packaging, water, energy
- Steps towards more sustainable resource use, e.g. renewable electricity or re-use of materials including waste, heat and energy
- Evidence of design changes to encourage and enhance re-use/recycling of your product
- Evidence of a shift from an ownership model to a lease model
- Efforts to increase awareness of the impacts of your products/services on the wider environment

Applicants will receive a higher score if they can provide quantitative evidence of their reduced impact(s). Where possible, associated carbon savings should be included to indicate your contribution towards Scotland's Climate Change targets (see below).

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Environment/climatechange/meetingemissionstargets>

Please provide environmental data for 3 years, if possible, and be sure to include the correct units.



2.5. Social Benefit



The service/product should meet the needs of consumers, staff, and communities and bring wider social benefits.

This section will be evaluated on the following;

- An outline of the consumer needs met by the product/service
- Evidence of wider social benefits that can be expected to arise from the product/service,
- Information on how benefits – and scope for future improvements – are communicated within the company and externally should also be included

Examples of social benefits may include: creation of local employment opportunities; securing staff's long-term employment; improvements in working conditions or quality of life; improved working, leisure or health related benefits or conditions; positive impacts on the local community or on a global level; and financial benefits of any cost savings that have been redirected to benefit staff or end users.

2.6. Economic Benefit



Using quantitative data, demonstrate that the product/service/business model is, or will be, economically viable.

This section will be evaluated on the following:

- Quantitative data that demonstrates the product/service's economic viability
- A description/quantification of any wider economic benefits that have resulted from the service/product/business model.
- Evidence that the product will have an economic benefit to users, including its payback period
- If the product/service has yet to reach market, provide strong evidence that it will be viable when it does so.
- How maximum value of the product is maintained.

Details in this section might include: sales performance data or credible projected sales



with an estimate of the potential market size; and evidence of long and short term economic benefits for the company, staff and/or end users.

You might also provide evidence that your environmental commitment has opened up new markets, helped to win contracts, helped to keep customers/develop customer relations, or helped avoid any negative financial implications, such as legislative issues or unnecessary investment in treatment works by reducing effluent etc.

Please ensure that economic benefit data provided relates specifically to the environmental benefit data provided in the section above.

Please provide data for three years, if possible.

2.7. Best Practice



There must be clear potential for good practice and innovation to be replicated elsewhere.

Please provide details of your efforts to share best practice with suppliers, consumers and/or other producers.

This section will be evaluated on the following:

- Evidence that the organisation has actively sought to replicate or promote its achievements elsewhere, for example through seminars, social media, business network groups and case studies, or as a minimum has considered the potential for replication within the business itself.

There must be clear potential for wider adoption of your Circular Economy approach and a willingness to promote this knowledge and expertise with other organisations within and outwith Scotland as appropriate.



3. Next Steps

All the forms we receive will be assessed, and those which show a high level of commitment and have reached the appropriate standard will be added to the list of finalists.

If you are placed on the list of finalists you will then receive a judge's site visit. This gives you the opportunity to provide more details of your achievements and allows the judges to more accurately assess your application

