



The Green Gown Awards 2009

Guidance notes for participants for stage one applications

The Green Gown Awards recognise positive actions to achieve sustainability in higher and further education, with particular emphasis on environmental improvement. The Awards were founded by the Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement (HEEPI) project which was funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and are now organised by the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC).

The Awards are run in collaboration and governed by a cross agency steering group with key sector bodies: Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement (HEEPI), The Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE), The British Universities Finance Directors Group (BUFDG), Association of Colleges (AOC), Guild HE, National Union of Students Services Ltd (NUS), Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and Universities UK (UUK).

This years Awards have been sponsored by a number of organisations: Carbon Trust, College & University Business Officers (CUBO), Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Salix Finance.

The achievements of the universities and colleges winning the Awards will be publicised through:

- Announcement of the winners and presentation of the Awards at the Green Gown gala banquet on Tuesday 23 June 2009 at Imperial College London
- A brochure summarising winning entries
- Coverage of the Awards in sector publications
- Publicity on the Green Gown Awards website and other partner websites.
- Winners may be asked to host a Masterclass in 2009 (it is envisaged there will be three) to disseminate their initiatives and projects to the wider education sector. All winners must be prepared to host an event.

Previous experience of the Awards scheme shows that the resulting benefits to institutional and personal reputations vastly outweighs the time involved in preparing applications.

Award Categories 2009

Three new categories have been included in the 2009 Awards schedule making a total of eleven. Some of the categories have been revised since 07-08 Awards.



1. Carbon Reduction – sponsored by



2. Colleges & Smaller Institutions – sponsored by



Leading learning and skills

3. Continuous Improvement – Specific Area – sponsored by



4. Continuous Improvement – Institutional Change – sponsored by



5. Courses – supported by



6. Green ICT – sponsored by



7. Research – sponsored by



8. Residences – sponsored by



9. Social Responsibility – supported by





10. Student Initiatives – supported by



national union of students

11. Sustainable Construction & Refurbishment



Criteria

Carbon Reduction – This category recognises initiatives which have achieved significant reductions in the carbon footprint of a university or college. Although carbon reductions in all areas will be taken into account, the category's 'centre of gravity' is with energy efficiency, and applications will be expected to show good progress in this area. (NB a stand alone energy efficiency innovation producing significant carbon benefits could therefore be eligible for this category). There is no presumption that institutions will have participated in the Carbon Trust's Carbon Management programme, although activities connected with this are certainly eligible. Applications are only likely to be successful if they provide considerable quantitative evidence on the nature of the improvements made, and demonstrate a causal relationship between activities undertaken and improvements achieved. Applications must also demonstrate real improvement, rather than precursor activities such as foot printing or setting of targets. Please note, if your project is a long standing initiative, for longer than 5 years, it may be more appropriate under the continuous improvement category.

Colleges – This category recognises the difficulties which FE and smaller HE institutions have, relative to larger universities, in taking action in many areas. It encompasses any environment-related initiatives which contribute to sustainable development. It is open to all institutions funded by the Learning and Skills Council and/or affiliated with Guild HE. (Note – other categories are also open to FE and HE Colleges and may be a better choice for specific initiatives, such as a green building).

Continuous Improvement Whole Institution - This category recognises sustained and successful activities to improve the performance of whole further and higher education institutions, campuses, faculties and buildings over a number of years. Project are only likely to be successful if they provide considerable quantitative evidence on the nature of the improvements made, and also demonstrate a causal relationship between activities undertaken and improvements achieved. Initiatives must have been running for at least five years.

Continuous Improvement Specific Area - This encompasses initiatives which have been sustained over a period of years, supported by long-term investment and/or which span a number of areas. One intention is to provide recognition for 'coalface' initiatives which may not be high profile, nor deliver great benefits in a single year, but which keep on creating benefits. Projects are only likely to be successful if they provide considerable quantitative evidence on the nature of the improvements made, and also demonstrate a causal relationship between activities undertaken and improvements achieved. Initiatives must have been running for at least five years.



