



*"Together, let us  
shine a spotlight on  
business excellence  
here in Rutland"*

DR. SARAH FURNESS  
HIS MAJESTY'S LORD-LIEUTENANT  
OF RUTLAND

THE KING'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE

# RUTLAND FUTURE WINNERS GUIDE



THE KING'S AWARDS  
FOR ENTERPRISE

# THE KING'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE

The King's Awards for Enterprise offer the opportunity for national and international recognition to those who are leading by example in business excellence.

*In this brochure we explain what the Award is and outline the business benefits to be gained and encourage business leaders in Rutland to apply or nominate others.*

*A business does not have to be big to win and only needs to have been operating regularly and meet the criteria to qualify, so the myth of big very long established businesses being the only ones who can win is just that a myth.*

*Winning this award can "turbo charge" your business and I wholeheartedly encourage you to apply.*

*Sarah Furness.*

**DR. SARAH FURNESS**  
**H.M. LORD-LIEUTENANT OF RUTLAND**



# ABOUT THE KING'S AWARDS

Considered the UK's most prestigious awards they were instituted by Royal Warrant in 1965 and first awarded in 1966. Their format has evolved to now include four categories: International Trade, Innovation, Sustainable Development and Promoting Opportunity (through social mobility)



## THE KING'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE

*If your organisation is successful and is granted an award you will be:*

- Invited to a Royal reception
- Presented with the award at your company by The King's representative, the Lord-Lieutenant
- Able to fly The King's Awards flag at your main office and use the emblem on your marketing materials (for example your packaging, advertisements, stationary and website)
- Given a Grant of Appointment (an official certificate) and a commemorative trophy

The awards are valid for 5 years.

*Organisations that have gained an award have reported benefiting from:*

- Worldwide recognition
- Increased commercial value
- Greater press coverage
- A boost to staff morale

The King's Awards for Enterprise are free to enter with a straight forward online entry process and you may apply for more than one award.



# THE KING'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE: ELIGIBILITY

To apply for the King's Awards for Enterprise your organisation must meet the following minimum criteria:

- Be based in the UK (including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man)
- Have a good, continuous, compliance record with HMRC
- Be a self-contained enterprise that markets its own products or services and is under its own management.
- Have at least two full-time employees or part-time equivalents
- Demonstrate strong achievement in environmental, social and governance practices

Your organisation can be a business, non-profit or in the public sector.

There are four award categories that you can apply for:

- International Trade
- Innovation
- Sustainable Development
- Promoting Opportunity through social mobility

Each award has additional entry criteria, which are included later in this publication as well as on the website:

[www.gov.uk/kings-awards-for-enterprise/eligibility](http://www.gov.uk/kings-awards-for-enterprise/eligibility)



Staff from The Woolroom pictured having received their International Trade Award.

# WHY YOUR BUSINESS SHOULD APPLY FOR A KING'S AWARD FOR ENTERPRISE

What motivates a company to enter the King's Awards is as varied as the businesses that apply. One thing that is certain is that companies have everything to gain and nothing to lose.

*The King's Awards for Enterprise are widely considered the highest accolade to be bestowed upon a UK business, celebrating companies which have showed outstanding achievements, across many sectors and that showcase their innovations, ideas and achievements to a global audience.*

*They are highly respected both at home and abroad and being awarded one has been proven to give companies a winning edge over their competitors. As a globally recognised mark, the award also helps to open markets that may have been difficult to access previously.*

*It is not just about receiving an award, often the process of entering means looking at your organisation from a different perspective. Not all applicants are successful first time around but receive full and comprehensive feedback about their strengths and are offered guidance about how to improve their entry for the future.*

*Since the launch of the awards in 1965, participants have come from across the UK, from city-based centres of commerce to remote areas in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and the Channel Islands. Most winning companies have fewer than 250 employees, although larger companies have also earned this prestigious accolade.*

*Benefits of winning the King's Awards:*

- National and global recognition
- Excellent marketing opportunities
- Added commercial value to your business and increased trade
- Competitive edge and new business opportunities
- Boost to staff morale, helping to retain and attract highly skilled individuals
- Use of the Award emblem on stationery, website and advertising
- Permission to fly The King's Awards flag at your premises



# CATEGORIES OF

## *International Trade*

The UK has a long history of trading across the globe and the significance of the economic benefits associated with this were acknowledged at the inception of The Queen's Awards. Established in 1966 by HM The Queen, the awards initially featured categories for Export, Technology or a combination of the two. In 2000, the Export category was renamed International Trade. This category remains the most popular drawing the largest number of entries. In 2024, more than 160 companies received an award for their outstanding overseas trading success.

