

2008 Governor's Sustainability Awards

Details on Application Questions

This document is intended to give applicants guidance on each of the specific questions listed on the application form. The examples and details provided below are intended to stimulate your thinking, not limit it. Do not feel constrained to talk only about things described below. As a reminder of what is stated on the application form itself, applicants are not expected to answer every question. Responses should be focused in the applicant's areas of strength and focus on activities that go beyond compliance.

In some cases, there is overlap between the categories below. For example, a green roof could be described as an activity in the "Built Environment" category. Someone also might put this activity into the "Energy Efficiency" category because it could lower the building's heating load. Applicants should not be concerned about these overlaps but should just describe activities in whichever category makes the most sense to them. You will not be penalized for putting activities in one category versus another.

One of the intents of the questions is to collect information in specific areas and make the review of applications easier and consistent. The final category—"other"—is not described in further detail here because it is left open for the applicant to describe things that do not fit into a specific category.

1. *Energy Efficiency*

In broad brush, energy efficiency means using less energy than usual to accomplish the same task or do the same work. This may be accomplished through an advancement in a process or product. Examples of energy efficient products are highly efficient HVAC equipment, more efficient insulation, high performance windows, low-energy lights and premium-efficiency motors. Energy efficiency also may mean improving an industrial or agricultural process so that it requires less energy for the same output.

2. *Renewable Energy*

Renewable energy is energy that is produced using sources that can be replenished on a human time scale, such as biomass, or is available on a functionally inexhaustible scale, such as wind and solar. Examples of activities that could be described here are on-site generation of renewable energy, generation of renewable energy above and beyond the organization's load, creative design of a renewable energy project, or policy or funding innovation that facilitated renewable energy project development.

3. *Water Efficiency*

This category is the water equivalent of energy efficiency described in #1. If an organization has developed an innovative device or technique that saves water, it should describe the device or technique here. In addition, if an organization has redesigned an industrial or agricultural process so that it requires less water for the same output, please describe that here.

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4. *Transportation*

This is a broad category that includes any effort made to reduce the impacts of transportation related to an organization's operations. Specific examples are innovative transit, carpool or telecommuting options for employees. Another example would be a concerted effort to "green" the supply chain for an organization's products.

5. *Agriculture or Food-related Practices*

This category covers sustainability initiatives in the agriculture sector itself as well as other activities that involve food, such as food sourcing. Some examples may be innovative pest management techniques or irrigation improvements. Other examples may be sourcing all (or close to it) of the food an organization uses from within Oregon. Another example may be developing a new use for a previously discarded food product.

6. *Forestry*

Similar to the previous category, this category covers sustainability initiatives in the forestry sector itself as well as other activities that involve wood products. Developing a more sustainable use for a forest product should be described here. Reducing the impacts of forestry activities on the environment is another thing an applicant could describe here.

7. *Biodiversity, fish and wildlife habitat, ecosystem conservation and/or restoration*

Taking action to protect, avoid adverse impact to or restore native plants, animals, habitat and/or ecosystem. Some examples are

- Building a new facility on a brownfield site to avoid converting undeveloped land.
- Purchasing shade grown coffee for a restaurant to provide tropical habitat for birds and bats.
- Purchasing more credits than required to mitigate impacts of development to conserve ecologically significant site.
- Restoring wetland on company property for enjoyment by employees, local community and local wildlife.
- Having products certified by a third party using a process that addresses biodiversity conservation issues.
- Contributing money, volunteer resources and/or technical support to a conservation project or organization.
- Organizing volunteers to remove invasive species from a community park.
- Purchasing ecosystem credits to offset ecological footprint.

8. *Waste Management*

This is a very broad category that covers anything to do with waste. That may mean creating a new program to reduce the amount of waste generated in the first place. It may mean a new use for a previously discarded waste product. It may mean pollution prevention activities. It may mean creative ways to dramatically increase the recycling rates within an organization. It may mean diverting a significant amount of waste away from a landfill via a suite of activities.

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9. *Procurement*

This category is meant to capture an organization's activities to purchase the products and services with the least impact on the environment possible. A basic example would be a purchasing policy that requires only 100 percent recycled paper. Another would be to purchase and use low- or no-VOC paints. There are any number of situations where an organization has a choice between a traditional product and one that was designed and/or created with the environment in mind. This category seeks to recognize creative attempts to increase purchasing of the latter and decrease purchasing of the former.

10. *Built Environment*

This category covers any activities meant to reduce the impact of human development on the environment. Specific examples are building a LEED-platinum (or beyond) building, utilizing innovative storm water management techniques, using of permeable pavement or installing other creative landscaping techniques.

11. *Social Equity, i.e. hiring practices, innovative benefit programs, etc.*

This and the following category attempt to cover the social aspect of sustainability. Any activities an organization uses to improve social equity should be described here. A few specific examples are innovative hiring practices or benefit programs.

12. *Community Service and Civic Involvement*

This category covers activities either by the organization itself or its staff to get involved with the community. This could mean a lot of things, but a few examples are providing funds for a community project, encouraging and allowing staff to donate time to local causes, or providing meaningful opportunity for the local community to comment on a development project.

13. *Economic Benefit(s) (those realized directly from sustainability initiatives)*

In this category, an applicant should describe any economic benefit that an organization has derived from its focus on sustainability. This could be money saved (less money going out) or increased revenues from sales related to more sustainable products (more money coming in).

14. *Other Relevant Practices*

This section is left open for additional relevant discussion that does not fit into one of the above categories.