ENTRY DEADLINE: Thursday, July 23, 2026

Scottish IMPACT Awards 2026

Brought to you by The Herald

ENTRY GUIDE

@newsquestscotlandevents @heraldscotland

Brought to you by The Herald

Category Sponsors DIAGEO

Support Sponsors NEWSQUESTEVENTS SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

CONTENTS

Scottish IMPACT Awards 2026
Brought to you by The Herald

03 Welcome

04 Entry Rules

05 Categories & Criteria

Climate Action Award

Community Impact Award

Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Award
sponsored by Diageo

Sustainable Innovation Award

Workplace & Wellbeing Award

WELCOME

Scottish IMPACT Awards 2026
Brought to you by The Herald

Now in their second year, The Scottish Impact Awards celebrate the organisations building a better, fairer, and more sustainable Scotland.

Delivered by The Herald and Newsquest Events Scotland & NI, these awards recognise the trailblazers who embed purpose into action, creating lasting impact across society, the environment, and the workplace.

From empowering communities through regeneration, inclusion, and cultural initiatives, to fostering healthier, more ethical workplaces, each award honours leadership that truly makes a difference. We shine a light on organisations showing progress in Diversity and Inclusion practices, those tackling the climate crisis head-on as Climate Action Champions, and celebrate Innovators driving the circular economy through sustainable design and procurement.

Now established as Scotland's flagship celebration of purpose-driven excellence, the Scottish Impact Awards stand proudly, highlighting the organisations shaping a future where impact is embedded at the heart of strategy, culture, and community.

Join us in recognising those leading Scotland into a future where purpose meets progress.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Scottish Impact Awards Entry Guide 2026

We are committed to making our information accessible to everyone. The Scottish Impact Awards Entry Guide 2026 is currently provided as a designed PDF. While this format is visually engaging, it may not fully meet the needs of people using screen readers, text-to-speech software, or other assistive technologies, as it does not yet meet all UK Association for Accessible Formats (UKAAF) standards for accessible PDFs.

To ensure equal access, **an accessible alternative version** of this guide is available in Word format. This version is structured for assistive technologies and can be adapted to suit individual needs.

If you require this information in another format, or need further support to enter the awards, please contact Sharon Franchetti at sharon.franchetti@newsquest.co.uk and we will be happy to help.

If your organisation is making a positive difference, we want to hear about it!

Scottish IMPACT Awards 2026

Brought to you by The Herald

ENTRANT CHECKLIST

This guide has been designed to make entering the awards as clear, simple and accessible as possible.

Before submitting your entry, make sure you have:

- [ ] Completed all required fields in the online entry form
- [ ] Clearly explained the challenge or opportunity your work addressed
- [ ] Described the initiatives or actions taken
- [ ] Provided measurable impact or outcomes
- [ ] Responded to any relevant impact indicators (optional but encouraged)
- [ ] Articulated why your work deserves recognition
- [ ] Uploaded a single supporting documentation (Optional)
- [ ] Uploaded required imagery and logo files
- [ ] Confirmed accuracy of all information provided

CHECKLIST

ENTRY RULES

Scottish IMPACT Awards 2026
Brought to you by The Herald

WHO CAN ENTER

The Scottish Impact Awards are open to all registered organisations operating in Scotland, including:

- Micro organisations (1–10 employees)
- Small & Medium organisations (11–250 employees)
- Large organisations (250+ employees)

Entries are welcomed from all sectors, including private, public, third sector, charities and education.

All categories are judged by organisation size to ensure fairness and inclusivity.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT CATEGORY

You may enter one or multiple categories, provided each entry reflects a distinct area of impact.

2026 Award Categories:

- Climate Action Champion
- Community Impact
- Diversity & Inclusion Leadership
- Sustainable Innovation
- Wellbeing & Workforce

Each category includes short guidance explaining what judges are looking for. Choose the category that best reflects the main focus of your work. You can find the full category criteria here

WHAT THE JUDGES ARE LOOKING FOR

Judges are not looking for perfection or polished marketing language.

They are looking for:

- Clear action – what you actually did
- Real impact – the difference it made
- Learning and progress – not just end results
- Impact relative to scale – your size and resources are taken into account

THE ENTRY STRUCTURE

All categories follow the same simple structure.

- **The Challenge or Opportunity**
  What issue or opportunity did you seek to address?
- **What You Did**
  What actions, initiatives or changes were delivered?
- **The Impact**
  What difference did this work make? This is the most important section.
- **Why This Deserves Recognition**
  Why should this work be recognised and what could others learn?
- **Supporting Evidence (Optional)**
  One supporting document may be uploaded, but this is not required.
- **Organisation Snapshot (Not Scored)**
  Provides context only and does not affect scoring.

ABOUT KPIs AND METRICS

Some categories include example indicators to guide your entry. These are:

- Supportive, not compulsory
- Flexible depending on size and maturity
- Designed to help you demonstrate impact

Clear explanation and learning are just as valuable as numbers.