*For the International Trade award. Your company must:*

- Have made a minimum of £100,000 in overseas sales in the first year of your entry and show year-on-year growth
- Prove that your organisation has achieved outstanding growth in overseas earnings relative to your business size and sector
- Prove steep year-on-year growth (without dips) in overseas sales over three years - or substantial year-on-year growth (without dips) over six years.

## *Sustainable Development*

Over time the awards have evolved to better reflect the UK's business landscape and priorities. In 1993, a new category for sustainable development was introduced, recognising the importance of balancing economic success with environmental and social responsibility.

In 2019, the criteria were updated to place greater emphasis on the development of strategies aimed at embedding sustainability within business operations.

*To qualify for the Sustainable Development category, your businesses must show:*

- Outstanding achievements in sustainable development for more than two years
- Evidence of the tangible benefits or positive outcomes resulting from the initiatives
- How you have achieved outstanding sustainable development for more than 2 years

- Evidence of the benefits or positive outcomes of your actions or interventions
- How your company and its industry leaders pioneer sustainable developments in your sector or community
- How you have overcome challenges with sustainability that are specific to your sector

*You can include examples such as how you have:*

- Developed an innovative product, service or process that has environmental benefits
- Made sustainability an essential part of your organisation, supply chain or community

Read the United Nations sustainable development goals (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>) to identify which goals are relevant to your work.

*For general eligibility criteria, visit: <https://www.>*



# KING'S AWARDS

## Innovation

Originally established in 1966 by HM The Queen, these awards allowed companies to apply in the categories of Export, Technology, or both.

In 2000, the awards were renamed The Queen's Awards for Enterprise, with the Technology category updated to Innovation, reflecting advancements in UK manufacturing and homegrown businesses.

Now called The King's Awards for Enterprise. The Innovation category remains strong, with over 40 awards given in this category in 2024, recognising businesses for their exceptional achievements.

*To apply for the Innovation Award, your company must meet the following requirements:*

- Have an innovation that has not been sold before

- The innovation must have been available on the market for at least two years
- The company must have recovered all investments made in the innovation or demonstrate that future costs will be recovered

*The innovation should be in one of the following categories:*

- Invention, design, or production of goods
- Performance of services
- Marketing and distribution
- After-sales support for goods or services

## Promoting Opportunity through social mobility

In 2017, the Promoting Opportunity category was launched to recognise organisations that take significant steps to improve social mobility through employment initiatives, training opportunities, and development programs.

*To qualify for the Promoting Opportunity (Through Social Mobility) award, your organisation must have actively supported individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds in improving their job skills and career prospects. Eligible initiatives should demonstrate at least two years of impactful work in areas such as:*

- Providing work experience or career advice

- Mentoring
- Offering job-related training or interview support
- Ensuring recruitment processes are inclusive and accessible to all

*Applicants must show evidence of the positive benefits delivered to:*

- The individuals or communities supported
- Your organisation
- Your employees
- The wider community

# YOUR FREE APPLICATION STARTS HERE

First, you'll need to register on The King's Awards website. You can then access the entry forms.

*There are different forms for each Award category, along with helpful guidance notes and additional information to help you correctly complete the form.*

*Entries are free and you may enter more than one category, providing your business meets the eligibility criteria for each category you wish to enter. All entry forms must be completed and submitted online and once submitted you will receive an email confirmation.*

Applications open each year on 6<sup>th</sup> May, closing on 12<sup>th</sup> September.

Awards are announced annually on the anniversary of The King's Coronation the 6<sup>th</sup> May.



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# HOW TO APPLY?

The 2026 application round is open from 6<sup>th</sup> May to 12<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Almost all UK businesses can apply and the application process is free and straightforward.

The King's Awards Helpline is here to help you

## Contact:

 [kingsawards@businessandtrade.gov.uk](mailto:kingsawards@businessandtrade.gov.uk)

 **020 4551 0081**

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

*\*calls may be charged – if you have any queries please check with your provider.*

 [www.gov.uk/kings-awards-for-enterprise](http://www.gov.uk/kings-awards-for-enterprise)

Scan the QR code to apply:

