



2027 D&I Awards Submission Guidelines

Tips for completing a nomination

Purpose of this guide

- Help nominees prepare a complete and valid entry by answering each published criterion with clear, specific evidence.
- Align responses with the anchored scoring approach used by judges: evidence, outcomes and impact are more important than presentation polish.
- Make it easier for judges to match the submission to the most appropriate score range

Before you start: what makes a strong, valid entry

- Answer every question under the three published criteria and stay within the stated word limit for each question.
- Use specific evidence rather than broad statements of intent. Where possible, include dates, baselines, measures, participation data, examples, quotations, policies, governance documents or partnership outcomes.
- Explain the context of your organisation, sector or community so judges can assess the entry proportionately.
- Show the link between the D&I challenge, the initiative design, implementation, outcomes and longer-term impact.
- Avoid relying on marketing language. Judges are looking for demonstrated evidence that supports the scoring anchors.

Criterion	Weighting	Judges assess	Entry response should prove
Innovation	30%	Originality, intent and design	Clearly explain what is new, improved or redesigned; show the method, resourcing, governance, adoption, scalability or replication.
Benefit & Measurement	35%	Meaningful outcomes and how they are measured	Define intended benefits, use useful KPIs or measures, include baseline/follow-up data where available, and link outcomes back to objectives.
Impact & Outreach	35%	Breadth, depth and sustainability of influence	Show who experienced the impact, how far it reached, whether stakeholders or communities were involved, and whether the change can be sustained.

How judges will use anchored scoring

- Judges will select the score range that best aligns with the evidence provided for each criterion.
- Higher scores require stronger, clearer and more sustained evidence; they do not require a perfect initiative or the largest organisation.
- Sub-criteria such as strategy, innovative practices, employee engagement, measurable impact, leadership buy-in, collaboration, sustainability and cultural transformation are guidance lenses, not separate scores.
- A submission should therefore make the evidence easy to find, clearly linked to the criterion, and supported by examples or measures.

1. Innovation 30% weighting

700-word limit per question | Use this section to show evidence against the relevant scoring anchors.

Nominee question:

Describe the D&I innovation or initiative, including the systems, policies, instruments, partnerships or community engagements that were adapted or adopted to facilitate it.

How to answer

Explain what is innovative about the initiative in your specific context. Innovation may be new to your organisation, new to your sector, a significant redesign of an existing approach, or a deliberate shift from compliance to impact. Highlight how organisational leaders sponsored, championed and resourced the initiative.

Evidence to include

- The gap, challenge or opportunity the initiative was designed to address.
- What changed from previous practice or business as usual.
- The model, method, process, policy, system or partnership that enabled the initiative.
- How the initiative was resourced, governed and supported by leaders or stakeholders.
- Evidence of adoption across teams, cross-functional involvement, scalability or replication.
- If relevant, how community or external partners shaped the design or delivery.

Avoid relying only on:

- Simply stating that the initiative is innovative without explaining why.
- Describing activities without showing the design, method, resourcing or change pathway.
- Only listing partnerships or policies without explaining their role in implementation.

2. Benefit & Measurement 35% weighting

700-word limit per question | Use this section to show evidence against the relevant scoring anchors.

Nominee question:

Who did the D&I innovation or initiative benefit, and how has its effectiveness been measured? Include the changes and improvements, with metrics, where possible.

How to answer

Focus on meaningful outcomes and the evidence used to measure them. Judges need to see who benefited, what changed, how this was measured, and how the outcomes connect back to the initiative's objectives.

Evidence to include

- The intended beneficiaries, such as employees, participants, customers, suppliers, community groups or the broader organisation.
- Clear intended benefits and how they relate to the original D&I challenge or opportunity.
- Measures or KPIs used to assess effectiveness, such as representation, retention, participation, promotion, engagement, accessibility, complaints, procurement, customer experience or community outcomes.
- Baseline, follow-up or comparison data where available, including disaggregated data by cohort where appropriate.
- Qualitative evidence such as feedback, interviews, case studies or testimonials, used to support rather than replace measurable outcomes.
- Evidence that improvements were sustained, repeated or validated beyond a single activity.

Avoid relying only on:

- Activity counts alone, such as number of sessions delivered, without explaining the outcome.
- Anecdotes without any supporting measures or clear link to objectives.
- Metrics that are not connected to the initiative's intended benefits.

3. Impact & Outreach 35% weighting

700-word limit per question | Use this section to show evidence against the relevant scoring anchors.

Nominee question:

How has the D&I initiative or program delivered on its intended purpose — in terms of representation of people from key diversity groups, behavioural or attitude changes within your organisation, and impact on external parties such as clients, customers, suppliers and partnerships?

How to answer

Show the breadth, depth and sustainability of the initiative's influence. This section should explain how the initiative affected people, culture, behaviour, relationships and practice internally and externally.

Evidence to include

- How far the initiative reached: one team, multiple departments, the whole organisation, community partners, clients, customers, suppliers, sector networks or other external groups.
- Evidence that the initiative delivered on its intended purpose, including representation data where relevant and lawful to share.
- Behavioural, cultural or attitudinal shifts, supported by observable examples or measures.

- Community, partnership, supplier, customer or sector outcomes, including shared or co-created outcomes where relevant.
- Evidence that the impact is sustainable, embedded or likely to continue beyond the initial activity.
- If the initiative influenced practice beyond the organisation, explain how and provide evidence such as replication, recognition, adoption by partners or external validation.

Avoid relying only on:

- General statements that inclusion improved without evidence of how this was observed or measured.
- Representation data without explaining what changed or why it matters.
- External engagement that is mentioned but not linked to outcomes or impact.

Nominee evidence checklist

Check	Evidence prompt	Why it matters
☐	Have you answered every question under Innovation, Benefit & Measurement, and Impact & Outreach?	A complete response helps judges apply all three weighted criteria.
☐	Have you explained the D&I challenge, opportunity or gap?	Context helps judges assess the initiative proportionately.
☐	Have you described what changed from business as usual?	This supports the Innovation anchor.
☐	Have you included the systems, policies, governance, resourcing or partnerships that enabled delivery?	This shows intentional design and implementation strength.
☐	Have you identified who benefited and how?	This supports Benefit & Measurement.
☐	Have you included measures, baselines, follow-up data or other evidence, where available?	This helps judges assess whether benefits were demonstrated, not just intended.
☐	Have you shown breadth, depth and sustainability of influence?	This supports Impact & Outreach.
☐	Have you avoided relying only on narrative polish or broad claims?	Judges score evidence, outcomes and impact rather than presentation quality.

Final quality check before submission

- Can a judge quickly identify the evidence that supports each criterion?
- Does each claim have an example, data point, document, stakeholder input or clear explanation behind it?
- Does the entry show the journey from intent to implementation to outcome to impact?
- If the entry uses sensitive diversity data, has it been presented appropriately and respectfully?