



iiE Awards 2026 Criteria

Please note that to enter, your organisation must be a participating member of the iiE programme and have been audited between 01/10/25 - 30/09/26.

If you've not yet been audited and wish to enter the 2026 Awards, please contact your advisor ASAP to book your audit.

iiE Awards applicants will be asked to provide the following:

Organisation Name, Website and Contact Details

Organisation Details: describing your organisation, your progress to date, how long you have been an iiE member, most recent iiE level achieved and any other key highlights with respect to reducing environmental impact. Please state if your organisation is in owned, shared or managed premises, or if it is hybrid/home/full-time office working. **Max 100 words.**

Award Category

Background and Baseline Information: detailing the area of focus in which you were looking to make improvements, including any baseline figures or evidence. **Max 400 words.**

Actions - what did you do?

Let us know what you did, mention any areas of the iiE programme or wider stakeholders that helped you take action, challenges you came across and how you over came them. **Max 500 words.**

Key Results: highlighting the results/outcomes of the actions listed above, include significant figures, evidence and testimonials. **Max 500 words.**

Additional Evidence: One additional file (up to 20MB) or a link to a video (ideally, no more than 2 minutes) can be provided to support your application. Ensure they are relevant to the award entry and ensure that they can be read in a maximum of 5 minutes – photos are better than lots of pages of text.

Top Tips For A Successful Award Submission

1. Consider who the judges are - sustainability experts but who do not necessarily have detailed knowledge of the iiE programme.
2. Keep it concise. The judges will spend around 10 minutes reading and judging your entry – do not expect them to get through long documents submitted as evidence and do not feel that you have to write the maximum amount of words under each heading.
3. Make the facts clear, add details that will stand out, and keep to the point. Back statements up with figures or data (not iiE audit scores) where possible.
4. Supporting evidence should be directly relevant to your award entry, photos or short videos can be memorable, carbon footprint calculations should be submitted with the best carbon reduction award.

Any questions? Please email info@iie.uk.com

1. Best Newcomer (SME & Large)

Considerations for Applicants:

This award will recognise organisations that have excelled in their early years as an iiE member. Eligible businesses must have achieved an iiE accreditation, be able to demonstrate that they have established firm environmental management foundations, have achieved strong staff engagement in sustainability projects and/or significant changes made to reduce their environmental impact.

This award is open to any accredited member within their first two years of iiE membership.

Applicants should demonstrate the following:

- **Introduction of New Policies:** Evidence of the introduction of new policies that are already making a positive environmental impact, such as transitioning to renewable energy, supporting remote working with reduced environmental impact, or creating lists of sustainable products.
- **Staff Engagement Initiatives:** Actions taken to engage and educate staff on sustainability, including the introduction of incentives, training programs, or communication strategies that raise environmental awareness and encourage participation.
- **Investments and Savings:** Demonstration of any investments made in sustainability initiatives and the financial savings achieved (if applicable, based on multiple years of data).
- **Promotion of iiE Membership:** Applicants should demonstrate how they actively promote their participation in the iiE membership programme on their own or through other organisations' websites and social media channels.
- **Demonstrable Benefits of iiE Participation:** Applicants should showcase the benefits of being part of the iiE programme, such as increased profits, cost savings, attracting clients, increased staff satisfaction and/or co-hesion, increased customer interest and/or satisfaction, and securing funding or contracts.

2. Best Carbon Reduction

Considerations for Applicants:

This award is open to any organisation which has achieved their iiE accreditation and has calculated and can show reductions in their carbon footprint across the Scope 1, 2 and key Scope 3 emission categories.

Applicants should demonstrate some, or all of the following:

- **Carbon Planning and Investments:** Applicants should provide information about how they have developed their plans to achieve carbon reductions, detailing any investments made, and give information about resulting figures, particularly if reductions were not achieved as planned. Applicants should outline if they are on a renewable energy tariff and which company it is with.
- **Aligned to Net Zero by 2050:** The winner must demonstrate significant progress towards halving their carbon emissions since their baseline year, in line with national net zero targets by 2050, and are ideally ahead of that target. If the entrant has set a specific carbon reduction/net zero target, this should be stated, detailing to which Scopes it relates.
- **Scope 1 & 2 Emissions Reductions:** Applicants need to provide evidence of key reductions in Scope 1 & 2 emissions over the previous year or against baseline figures - ideally both which cover direct and indirect emissions from energy use, fleet transport, and other major greenhouse gases. Reductions should be absolute, but if absolute performance has been affected by a significant change to the business within the comparative timeframe, this should be explained, and normalised figures included.
- **Scope 3 Carbon Reductions:** While not all iiE members are required to report on Scope 3 emissions, those who demonstrate reductions in embedded carbon (e.g., from grey fleet use, waste, commuting, supply chains, products, and services) will be awarded additional points.
- **Demonstrable Benefits:** Where possible, applicants should showcase the tangible benefits from the activity. These could include recorded results, increased profits, cost savings, enhanced client or customer interest, improved staff awareness and behaviours, improved customer satisfaction.
- **Evidence of Promotion:** Details should be given of how staff and wider stakeholder involvement and/or behaviour change was encouraged - including both internal and external promotion.

