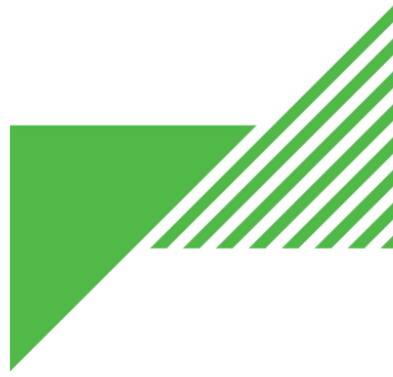


**VIBES  
AWARDS**  
2016



VISION IN BUSINESS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT OF SCOTLAND



**MANAGEMENT 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 **Management Award** recognises businesses with the strategic vision and management systems that enable them to continuously improve their contribution to Scotland's sustainable development.

A business with a successful application will be able to demonstrate management systems that:

- Have improved environmental performance through resource efficiency, staff and supply chain engagement etc.
- Have achieved associated economic and social benefits, such as providing local employment opportunities, engagement with local schools, colleges, charities etc.

The environmental, economic, social and ethical aspects of sustainability must be clearly integrated into the organisation's overall mission and all of its policies. There must be evidence of targets and indicators for monitoring and reporting performance. The organisation must also have mechanisms in place for addressing issues of wider corporate social responsibility, such as community involvement, employee rights and supply chain impacts.

The business's management systems do not need to be formally certified by an accredited scheme; a system designed specifically for the organisation or for a sector, e.g. the Green Tourism Scheme, can be just as effective, particularly for smaller organisations.

A key feature of the management system should be a willingness to include all stakeholders in the process. Good communications and discussions should generate feedback that can be used, where practical, to help shape decisions. The organisation must show that it is leading the field and setting an example that others will be inspired to follow.

There are two awards:

- Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME): <250 employees
- Large: > 250 employees.



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. Please see Innovation Award guidance notes and fill in section 4 on your Management Award application form if you would like to enter.

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 Management Award Application form.



## 2. Judging Criteria

The Management Award is for an exceptional business with the strategic vision and management systems that enable it to continuously improve its contribution to sustainable development – benefiting both the environment and the economic growth of the company.

The main body of the application form is divided into an executive summary and five criteria. These five 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](mailto:vibes@sepa.org.uk).

## **2.1. Executive Summary**

An executive summary is required. This summary represents your chance to grab the judges' 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 done.
- What you have achieved.
- Innovations, originality and inspiration for change.

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, e.g. sustainable procurement policies.

Your practice could be innovative within your sector or your site may have developed a practice that is innovative for the parent company and has the potential to be rolled out across all sites within the group. Judges are looking for you to demonstrate that you have thought 'outside the box.' This summary is limited to **500 words**.



## 2.2. Commitment



*Your application must demonstrate your organisation's commitment to environmental sustainability and reducing environmental impacts.*

This section will be evaluated on the following:

- Evidence of strategic principles of the organisation through corporate mission statements, policies, codes of conduct etc. demonstrating the organisation's commitment to achieving excellence in environmental (and social/ethical) performance.
- Evidence of how this commitment is supported by senior management and staff throughout the organisation.
- Provide details to demonstrate that your environmental policy has been incorporated into your staff development, procurement procedures, overall company policy and/or marketing strategy.
- Provide details of your Environmental management system – this could be any of the following; sector scheme e.g. GTBS, Green ticks; ISO14001, BS8555; company specific scheme.
- Demonstration of future plans for continuous improvement.