TOP TIPS FOR A STRONG ENTRY

- Be clear and concise
- Focus on outcomes, not just policies
- Use examples wherever possible
- Don't worry if your data isn't perfect
- Write in plain English

Authentic impact matters more than polished language.

CATEGORIES

Scottish IMPACT Awards 2026
Brought to you by The Herald

CLIMATE ACTION CHAMPION AWARD

Recognises organisations operating in Scotland that are taking meaningful action to reduce their environmental impact and embed sustainability within their operations, culture and long-term strategy.
Suggested KPIs:

- Does your company measure Green House Gas Emissions?
- Has the company achieved a reduction in emissions?
- Does the company use renewable energy?

COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD

Recognises organisations operating in Scotland that are making a meaningful and measurable difference to local or national communities through social initiatives, partnerships, regeneration projects, inclusion programmes, or long-term community collaboration.

- Demonstrate community investment, either financial, in-kind or time-based.
- Advise Stakeholder Engagement such as consultations, meetings or engagement activities undertaken.
- Demonstrate the reach of initiatives such as number of individuals, organisations or groups supported.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION LEADERSHIP AWARD

sponsored by Diageo

Recognises organisations operating in Scotland that demonstrate strong leadership and meaningful action in creating inclusive, equitable and diverse workplaces and communities.
The award celebrates organisations of all sizes that are addressing inequality, improving representation, and embedding inclusion into culture, policies and practice.

- **Workforce Diversity** – Evidence of representation, demographic insights or inclusion policies.
- **Inclusive Leadership** – tracking of representation at leadership or management level.
- **Progression Rate** – Support of underrepresented groups to progress or remain.
- Evidence of inclusive recruitment, onboarding or support platforms in place.

SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION AWARD

Recognises organisations operating in Scotland that are developing and delivering innovative products, services or processes that drive environmental or social sustainability.
The award celebrates innovation that supports long-term positive impact, circular economy principles and scalable solutions.

- Describe your circular economy practices such as reuse, refurbishment, recycling or material efficiency benefits.
- Energy Efficiency – Have you achieved reductions in energy use per unit of output?
- Waste or resource reduction - describe any reductions achieved or targeted.
- Sustainable supply chain - outline how suppliers are engaged in sustainable or responsible practices.
- Advise how this innovation could be scaled, replicated or expanded?

WELLBEING & WORKFORCE AWARD

Recognises organisations operating in Scotland that prioritise employee wellbeing, mental health, fair and ethical employment, and positive workplace culture.
The award celebrates organisations of all sizes that demonstrate leadership beyond compliance, embedding wellbeing and fairness into everyday practice.

- Do you measure employee engagement or wellbeing?
- Describe any trends, improvements or learning in staff retention or turnover.
- Outline your approach to pay fairness, pay gaps or progression.
- Describe any wellbeing, mental health or flexible working support in place.

GALLERY

Scottish IMPACT Awards 2026
Brought to you by The Herald

Inaugural Winners

Community Impact Award

- Active Life Club **Winner** - Micro (1–10 employees)
- Highland Coast Hotels **Joint Winner** - Small/Medium (11–250 employees) AND The Yard **Joint - Winner** - Small/Medium (11–250 employees)
- Mott MacDonald **Winner** - Large (250+ employees)

Wellbeing & Workforce Award

- Scottish Water

Climate Action Champion Award

sponsored by Scottish National Investment Bank

- WEEE Scotland Limited

Diversity & Inclusion Leadership Award

sponsored by Diageo

- Youth STEM 2030 **Winner** - Micro (1–10 employees)
- Mercat Tours **Winner** - Small/Medium (11–250 employees)
- M&H Carriers **Winner** - Large (250+ employees)

Sustainable Innovation Award

sponsored by Aegon

- Utopi

Judges Special Recognition Award

- Lost Shore Surf Resort

WHAT NEXT?

Scottish IMPACT Awards 2026
Brought to you by The Herald

All entries are independently reviewed by the judging panel.

If shortlisted, you will be contacted by the events team and information provided on attending the awards night.

The Awards evening will be held on Thursday, October 1st, at Marriott Hotel in Glasgow.
The event is ticketed and more information can be found here

Attendance is not mandatory and has no reflection on whether you win on the night. We do encourage all finalists to join us where possible, to share in your achievements with your peers and network with like-minded organisations putting impact in front of business decisions.

NEED HELP?

If you have questions or would like support before entering, please contact the awards team. We're here to help you submit your best possible entry.

If you're making a positive difference, we want to hear about it – regardless of your size, sector or stage of journey!

SHARON FRANCHETTI
Event Manager
Newsquest Scotland Events
sharon.franchetti@ewsquest.co.uk
T: 0141 302 6039

NEED HELP