

How strategic is your CSI? Entries for the Trialogue Strategic CSI Award are now open

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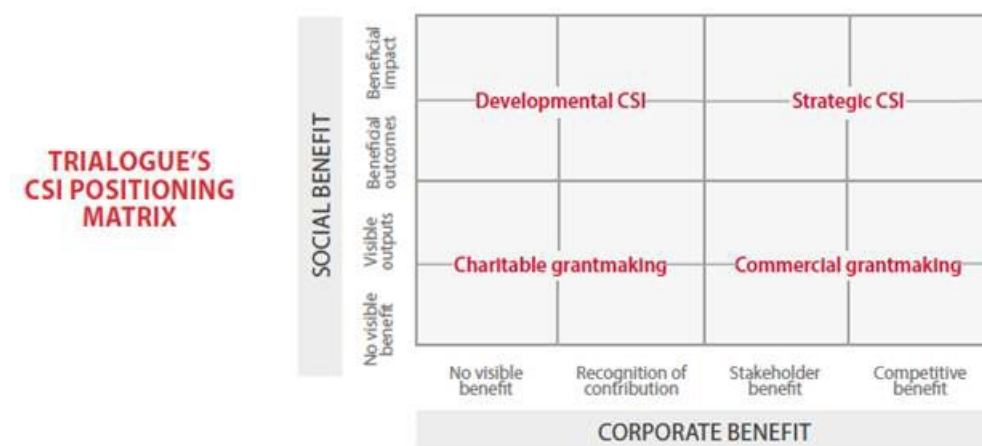
5 Jul 2019

Companies are invited to enter their strategic corporate social investment projects for consideration in the annual Trialogue Strategic CSI Award. A strategic project is one that is implemented to meet social benefits through core business practice. The winning project will be profiled in The Trialogue Business in Society Handbook and receive extensive media coverage.



For CSI to be strategic, it must have positive developmental impact that is aligned with and contributes to the priorities of the business, beyond reputational impact. The Trialogue Strategic CSI Award recognises projects that exemplify best practice. It aims to encourage CSI practitioners to think more strategically when planning and implementing their initiatives.

As can be seen in Trialogue's CSI Positioning Matrix below, strategic CSI projects deliver a high combination of positive social and business outcomes. While developmental CSI offers beneficial social outcomes, it does not always have significant corporate benefits. Similarly, commercial grantmaking prioritises corporate benefit over social return.



Judging criteria

Each entry is judged against objectives, social benefits and corporate benefits, as set out below.

Objectives

Targets need to be practical and realistic. Entries should have 'SMART' (specific, measurable, relevant and time-bound) objectives.

Social benefits

- **Visible outputs:** Short-term results that are immediate, visible and concrete (e.g. number of houses built, people trained, supplies or pamphlets distributed, community members treated, hours of service delivered).
- **Beneficial outcomes:** Specific changes in behaviour, knowledge, skills or wellbeing. Medium-term developmental results that are the consequence of achieving a specified combination of short-term outputs (e.g. behaviour change, attitude change, new knowledge or skills, improved grades, reduced isolation, improved access to health services, improved self-esteem).
- **Beneficial impact:** Broader long-term (three years or more) consequences of the project. Community, society or system-level changes that are the logical consequences of a series of medium- and short-term results (e.g. improved effectiveness of education system, reduction in HIV prevalence, new social norms, more educated/healthier population, inclusive decision-making, lack of stigma, increased capacity).

Government engagement, lesson-sharing and advocacy are also taken into account.

Corporate benefits

- **Recognition of contribution:** Recognition of the project that improves the company's reputation. This can include recognition of expenditure as socioeconomic development in line with the BBBEE scorecard, as well as internal and external communication of the project.
- **Stakeholder benefit:** Meaningful engagement with key stakeholder groups in the funding, design or management of the project that improves the company's relationship with that stakeholder group. Stakeholders can include communities, regulators, government, suppliers, customers or employees.
- **Competitive benefit:** Project benefits that enhance the competitiveness of the business. This can be done by securing a licence to operate, opening up new markets for the business, introducing new products, reducing costs by developing suppliers and/or leveraging corporate resources, or securing specialised talent.

Download the Strategic CSI Award 2019 entry form [here](#) or contact Mahlo Maku on mahlo@trialogue.co.za or 011 026 1308 for more details.

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