



BEST AWARDS

BUSINESS & EDUCATION
THROUGH SKILLS & TRAINING

2011 / 12

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BEST



Department for
**Employment
and Learning**

www.delni.gov.uk





BEST AWARDS

Business & Education through Skills & Training

Do you have an idea for an innovative solution to a business problem?

Do you know of a market opportunity for a new product?

Are you carrying out a project as part of your course?

Colleges NI has introduced the BEST AWARDS (Business & Education through Skills & Training) to celebrate the creativity and innovation that is such an important part of the College experience and to recognise the excellent project-based learning across our colleges. With a focus particularly on the disciplines of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), the BEST Awards will give students the opportunity to showcase their work in related areas.

The criteria have been kept deliberately wide to enable a diverse range of projects to be eligible and entries are welcomed from a broad range of STEM-based areas including, for example, Engineering, Creative Media, Applied Sciences, Built Environment, Computing & IT, Animal Care, Sports Science, Music Technology, Healthcare, Accounting and Digital Design. This booklet outlines the criteria and application process. The deadline for completion of the application form is Friday 16 December 2011.

Guidance and mentoring support will also be available to entrants throughout their projects and the BEST AWARDS Grand Final will be in May 2012 to celebrate and recognise projects across a range of categories.

If you have a good idea, no matter how big or small, discuss it with your course tutor and get an application form.

CREATE INNOVATE

Criteria for Entry

You can enter if you are enrolled on a programme of further or higher education in the academic year 2011/12. The course may be either part-time or full-time. Your project entry can be based on a project module within a course or on any element of project-based learning or investigation. Your work should have a significant element of science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) or related areas as its main theme but there are no restrictions on the business area to which the project relates.

Entries are welcomed from a diverse range of areas including, for example, Engineering, Creative Media, Applied Sciences, Built Environment, Computing & IT, Animal Care, Sports Science, Music Technology, Healthcare, Accounting and Digital Design. If you are in doubt as to whether your project qualifies, you can consult your lecturer. Projects may be individual or team-based and entries will be welcomed from cross-curricular project teams.

There are no age limitations for the competition and entrants will be judged in two age categories:

- 16 to 18
- 19+

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How to Apply

If you are interested in applying, submit a short brief of the project to your course supervisor no later than Friday 16 December 2011. The brief should be no more than 500 words and should include the following:

1. Title of the project, name(s) of the student(s), title of the College, the course you are attending and the age category within which you are applying.
2. Outline of the proposed project.
3. An indication of the benefits or potential impact of the project.

Forms will be available from your course supervisor or from the CollegesNI website



Alternatively you may email:
alan.blair@collegesni.ac.uk

ADVIC HELP

Mentoring

Mentoring support will be available to assist you at a number of key stages during your project. It is anticipated that mentoring sessions will be held both in the early stages of the project to help identify goals and in the latter stages to review progress and examine particular challenges and opportunities.

What next

1. Discuss your idea with your course tutor.
2. Work out how you will take your idea forward.
3. Get an application form from your course tutor, CollegesNI website or email: alan.blair@collegesni.ac.uk
4. Submit your completed application form by Friday 16 December 2011.



Judging and Awards

You will have the opportunity to display your project at the grand final in May 2012 and discuss your work with the judges. The judges will be drawn from a variety of backgrounds including business, education and the public sector, and will be assigned to projects related to their individual backgrounds.

It is anticipated that small groups of judges, typically two to three people, will visit you at your stand to chat with you about your project. This will give you the opportunity to discuss any aspect of your project in more detail, for example, the challenges in developing the final solution or the possibility of taking the project to market. In general, the judges will seek to assess the following aspects of your work:

- The goal of your project (could be an existing problem or a new market opportunity).
- The key issues you have considered that directly influence your project.
- Your research (background reading, interviews, review of what already exists etc).
- The solutions you have considered and how you decided to take your project forward.
- How you planned and managed your work.
- The outcome of your project (could be a working prototype, a proposal for a new business process or perhaps a new software analysis for example).
- How well you communicate your project.

A variety of prizes will be awarded, which, in addition to the overall cash prizes and BEST AWARDS in each of the two age ranges, will also include special awards in the following categories:

- Engineering
- Life Sciences
- Creative Industries
- Built Environment
- Science and Engineering
- Most innovative
- Most entrepreneurial
- Best communication at a stand
- Best visual display

