LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

NOMINEE RESOURCE

Preparing a Strong Awards Application

2027 Business Achievement Awards | Guidance for nominated organizations

Welcome

Congratulations on being nominated for a 2027 London Chamber of Commerce Business Achievement Award. A nomination is an opportunity to tell the story of what your organization has accomplished. To be considered, you must complete the application for the appropriate category and satisfy its eligibility requirements. A nomination is not, by itself, finalist selection.

This guide explains how to prepare a clear, evidence-based submission. Your category-specific Charter and Application is the authoritative source for the actual eligibility rules, five questions, available marks and illustrative Key Results. This guide is a companion, not a substitute.

Start with the essentials

What to know	What it means for your application
Application length	Five questions, maximum 600 words per answer. Respond directly to each question and use the available space selectively.
Assessment	Each category is marked out of 100. The maximum marks for each criterion are printed in your category document.
EDIRR	Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Race Relations accounts for 20 of the 100 marks in every category. Include at least two meaningful indicators or examples of progress.
Number of finalists	Four finalists in Small, Medium and Large Business of the Year; two in each specialist category.
Eligibility	You may apply for one Business of the Year category and one specialist category, but can be selected as a finalist in only one.
No membership requirement	Chamber membership is not needed and does not influence scoring or selection.

1. Choose the right award category

Look first at the eligibility section and purpose of each Category Charter. If your business could fit more than one category, choose the award that best reflects your strongest demonstrated achievements and the evidence you can provide. The Chamber may recommend a category transfer, with your consent.

Award	What the application seeks
Small Business of the Year	A business ordinarily with 1–10 full-time equivalent employees and at least three years of commercial operation; sustained performance, leadership, contribution and adaptability.
Medium Business of the Year	Ordinarily 11–49 full-time equivalent employees and at least five years of commercial operation; organizational performance and contribution at medium scale.
Large Business of the Year	Ordinarily 50 or more full-time equivalent employees and at least five years of commercial operation; sustained business, workforce and civic achievements.
Agriculture and Food	Results in agriculture, food and beverage production, processing, agri-technology or their value chains, including stewardship and community contribution.

Award	What the application seeks
Climate Action Leadership	Environmental improvements supported by credible measures, plus evidence of strategy and integration. B Corp and UN SDG alignment can support, but cannot replace, demonstrated results.
Excellence in People and Culture	Workplace culture, leadership, development and well-being, with identifiable benefits for the London workforce.
Innovation	An innovation already implemented in real-world use, with measurable results and a credible commercial or operating pathway; early-stage or pre-revenue applicants can qualify.
Manufacturer	Demonstrated manufacturing performance, productivity, people, quality and innovation. Practical improvement counts; large capital expenditure is not required.
Nonprofit	Mission impact, stewardship, people and volunteers, collaboration and resilience. Qualitative and quantitative evidence are both welcome.

The employee bands are guidelines, not the only factors. The Chamber may also consider revenue, operating complexity, locations or network scale when classifying a business. Other categories have their own operating-history and eligibility requirements; read them before investing time in an application.

2. Turn achievements into clear evidence

For each question, explain what you were trying to achieve, what you did, what changed and why that result is meaningful. Judges need to understand the substance of the achievement and the evidence supporting it.

A practical way to structure each answer

Part	What to include
Achievement	Name the result or improvement in one plain sentence.
Action	Explain the decisions, practices or investments that produced it.
Evidence	Provide a number, comparison, independent observation, case example or another credible indication of change.
Significance	Explain why the result matters to customers, employees, communities or organizational performance.

Illustrative example: “We reduced energy use per unit produced by 18% between 2024 and 2026, based on utility bills and production records, while maintaining output quality. The change lowered operating costs and emissions.” The figures here are hypothetical; use only your organisation’s verified results.

3. Use the Key Results section intelligently

The Key Results indicators in each Charter are examples to help you choose suitable evidence. They are generally not a checklist requiring every field to be completed. Select measures that best explain your achievements. A useful comparison may be with an earlier year, a target, a baseline, a customer or community outcome, or another relevant standard.

Different awards need different kinds of proof. Innovation normally requires at least two measured outcomes linked to real-world implementation. Climate Action Leadership normally calls for at least three quantitative environmental measures where practicable. Nonprofit applicants may place greater weight on credible impact stories, community feedback and other qualitative evidence. Read the category-specific instructions carefully.

If exact commercial figures are sensitive, check your category’s guidance on percentages, ranges or appropriately contextualised measures. Do not disclose confidential information unnecessarily. If independent verification is requested later, ask the Chamber how it should be provided securely.

4. Give EDIRR a complete answer

Every category includes 20 marks for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Race Relations (EDIRR), including accessibility. Describe barriers you have identified, actions taken, who is responsible and what progress has resulted. Provide at least two indicators or examples that make sense for your organisation. These may be numerical, documented practice changes, employee or community feedback, or well-supported impact stories.

A small business may describe changed hiring practices, improved accessibility or stronger relationships with diverse suppliers and communities. A nonprofit may use credible accounts of improved access or participation. Avoid relying solely on a policy statement or a list of intentions.

If no relevant EDIRR evidence is provided, the organisation is not automatically disqualified: it receives zero marks for that 20-mark criterion. Providing a meaningful answer is therefore important to a complete application.

5. Check eligibility before submitting

Previous competitive award winners cannot apply for the same award during the next five complete award cycles, or for a different competitive award during the next three complete cycles. The rules apply to relevant wins before 2027, including organizations operating under substantially the same identity. A separate ten-cycle Corporate Icon crossover rule applies to Business of the Year Awards.

An organization materially involved with a Business Achievement Awards judge may also be subject to a two-cycle post-service restriction. Confirm the detailed rules in the category Charter and contact the Chamber if an eligibility issue is unclear. Eligibility is checked by the Chamber; do not assume that being nominated overrides a restriction.

6. Make the submission easy to assess

- Answer the actual question. Lead with your strongest achievement and connect it to the named criterion.
- Use meaningful comparisons and verified results; distinguish completed work from future plans.
- Explain context. A strong result for a specialised or smaller organisation need not involve the largest budget or workforce.
- Be precise about grants, investment and revenue. For Innovation, funding raised is not the same as customer demand, deployment or earned income.
- Use plain language and define unfamiliar acronyms. Avoid marketing slogans, repeated claims and unsupported superlatives.
- Proofread for consistency of dates, employee counts, percentages and claims across all five answers.

Final submission checklist

☐ I have checked the eligibility and award history rules for my chosen category.

☐ I have read the current Category Charter and Application and selected the right category.

☐ I have answered all five questions, each within 600 words.

☐ I have included relevant results, comparisons or credible qualitative evidence.

☐ I have provided at least two meaningful EDIRR indicators or examples.

☐ I have distinguished completed results from goals, grants or announcements.

☐ I have followed the Chamber's official instructions for deadlines, permitted attachments and submission.

Frequently asked questions

These are quick answers to common questions. Your category-specific Charter and Application and the Chamber's official 2027 submission instructions remain the authoritative sources.

I have been nominated. Am I automatically a finalist?
No. A nomination is an invitation to apply. You must complete the appropriate category application and meet its eligibility requirements. Finalists are selected through the awards process.

Do I need to be a Chamber member?
No. Chamber membership is not required and does not affect eligibility, marks or selection.

Can I apply in more than one category?
You may apply in one Business of the Year category and one specialist category, if eligible for both. You can be named a finalist in only one competitive category in the same awards cycle. The Chamber may recommend a category change, but only with your consent.

How is my Business of the Year size category determined?
The usual guidelines are 1–10 full-time equivalent employees for Small, 11–49 for Medium and 50 or more for Large. The Chamber may also consider revenue, locations, franchise or network scale and operating complexity if employee count alone is misleading.

Does my organization have to be headquartered in London?
A substantive London connection is required, but the Charter for each award explains how it may be demonstrated. For Excellence in People and Culture, the practices submitted must produce identifiable benefits for the London workforce, even if corporate HR leadership is elsewhere.

How many finalists will be selected?
Four in each of Small, Medium and Large Business of the Year, and two in each specialist award category.

I have won an award before. Can I enter again?
A previous winner cannot apply for the same competitive award during the next five complete awards cycles, or for another competitive award during the next three. Relevant wins before 2027 count. Separate ten-cycle crossover restrictions apply between Corporate Icon and the three Business of the Year awards. Check your Charter or ask the Chamber if uncertain.

How long can my answers be?
Each application has five questions with a maximum of 600 words per answer. Use the space for achievements and evidence rather than general promotional material. Follow the official submission instructions for any supporting materials.

Do I have to complete every item in the Key Results table?
Generally, no. These are illustrative measures, and you should select those that best demonstrate your achievements. Some awards specify stronger evidence expectations: Innovation requires at least two measured outcomes from real-world use; Climate Action Leadership normally asks for at least three relevant quantitative environmental measures where practicable.

What if I do not have sophisticated reports or an evaluation system?
Use reliable records appropriate to your organization. Depending on the category, evidence might include customer results, operational records, employee measures, documented changes, community feedback or well-supported case examples. Explain the comparison or context that makes the result meaningful.

What if I have limited EDIRR data?
Every category allocates 20 marks to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Race Relations, including accessibility. You may provide two meaningful indicators or examples of progress, including documented changes, feedback or impact stories. If no relevant evidence is supplied, you receive zero marks for that criterion, but are not automatically disqualified.

Can a pre-revenue startup enter the Innovation Award?
Potentially. Revenue is not mandatory, but the innovation must be in documented real-world use and have measurable results and a credible model for continued deployment or commercialization. Grants, investor financing, patents and prototypes alone do not establish eligibility.

Do B Corp certification or the UN Sustainable Development Goals guarantee credit?
No. In Climate Action Leadership, B Corp certification and alignment with relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals can support an application, but neither is required nor a substitute for demonstrated environmental results.

Must I disclose exact revenue or commercially sensitive figures?
Not necessarily. The category documents allow percentages or reasonable ranges where exact figures are sensitive. Claims should still be accurate and supported. If the Chamber requests further verification, ask how confidential information should be supplied securely.

Where do I find the deadline, upload instructions and attachment rules?
Use the Chamber's official 2027 nomination and application communications. Those administrative details are not established by this guide. Contact the Chamber if you need clarification before submitting.

Questions or assistance

The Chamber can clarify category eligibility, application instructions and the meaning of published requirements. Applicants remain responsible for the accuracy of their submissions. For submission dates, access instructions, supporting-material rules and contact details, rely on the official 2027 nomination communications issued by the Chamber.