3. Best Water Conservation

Considerations for Applicants:

This award is particularly relevant any organisation that has undertaken significant activity to reduce water use or conserve or protect water sources. Some iiE members struggle to get accurate measurement; evidence of good practice should be the main focus of the award entry if this is the case.

Applicants must demonstrate at least some of the following:

- **Water Reduction/Conservation Achievements:** If available, applicants should provide evidence of a reduction in water usage compared to their baseline year, or in the years since water reduction initiatives were introduced, or data/observations relating to conservation/quality improvements. (See above).
- **Investment in Water Saving, Conservation or Quality Improvement Measures:** Applicants should show how they have invested in water saving technologies or installations, conservation or quality improvements, or undertaken behaviour change campaigns or projects aimed at reducing the use and waste of water, or to avoid water pollution or contamination through direct or indirect activities. Projects like toilet twinning or participation in national campaigns could also be included in entries.
- **Demonstrable Benefits:** Applicants should showcase the tangible benefits from the activity. These could include recorded results, increased profits, cost savings, enhanced client or customer interest, reduced use of contaminating products, lower discharges to water courses, lower extraction requirements or observed/recorded changes to aquatic biodiversity or similar.
- **Evidence of Promotion:** Details should be given of how staff and wider stakeholder involvement and/or behaviour change was encouraged - including both internal and external promotion.

4. Best Waste Initiative

Considerations for Applicants:

This award is open to businesses of all sizes and types. Entrants should demonstrate how they have tackled waste, by adopting the waste hierarchy, improving separation, and, show how they've reduced waste through circular economy practices, efficiency improvements, and changes in working methods

(e.g., sourcing products with less packaging, better recyclability, or through reuse and repurposing).

An entry can focus on a specific project, procedural or system change or the organisation-wide performance.

*Some iiE members struggle to get accurate waste and recycling measurements, or figures in a particular year may have been affected by a particular event (such as a warehouse clearout, office move or similar); evidence of good practice should be the main focus of the award entry, with an explanation of relevant issues, if this is the case.

The winner must demonstrate the following:

- **Waste Performance Achievements:** Giving measured results *(see above) in waste reduction, including waste sent to landfill or energy recovery, or the most innovative or impactful actions in plastics reduction, reuse, and recycling.
- **Circular Economy Principles:** Evidence of applying circular economy principles and considering the full life-cycle of products in procurement and operations.
- **Demonstrable Benefits:** Applicants should showcase the tangible benefits from the activity. These could include recorded results, increased profits, cost savings, enhanced client or customer interest, measured changes to staff behaviours, improved customer satisfaction, or other beneficial outcomes.
- **Evidence of Promotion:** Details should be given of how staff and wider stakeholder involvement and/or behaviour change was encouraged - including both internal and external promotion.

5. Low Carbon Transport Champion

Considerations for Applicants:

This award is open to businesses of all sizes and types. Applicants should demonstrate how they have taken action to promote greener travel and transportation, or have decreased the use fossil-fuelled vehicles through initiatives such as travel plans, fleet policy changes and investments, engagement activities, supplier requirements, tracking and recording sustainable travel, or offering incentives to staff.

The winner must demonstrate the following:

- **Actions Taken or Innovations Made:** Clear evidence of actions taken or investments/innovations made to promote lower carbon transport use, such as the introduction of a travel plan, new transport options, investment in low carbon fleet, engagement activities focused on changing work-related travel or to promote sustainable commuting etc.
- **Improved Performance and Measurement:** Demonstrating how these actions or innovations have led to improved performance, and providing measurable outcomes (e.g., reductions in carbon emissions, changes to fleet/grey fleet composition, increased promotion and/or use of sustainable travel options, etc.).
- **Demonstrable Benefits:** If possible, applicants should showcase the tangible benefits from the activity. These could include increased profits, cost savings, enhanced client or customer interest, higher levels of staff satisfaction, changed staff behaviours, improved customer satisfaction, and/or success in securing funding or contracts.
- **Evidence of Promotion:** Details should be given of how staff and wider stakeholder involvement and/or behaviour change was encouraged - including both internal and external promotion.

6. Natural Environment Champion

Considerations for Applicants:

This award will recognise a business for its contributions to enhancing or protecting the natural environment, with a focus on biodiversity and conservation efforts.