Courses – This category recognises innovative actions with regard to sustainability in undergraduate, postgraduate and vocational courses in FE and HE institutions. Examples of possible application topics include the development of new courses focused on some or all sustainable development issues; adaptation of existing courses; use of practical sustainability-related projects or other practical activities within courses; and work-based learning initiatives.

Green ICT – This category recognises the growing environmental importance of ICT within the sector, and more generally. It encompasses actions within universities and colleges to minimise the energy consumption, carbon emissions, waste generation and other environmental impacts associated with ICT use. The development of hardware and/or software which creates environmental benefits is also included where universities and colleges have played a key role in its development.

Research – This category recognises research activity within universities and colleges which has had tangible effects on practice with regard to mitigation of environmental impacts and/or other areas which fall within the domain of social responsibility (e.g. community development; achieving social inclusion; assisting very disadvantaged people). The effects of the research can be in any country, but the main research itself must have been carried out in, or organised from, the UK. As this is a new category covering a wide range of activities, it will not be easy to judge. Hence, in the first year, the Awards will have a bias towards relatively targeted research where there is a clear cause and effect relationship between the research and outcomes, and where the latter can be clearly demonstrated, preferably by quantified evidence.

Residences – This category recognises initiatives to create environmental and social benefits in any residences (including those owned by private providers) which mainly house FE or HE students. The initiatives must be mainly focused on residences, but can be on a wide range of topics, including green design and refurbishment, energy and water efficiency, recycling, community involvement, improving relations with local neighbourhoods, and innovative fund raising for sustainable development. (Note – applications focusing on a new or refurbished residence may stand a better chance of success in this category than in sustainable construction).

Social Responsibility – This category recognises initiatives by FE or HE institutions which create significant benefits for local communities, disadvantaged groups, and society as a whole in either the UK or developing countries. As well as specific initiatives, this category includes institutions taking a leading and visionary role in multi-partner activities such as community development or urban regeneration. Although all applications will be considered on their merits, the judges will be looking for 'corporate social responsibility' type initiatives which have an element of proactive community and social concern, rather than 'business as usual' activities which create immediate financial benefit for the institution such as putting on new courses for particular groups. (Note – activities which have a substantial student element should be submitted to the Residences or Student Initiatives category).

Student Initiatives – This category recognises initiatives which have been developed and/or substantially influenced by students. Examples include awareness campaigns, procurement actions, and volunteering activities organised by unions, societies and similar organisations within FE and HE institutions, the general sustainability activities of students' unions, and specific initiatives or campaigns by national student bodies. Activities aimed at changing student awareness and behaviour by universities and colleges themselves are also eligible, provided that there is evidence of substantial student involvement.



Sustainable Construction – This category recognises new or refurbished buildings or campuses in further or higher education which have good energy and environmental performance. As such buildings sometimes fail to perform to their design specifications, evidence of actual performance in practice, and ideally of a post occupancy evaluation to identify problems and means of improving them, will be given special weight in judging. Applications featuring refurbished buildings are especially welcomed, and the difficulties of achieving similar levels of performance to new build will be taken into account in the judging process.

Initiatives which won or were commended in previous years will not generally be considered for this year's awards. They can, however, form part of an application to the Continuous Improvement category, provided that there is evidence of further improvement since the last Award. Other initiatives from the institutions concerned – or ones which were previously submitted but unsuccessful - can be submitted.

The closing date for Stage One applications is 12:00 noon on Friday 27 February 2009.

Stage One Application Form – Background Information

The Green Gown Awards is a two stage application process. The benefits of a two stage process are to make it easier for applicants; to enable a feedback process to achieve a more uniform quality in the applications seen by the full judging panel; and to allow recognition of a greater number of initiatives (through publication of a considerable number of short listed entries).