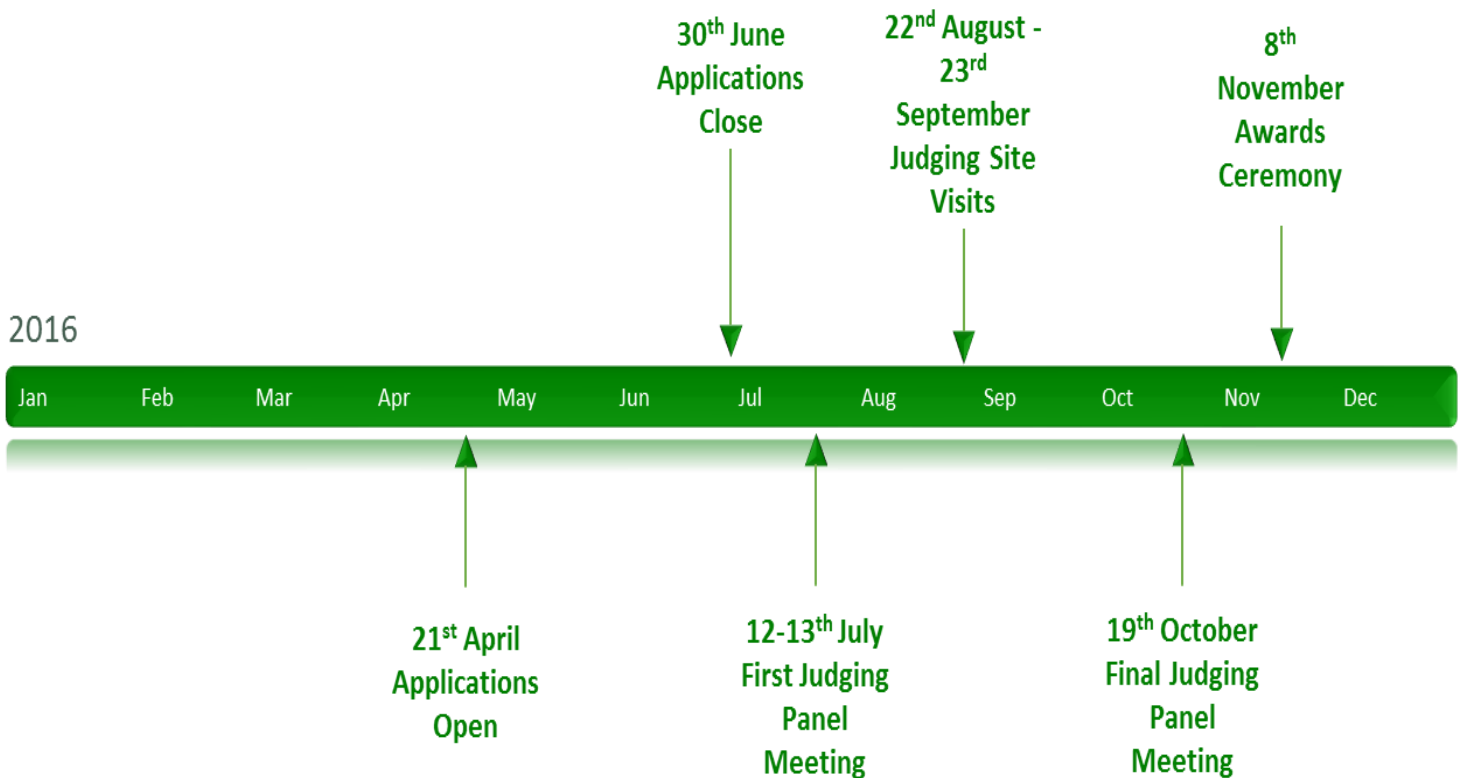
The VIBES Awards is all about recognising and promoting good practice and it is therefore incumbent on the organisers to ensure all finalists are compliant with any relevant environmental regulations. This will be done by making contact with local SEPA offices to assess the status of applicants.

The judges' site visits will take place during August or September. The visit allows the judges to meet the employees at the site/premises responsible for improving environmental performance and sustainable development. The visit should be used to support and expand on your application and should ordinarily take no longer than 3 hours.

Finalists will be chosen from each size category and a final judging panel comprising Bob Downes (SEPA Chairman), Lady Susan Rice (Chair of Scottish Water) and Lorne Crerar (Chair of Highlands and Islands Enterprise) will then select the winner for each of the size categories. These will be announced at the awards ceremony in November 2016.



4. Key Dates



5. Further Information

We hope that these guidance notes are of some help in the completion of your application form.

Please note that by entering VIBES you agree to share the information you provide with the partner organisations. The partner organisations are:

- Energy Saving Trust
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Scottish Enterprise
- Scottish Water
- Scottish Government
- Zero Waste Scotland
- 2020 Climate Group



The Awards are supported by:

- CBI Scotland
- Institute of Directors
- Bright Green Business
- FSB
- Quality Scotland

We may ask the partner organisations for additional information. This information will only be used to help assess your suitability as a VIBES winner.

If you're successful with your entry we will prepare a case study to highlight the areas of your business that particularly impressed the judges. Once you have approved the content of the case study it will be used to promote good practice more widely.

Further advice, support and assistance with the application form are available from the VIBES Awards Co-ordinator vibes@sepa.org.uk

You can get support and assistance from a number of the partner organisations to further improve the environmental performance and sustainable development of your business.

Sources of help will be highlighted in the feedback on your entry. You can also find out how each of the partners might be able to help you now by contacting the VIBES Co-ordinator or looking at the competition website (www.vibes.org.uk).

To submit your completed application save this word document using your company as the file name (if saving as PDF please also provide a word version of the application form). Then electronically submit this to us at the email address below.

Completed forms must be submitted no later than **1700 hours on Thursday 30th June 2016.**

Contact us:

Help Desk: 0300 0996699

Address :- Scottish Environment Protection Agency

VIBES Awards

Burnbrae

Mossilee Road

Galashiels

TD1 1NF

e-mail: Vibes@sepa.org.uk

Website: www.vibes.org.uk

Good luck from the whole team!