

## Guidance to designing and running ScotSectorlink-format competitions

---

Competitions raise awareness of the changing economic climate by encouraging 'budding researchers, designers and reporters' to submit a double-sided A4 resource which highlights up to eight businesses and states the theme for selecting highlights. This stipulation motivates entrants to seek information and also ask the views of residents, including those representing business, education and agencies. Valuable networks are forged by such searching and by clearly setting each entrant, or his/her representative, the task of gaining written permission from organisations for highlighting their details for not-for-profit purposes. Permission is usually granted because highlights are free promotions, being a resident's recommendation or an extract of the organisation's own website or literature.

A focused theme will relate to a specific industry or part of the wider care sector. It will be set by competition designers who also usually stipulate some sort of geographical area limitation.

Specific industries range widely, from recycled base materials, through forestry, renovation, renewables to unique jewellery (visit [www.scotsectorlink.org.uk/jewellery/jewellery1.html](http://www.scotsectorlink.org.uk/jewellery/jewellery1.html) for industry examples) and stained glass (visit [www.scotsectorlink.org.uk/glass/stainedglass1.html](http://www.scotsectorlink.org.uk/glass/stainedglass1.html) for further industry examples). For a set competition theme, entrants should be set to seek views on ways in which the industry could attract new recruits and investors, and also build a stream of visitors and/or customers (in person and online) for the industry's services.

The wider care sector ranges from services to maintain a home or garden, save fuel, help avoid malnutrition, keep mobile, contact friends, through to personal care services. For a predetermined competition area, entrants would be asked to seek recommendations on tradespeople whose services have helped local residents with increasing need to stay safely home-based. Entrants' resources would highlight these recommended businesses, and perhaps also outline some jobs in emergency services perhaps in fire, police, health or social care; and report on services which could not be found, perhaps due to a lack of confidence or online access.

**The costs of setting up and running a competition need not be significant if the following four recommended steps are well-planned in advance, but the benefits may well be significant as given in conclusion after the steps.**

**Step 1** Provide relevant competition terms and conditions, for example:

- What is the competition's industrial or wider care theme? Will different categories of awards encourage entrants from specific groups of residents, perhaps by age? What are the entry deadline dates? How should entries be submitted along with records granting permission for inclusion of highlighted details?
- What prizes will be offered, as even the smallest of businesses will sponsor a prize of £50, when invited to award ceremonies which double as essential, low-cost careers fairs? Will prizes or sponsorship also be donated by the emergency services or trading standards, so that the competition also promotes good practices to avoid vulnerability? What will be the format of the award ceremonies, and when and where will these take place? Experience shows that ceremonies work best when they start promptly (businesses often prefer a 6.00 pm weekday start) and finish within an hour and perhaps include a lively speaker. How will winning and other entries be featured at award ceremonies and in the media? Will selected entries be displayed in a public space after the competition?



## Guidance to designing and running ScotSectorlink-format competitions

---

- Will public funding be sought in partnership led by agencies, so that all entries are lodged after the competition for use by a locality's schools, colleges and welfare-to-work programmes? This investment builds banks of valuable learning resources about business. The regular checking exercise needed to seek new highlights for organisations now closed also valuably enables new cohorts of people to build their networks of contacts and knowledge of the economic climate.

**Step 2** Appoint a team of around four judges, who are residents, perhaps representing the industry, locality, education or emergency services. Fairly agree with each judge what he or she is to do. Is there clear statement that the judges' decisions will be final?

**Step 3** Produce an eye-catching leaflet ([www.scotsectorlink.org.uk/resources/stainedglassleaflet.pdf](http://www.scotsectorlink.org.uk/resources/stainedglassleaflet.pdf) for example) to attract target entrants, and explain how to obtain further details. Plan what media coverage will be sought, to promote the competition and its award ceremony, as entrants, sponsors and those highlighted in resources all welcome this. Which local shops will stock leaflets? Will the leaflet be used to inform media coverage? Are press releases and adverts required, and also pieces specifically for Facebook or other online display?

**Step 4** Decide who will co-ordinate and who will expedite the tasks to achieve the above, and produce a list of associated budget costs in time and materials.

### The benefits of the approach as detailed above

Competitions designed as above help economic development by ensuring that localities may better capitalise on the changing economic climate. Such competitions complement Facebook *which already succeeds as a proven informal recruitment tool and also as a proven promotional facility for locally-traded products and services*. Competitions complement by:

- enabling networks which include the many residents who are not online; and by
- motivating essential face-to-face initial contact at least when seeking residents' views.

Because of this, competitions may well succeed in:

- helping firms to find key workers so avoid closure on retirement of their current owners;
- informing education, training and career choices;
- enabling economies to harness energies of unemployed, under-employed and economically inactive residents;
- guiding publicly-funded initiatives towards enabling economic integration as well as social integration; and
- stemming the failure rate of start-ups.

For further information, contact [enquiry@scotsectorlink.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@scotsectorlink.org.uk)