Stage one involves a short application form. A small panel of sector experts will assess these to produce a short list for each category. These short listed entries will then be invited to submit a fuller application for stage two and the deadline for submission is Friday 15 May 2009. These will then be assessed by a larger judging panel with experts from both inside and outside further and higher education at a special 'judgement day' in June. This panel will select winning, and highly commended, entries for each category from the short list. The Awards will be announced and presented at a high profile, gala banquet on Tuesday 23 June 2009 at Imperial College London.

Filling in stage one application form

The stage one application process will involve consideration of a large number of entries, many of which are likely to be on similar topics. Applications which stand out through their clear signalling of achievements and succinct descriptions of work done and benefits achieved, will have a greater chance of progressing to stage two. **Applications must not be longer than three pages**, those which are will not be accepted.

Please cover the following topics in your application:

- **General Information** - If the application is being made by an architectural practice, or other non-academic body, please obtain prior approval from the institution, and provide a contact there.
- **Summary** – Please include a short summary of the project/initiative. This should only be a few sentences in length. Please make it as 'catchy' and descriptive as possible.



- **The Initiative** – Describe, in under 300 words, the initiative, covering topics such as the activities undertaken; reasons for doing it; time-scale; costs (in cash and staff time); current status (on-going, completed etc); departments/organisations involved.
- **The Benefits** - Summarise, in bullet point format, and with as much quantification as possible, the main benefits achieved by the initiative. Indicate, where relevant, the reference case against which benefits are being compared, e.g. status quo.
- **Significance for the sector** – Please summarise, in bullet point form, why you feel that your application is of wider interest to the sector. Relevant points might include significant internal impacts on finance; student and/or staff recruitment and behaviour; external recognition; replicability of both outcomes and learning through the HE and/or FE sectors; an original attempt to tackle a problem.

No background material, appendices etc will be accepted and examined for stage one applications. Short listed entries will be invited to submit such material at stage two.

Judging Criteria

The judging will be based on a composite view of the application, taking account of the following criteria, and the specific nature of the Award category:

- The nature and size of both environmental and non-environmental benefits (relative to its context)
- The relationship between benefits and costs
- Broader significance to the sector (e.g. originality, innovation, pathfinder status; replicability)
- The quality and reliability of evidence supporting the claims being made (e.g. quantitative evidence of benefits and outcomes)
- Unusual features which make the application 'stand out from the crowd' (e.g. extraordinary commitment and impact of a member of staff, quirky responses to topics that are sometimes seen as boring).

Entry Details

To enter, please fill in the two page stage one application form and email it to greengown@eauc.org.uk by 12:00 noon on Friday 27 February 2009. Submission of the form means that entrants have read, and accept, the conditions of entry (see below). Please use a separate form for every specific initiative you wish to enter. Try also to make your entries succinct, using bullet points wherever possible, and with a typeface of at least 11pt.

Please contact the Green Gown Awards team via greengown@eauc.org.uk or Tel: 01242 714321 if you have not been advised of receipt of your application within a week of sending it, or by 12:00 noon on Friday 6 March 2009.



CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

- The projects entered can either be ongoing, or must have been completed since November 2006 and have been operational within a higher or further education establishment, or a work-based learning provider.
- Third party organisations, e.g. architects, may enter on behalf of an Institution, but an Institution employee must approve the application.
- Entries must be submitted using an official Awards entry form.
- The closing date for stage one entries is **12:00 noon on Friday 27 February 2009.**
- Selected entries will be placed on the Green Gown Awards website in order to disseminate best practice throughout the sector. Unless otherwise stated, it is assumed that applicants accept that their applications will be in the public domain.
- The Awards organisers reserve the right to a) refuse an entry if the rules have not been met, and b) audit winning applications to ensure that claims made are fully justified.
- The Awards organisers reserve the right to move an entry from one category to another if they feel the new category is more appropriate.
- The Awards organiser's decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into.