The Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths

Advice on Applying for a Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths Award and producing an Awards Portfolio

All applicants for Company awards (Diploma of Merit and above) are required to produce a portfolio to accompany their application. The Craft & Awards Committee has produced the following guidance notes as an aid to applicants:

- Download an application form from the company website http://blacksmithscompany.co.uk or alternatively request a hard copy from the Clerk.

- The application form contains information on the evidence required for the assessment criteria for each of the awards - this will give you an indication of the type of evidence that you will need to gather and make available. All blacksmiths are different and do different sorts of work so don't be put off if there appear to be small gaps in your evidence.

- The Clerk to the company will be happy to put you in touch with a representative who will be willing to support you in the preparation of your application.

- Fill in the application form indicating which award you are interested in applying for and prepare your portfolio. It would normally be expected that for awards of AWCB and higher that they be applied for and received in sequence.

- The application form and portfolio should then be forwarded by e mail or post for the attention of:

  The Clerk to the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths
  Painters' Hall
  9 Little Trinity Lane
  London
  EC4V 2AD
  clerk@blacksmithscompany.co.uk

Please note that any submitted portfolios will be retained by the company for its archive and therefore only copies and not originals should be sent. **The preferred means for application forms and portfolios to be submitted is in electronic format** although hard copy can be sent if necessary.

- You will receive a message/letter confirming receipt from the Clerk.

- Your application will be raised at the next available Craft & Awards Committee meeting (these occur tri-annually in January / February, April and October). Your application will be valid for 18 months.

- The awards coordinator will contact you to agree a date for an assessment visit.

- It is strongly recommended that you review the assessment criteria (https://blacksmithscompany.co.uk/craft/awards/) of the award that you have applied for and arrange for the assessors to have access to any evidence that will support your application. It should be noted that the company is well aware of the commercial realities within the craft and the assessors will welcome the opportunity to review both specialist forge-work and more commercial work.

- You should, where possible, arrange for inspection of any sited work that is in reasonable proximity to your workshops.
- Arrange for any design work (drawings, samples, models etc.) and a copy of your portfolio to be available.
- Depending on the level of award applied for, you will be visited by one or more assessors. Assessment visits will last for several hours but no more than a day.
- The assessors will then prepare a report with a recommendation for the next Craft Committee meeting.
- The Craft & Awards Committee will arrive at a decision which will be forwarded to the Wardens' Court and Court of Assistants for final ratification. The Courts meet quarterly.
- The Clerk will inform you of the result and, if successful, you will then be entitled to use the appropriate letters after your name. You will also be given the opportunity to attend a Company ceremony in London to receive your award.

INDICATIVE PORTFOLIO CONTENT

The precise format can vary; for example, it could comprise a Word document with a set of accompanying JPEG photographs; alternatively, you may wish to put together a PowerPoint style presentation. Although this may seem onerous, it is hoped that such an exercise will be helpful in marketing your work to the general public. It could also act as the subject matter in a website or Facebook home page.

1. A cover photo of yourself.
2. A picture of your maker's mark if you have one. This will be added to the Company list of makers' marks.
3. Photos of your workplace with a short statement describing the general nature of your work/business.
4. A brief CV of your background, working and education history that also includes information on for example:

   • Previous awards/prizes.

   • Relevant qualifications.

   • Exhibitions or Shows.

   • Membership/position and contribution to relevant craft/industry bodies and their events.

   • Website details.

   • In the case of company awards a list of staff with their responsibilities.

   • For higher awards include any information on promoting the craft to others e.g. training, assessing, teaching, demonstrating, publicity news events etc.

5. The portfolio should include annotated, good quality images of your work (arranged in date order). The images should be accompanied by:

- A title and year of manufacture.
- Close up images of e.g. construction details, decorative and structural elements, fixings.
- A site address if appropriate.
- Images of design work e.g. Research, drawings, photos of samples, models, specifications etc.
- A brief description of the materials and construction process.
- A statement making it clear which parts of it were produced by you, if it has been produced by more than one person. This includes design and site work.
- A statement listing (in the case of company awards) those involved and indications of what aspects of the piece they were responsible for.
- A description of finish.
- Letters of commendation if available.

Previously assessed work can be submitted as part of the evidence for higher awards especially if illustrating issues such as depth and breadth of production but must be referenced as such. Significant fresh evidence should be submitted to support any further application for a subsequent higher award.