## 2.3. Integration



*The identification of clear objectives and targets for environmental and social improvement alongside financial performance targets demonstrates the integration of sustainability within the overall business.*

This section will be evaluated on the following:

- Identification of your targets and/or KPIs in relation to environmental monitoring/improvement, include information on who has overall responsibility for the targets and how you measure progress towards meeting them.
- Information to demonstrate how improvements are communicated within the company and externally.
- Explain how this information is used to inform and improve business decisions.
- Explain how this relates back to the strategic principles of the organisation

## 2.4. Achievements in Sustainable Development



*There must be a demonstration that continuous performance improvement results in environmental, economic and social benefit against the organisation's stated objectives, as demonstrated by regular monitoring and reporting.*

This Section covers Environmental, Economic and Social benefit will be evaluated on the following:

- Detailed evidence to demonstrate continuous improvement in the organisations performance against key environmental targets to minimise environmental impacts.
- Details of the economic benefit resulting from this continuous improvement.
- Details of the social benefits achieved by your company.





## ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT

Details of how you have demonstrated continuous improvement and minimised your environmental impacts could include;

- through reduced consumption of resources (materials, packaging, water, energy)
- moving towards more sustainable resource use (renewable electricity, re-use of materials)
- considering the impacts of your products / services on the wider environment (end of life, recycling)
- reductions in the environmental impacts from transporting resources on and off site and from employees commuting to and from work; perhaps you have introduced cleaner, more efficient vehicles, car sharing, or encourage the use of public transport, cycling and walking.
- Improving biodiversity.

You should try to consider how your business impacts on the environment both locally and globally (air, water, noise, etc.), and how you have managed to reduce these impacts. This could include contributing to local biodiversity, enhancing the exterior of premises to attract wildlife, or becoming involved with or instigating international projects to improve biodiversity.

Please provide environmental data over a 3 year period if possible, and be sure to include the correct units where applicable. Data calculated per unit of output – e.g. hotel bed nights, covers served or metres of cable produced – would be most valuable.

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>

## ECONOMIC BENEFIT

Details of the economic benefits you have realised from your activities in relation to the environment could include cost savings you have realised through;

- reduced raw materials use,
- improved waste management practices,
- installing energy and water efficiency technologies,
- reduced transport fuel,
- reduced operating costs etc.

If you have you generated additional income streams through environmental/sustainable activities, e.g. selling waste products, winning contracts through environmental credentials, this should also be included.

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



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## SOCIAL BENEFIT

Details on social benefit may include:

- local employment opportunities created;
  - long-term employment of staff secured;
  - improvement of working conditions or quality of life;
  - evidence of improved working, leisure or health related conditions;
  - team building projects, e.g. tree planting, gardening etc.;
  - positive impacts, such as charitable contributions to the local community or to global causes;
  - or quantifiable benefits to the supply chain.
- 

## 2.5. Employee Involvement



*Employees must be closely involved in all aspects of environmental management, understand the company ethos and how this applies to them.*

This section will be evaluated on the following:

- Evidence that employees at all levels are involved in environmental management
  - A summary of efforts to raise employees' awareness of your environmental policies, e.g. through green teams, staff training, and employee suggestion schemes
  - Evidence that channels of communication between all levels of personnel are open and frequently used
  - Examples of any ongoing programmes to improve employees' working conditions, including management and career development and how these take into account the sustainable objectives of the organisation
-



## 2.6. Accountability, External Communication and Sharing Best Practice

Accountability ,  
External  
Communications  
& Best Practice

*There must be regular discussions with stakeholders (employees, suppliers, customers, local community, non-governmental organisations, etc.) with feedback of the results into management decision-making.*

*There must be clear potential for good practice to be shared within your organisation and with other organisations (e.g. through involvement in business networks, dissemination at conferences, promotion through social media).*

This section will be evaluated on the following:

- Details of how you promote your environmental commitments and targets to stakeholders and how you deal with specific issues.
- Mechanisms in place for ensuring stakeholders' views are taken into account,
- Details of efforts to influence others, e.g. stakeholders, customers, suppliers to adopt sustainable practices.
- Evidence of steps that have been taken to share good management practice for sustainable development throughout your organisation and with other organisations



### 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 judges' site visit. This gives you the opportunity to provide more details of your achievements and allows the judges to more accurately assess your application.