The winner must demonstrate the following:

- **Action or Projects Taken:** Clear examples of actions or projects that have directly contributed to environmental protection or enhancement, such as tree planting, establishing wildflower meadows, outside space enhancement or other conservation initiatives.
- **Impact Measurement:** Evidence of how the business has measured the impact of its efforts, including details of the organisations or partners involved, the frequency of activities, participant engagement, and the overall environmental outcomes achieved.

- **Demonstrable Benefits:** Applicants should showcase the tangible benefits from the activity. These could include increased profits, cost savings, enhanced staff, client or customer interest, increased staff or customer satisfaction, and/or workplace culture change.
- **Evidence of Promotion:** Details should be given of how staff and wider stakeholder involvement and behaviour change was encouraged - including both internal and external promotion.

7. Sustainability Influencer

Considerations for Applicants:

This award will recognise a business that has successfully inspired and driven change beyond its direct operations, influencing other stakeholders, people or organisations to adopt more sustainable practices.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate most of the following:

- **Collaborative Efforts:** A list of organisations or partners they have worked with to drive change, including any relevant projects (e.g., collaborating with catering services, trade associations, etc.).
- **Initiatives and Projects:** Specific projects or campaigns undertaken to inspire change, such as environmental awareness programs or partnerships with other organisations.
- **Environmental Campaigns:** Communications and marketing efforts that promoted sustainability, including environmental campaigns run to raise awareness or change behaviours.
- **Impact Metrics:** Measurable outcomes demonstrating the effectiveness of actions, such as audience numbers reached, increases in engagement, measured changes in behaviour amongst the audience or other positive environmental or social impacts.
- **Feedback and Engagement:** Evidence of feedback from the audience members, detailing how the initiatives influenced them or created change amongst the targeted organisations or groups.
- **Additional Benefits:** Applicants should detail any further outcomes/benefits which have been achieved as a result of the initiative, e.g. interest from wider stakeholder groups or requests to share experiences in a public forum etc.

8. Best Social Impact

Considerations for Applicants:

This award will recognise organisations that have made a significant impact in their local community through their organisation's purpose, or through the project section of their iiE accreditation. Impact can be demonstrated through activities such as volunteering, financial support, provision of social support or contributing to human wellbeing.

Applicants should demonstrate the following:

- **Projects Undertaken:** Specific projects or initiatives that have contributed to the local community, such as volunteering, donations, or community based programs.
- **Scale of Impact:** The scale of the organisation's impact, whether through one off projects or long term engagement that has sustained positive outcomes.
- **Staff Engagement:** The level of staff involvement in these community projects, including the number or percentage of staff engaged and the duration of their commitment.
- **Feedback from Beneficiaries:** Testimonials or feedback from those who benefited from the projects, showcasing the real world impact on individuals or communities.
- **Measured Outcomes:** Clear, measurable outcomes from the projects, such as improvements in community wellbeing, increased local engagement, or positive changes in local resources.
- **Promotion:** Applicants should demonstrate how they promoted the outcomes of their participation on their own or through other organisations' websites and social media channels.
- **Additional Benefits:** Applicants should detail any further outcomes/benefits which have been achieved as a result of the initiative, e.g. interest from wider stakeholder groups or requests to share experiences in a public forum etc.

9. Overall Outstanding Achiever (SME & Large)

Considerations for Applicants:

This award will recognise two winners based on organisational size (small to medium businesses and large organisations). The entry will highlight how the organisation has demonstrated resource efficiency across its measured resources using appropriate metrics, such as reduced energy use per unit of output or reduced waste per employee. The entry should also demonstrate how the organisation has used the iiE framework to drive results, engaged staff to support its sustainability aims and how it communicates these to its stakeholders.

To be eligible, applicants must be Green accredited members and measure at least six resources.

Applicants should demonstrate a number of the following:

- **Reductions achieved or planned performance improvement:** Clear evidence of normalised reductions in most, if not all, measured resources – annually and/or against baselines.
- **Financial Savings:** A reliable estimate of the amount of money saved as a result of implementing resource efficiency measures.
- **Investments Made:** Details of any investments made in technologies, processes, or systems that support resource efficiency.
- **Process Evidence:** Documentation or evidence of the processes or procedural changes followed to achieve these reductions, likely drawn from the audit process.
- **Promotion of iiE Membership:** Applicants should demonstrate how they actively promote their participation in the iiE membership programme on their own or through other organisations' websites and social media channels.
- **Demonstrable Benefits:** Applicants should show how being part of the iiE programme has led to increased profits, cost savings, attracting clients, higher staff satisfaction levels and/or wellbeing, boosting customer satisfaction, wider stakeholder involvement and/or securing funding or contracts.