



VIBES PRODUCT/SERVICE AWARD APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES

The Competition

- The VIBES (Vision in Business for the Environment of Scotland) Awards aim to raise awareness of environmental and sustainable development¹ issues within businesses in Scotland.
- The competition plans to emphasise that more effective environmental management is not only good for business, the economy and competitiveness but also benefits the surroundings in which we work, live and relax. It will reward not only those who have addressed sustainable development issues in the work place, but also hope to encourage others to follow their example.

Who Can Apply

The VIBES Awards are open to **ANY**² Scottish based business that contributes to the sustainable development of Scotland in some way.

- All businesses have some impact on the environment, either directly or indirectly, that can be reduced whilst also improving their performance.
- If you have taken an effective approach to environmental improvement and sustainable development, either across the whole of your business or by focussing on only one of your activities, you could be eligible for a VIBES Award.
- Applicants are placed in categories according to size of parent company.

How to Apply

- Applications can be made using the application form attached or on-line via the competition website, www.vibes.org.uk, where further copies of the form can be obtained. Postal applications should be sent to the address at the back of the form. **We encourage entries to be made via the website whenever possible.**
- We require a site-based application in Scotland, which will be visited by the judges. So if you are a business with multiple sites then, each application form must be site specific (unless

¹ "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (*Brundtland Report definition*) i.e. takes consideration of social, economic and environmental issues.

² Current partners and sponsors of the VIBES Awards are not eligible to enter.



applying to the Product/Service or Process Categories). Also please note that it is the size of your business or group as a whole that determines the size category that you are included in.

- Each application should focus on actions and achievements **over the past three years** at the site being entered.
- Businesses with more than one site are welcome to make more than one site based application.

The Application Form

- The application form is designed to help assess your application according to six criteria.
- The application form can be submitted on-line, alternatively, it should be typed or completed in clear handwriting.
- Please be concise and limit the information provided in each criteria to a **maximum** of 100 words. **Use bullet points where possible.** If short-listed you will have the opportunity to expand on actions and achievements during the judges' site visit.
- Provide quantitative data where appropriate. For instance, if you have reduced your energy consumption or your resource use then you **must quantify the amount saved.** You may be asked to provide data to support these figures during the judges' site visit.

Part 1 – Company Details

Part 1(a).

- This section asks for information about the site or premises you are putting forward for the awards.
N.B. The address you provide should be for the site or premises you would like the judges to visit. If the site contact is not based at this location please provide an alternative correspondence address.
- The overall size of the business (parent company) will determine the size category in which you are placed. There are three size categories:

Size categories:

- Businesses with more than 250 employees
- Businesses with between 50 and 250 employees
- Businesses with less than 50 employees



A short-list of companies reaching the appropriate standard will be selected for each size category.

- We also ask for a description of the main business activities of your company. This should state your main business activity, the services or products you provide and your principal markets.
- Please ensure you provide all information marked with *.

Part 1(b)

- These awards act as a participating feeder scheme for the European 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.

Part 2 – Judging Criteria

- The main body of the application form is divided into ten criteria.
- To help you provide the information required for each criteria you may wish to consider the following questions.
- Applicants are encouraged to complete all criteria if possible but it is acknowledged that some criteria may not be relevant to your entry.

Criteria

Commitment

- The Senior management must be clearly committed to the development and marketing of the product, and must give an indication of its importance with regard to the organisation's overall strategy.

Environmental Benefit

Clear and quantified analysis must demonstrate increased resource efficiency and reduced environmental impacts over the complete life-cycle of the product or service (e.g. through life cycle assessment).

PLEASE PROVIDE QUANTITATIVE DATA WHEREVER POSSIBLE

Economic Benefit

- Proof must be given that the new product or service is at least economically viable (e.g. through sales performance data or credible sales projections).



Social Benefit

- The product or service must meet the needs of consumers and bring wider social benefits (e.g. providing decent working conditions; safeguarding consumer health; improving quality of life).

Innovation

- Substantial innovation in the product or service must bring improvements in environmental, economic and social performance over the comparable alternatives whilst at least maintaining functional performance. Entrants should take steps to ensure that their development is genuinely innovative. Searching on the internet search engines easily provides details of similar developments if they exist and have been reported. Judges are quite capable, and do carry out such searches when assessing entries.

Replication Activity

- There must be clear potential for wider adoption of the innovative aspects of the product or service, and willingness to share this knowledge and expertise with other organisations.

Once application forms have been assessed we will be making a short-list of finalists. Businesses meeting the required standard will be selected from each size category.

- Short-listed companies will be asked to host a visit by the competition judges during September or October. The visit allows the judges to meet the employees at the site / premises responsible for improving environmental performance and sustainable development and should be used to back up and expand on your application. The visit will take no longer than 3 hours.
- Finalists will be chosen from the short-list in size and category. A judging panel will then select a national winner for each business size and category, which will be announced at an awards ceremony in December 2008. Commendations may also be awarded to outstanding companies.

VIBES PROCESS	DATE
VIBES LAUNCH	March 12 th 2008
VIBES APPLICATION WORKSHOPS	May 2008
CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS	July 18 th 2008
JUDGING SHORTLIST PANEL MEET	July 2008
JUDGING SITE VISITS	September 22 nd to October 17 th 2008
JUDGING FINALIST PANEL MEET	October 2008
NATIONAL JUDGING PANEL MEET	November 2008
FINALISTS AND NATIONAL WINNERS AWARDED AT ANNUAL CEREMONY	December 2008



Further Information / Assistance

- We hope that these guidance notes are of some help in the completion of your application form. Remember that no single business has all the answers. Everybody has the potential to improve the performance of their business in some way.
- Please note that by entering VIBES you agree to share the information you provide with the partner organisations. Additional information from partner organisations may also be obtained. This information will only be used to help assess your suitability as a VIBES winner.
- Should you be chosen as a winning entry a case study will be prepared to highlight the key criteria that make your organisation an exemplar for environmental best practice. This case study will be used for dissemination purposes.
- Further advice, support and assistance with the application form are available from the VIBES Awards Co-ordinator (details below).
- If you are interested in improving the environmental performance and sustainable development of your organisation many of the partners involved in the VIBES Awards are available to provide support and assistance. To find out how each of the partners might be able to help you please contact the VIBES Co-ordinator or look at the competition web-site (www.vibes.org.uk).

Completed forms must be submitted no later than **1700 hours on Friday 18th July, 2008.**

Good Luck!

VIBES Awards, C/o Scottish Environment Protection Agency

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VIBES is a partnership between: Business Stream, CBI Scotland, Energy Saving Trust, Environmental Protection UK, Envirowise, Federation of Small Businesses Scotland, Forward Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Scottish Government.
VIBES Awards Ceremony is sponsored by: Chivas Brothers – Pernod Ricard.