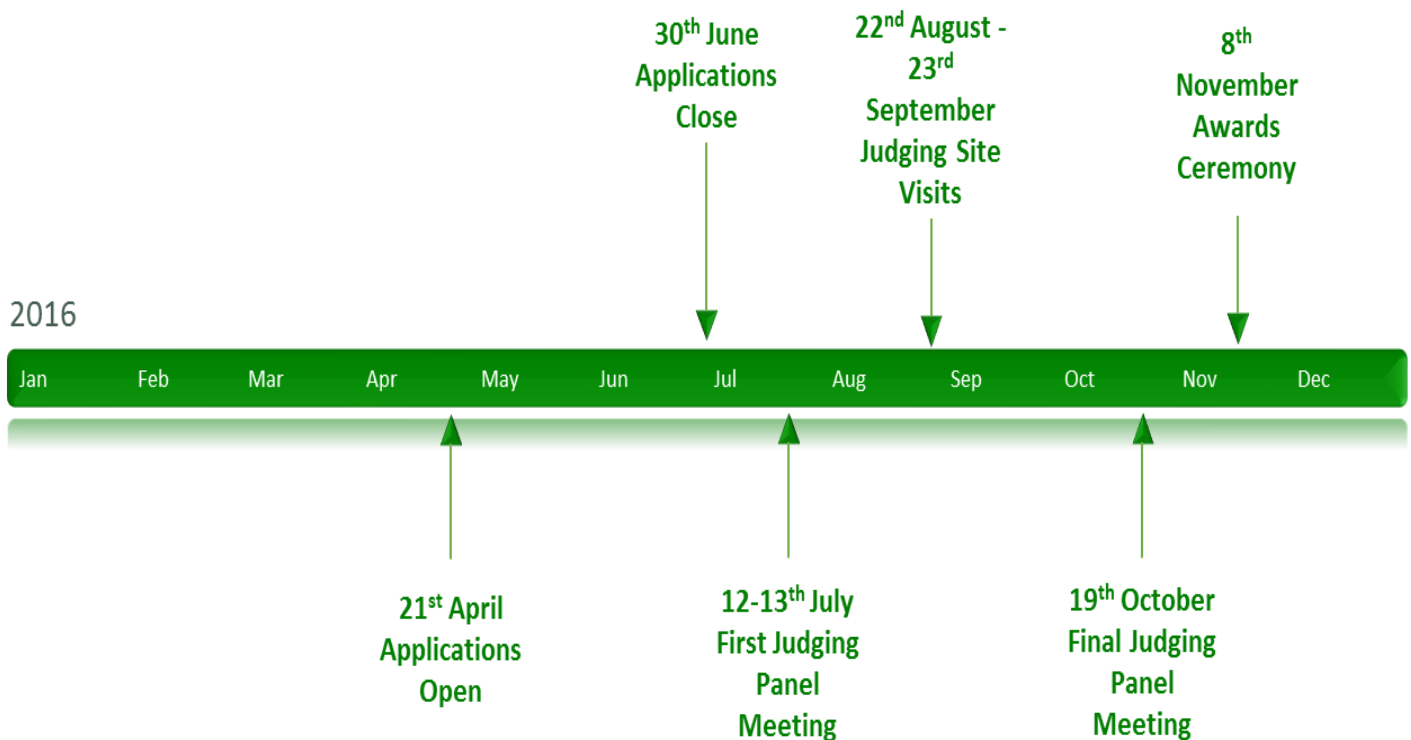
The VIBES Awards is all about recognising and promoting good practice and it is therefore incumbent on the organisers to ensure all finalists are compliant with any relevant environmental regulations. This will be done by making contact with local SEPA offices to assess the status of applicants.

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](mailto: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](http://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 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016.**

**Contact us:**

Help Desk: 0300 0996699

Address :- Scottish Environment Protection Agency

VIBES Awards

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Good luck from the whole team!