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Charity Council

CHARITY AWARDS:

Briefing on the PILLAR Framework and Awards Application Process

29 June 2026

Programme

Time	Programme
3.00pm – 3.10pm	**Opening Address by Ms Theresa Goh** Charity Council Chairperson
3.10pm – 4.10pm	**Briefing on the PILLAR Framework & Awards Application Process by Dr Caroline Lim** Head, Organisation & Leadership for Social Change Programme, SUSS
4.10pm – 4.30pm	**Briefing on Submission Process via the Awards Force Platform by Mr Nazran Ahmad** Project Director, Hydse
4.30pm – 5.00pm	Q & A
5.00pm	End of Session

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Briefing on the PILLAR Framework & Awards Application Process

Dr Caroline Lim

Head, Organisation & Leadership for Social Change Programme, SUSS

PILLAR Framework

https://go.gov.sg/pillarframework

https://go.gov.sg/pillarframework

PILLAR Framework for Charity Awards

Briefing for Charities

Monday, 29 Jun 2026

Presenter: Caroline Lim | email: carolinelimsl@suss.edu.sg

Faculty Team: A/P Soh Kee Hean, Dr Joyce Wang

Agenda

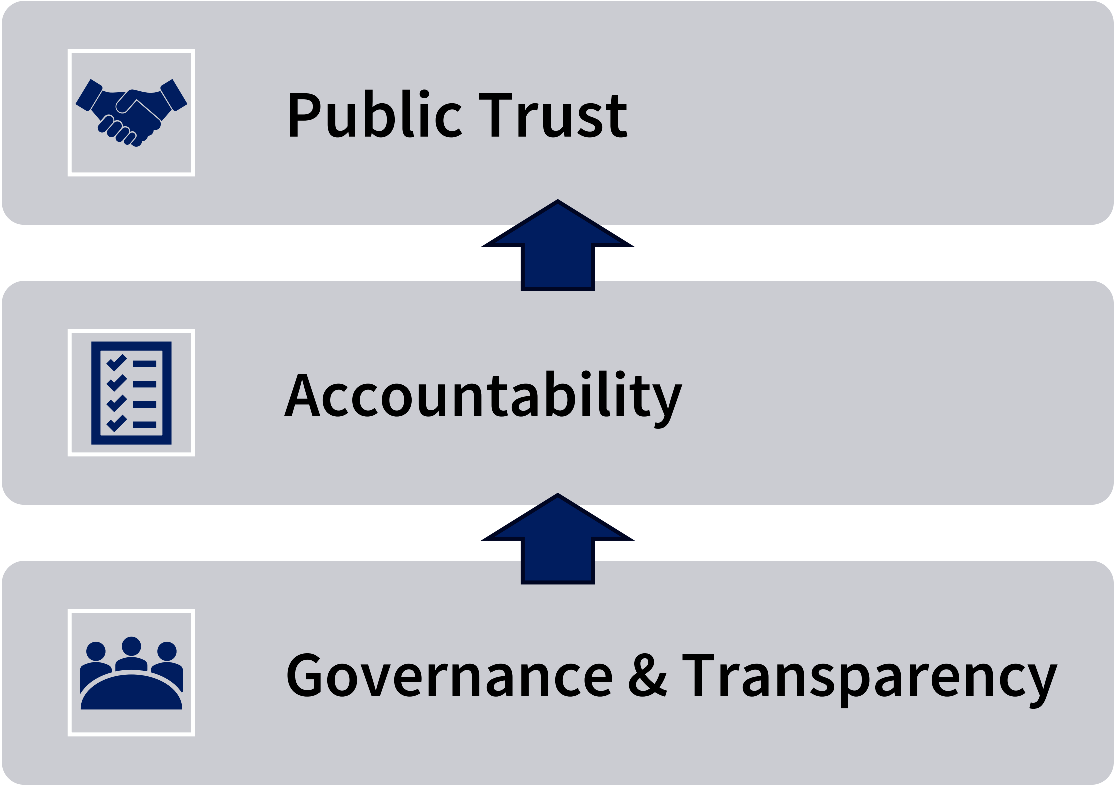
Designed for Charities, with Charities

- Refreshed awards evaluation framework from your participation – interviews, FGD, pilot testing in 2025
- Your inputs helped shape and finalise the “PILLAR Framework”
- Roadmap for stronger governance
- Embedded with the Code/GEC

PILLAR: A Shared Governance Language

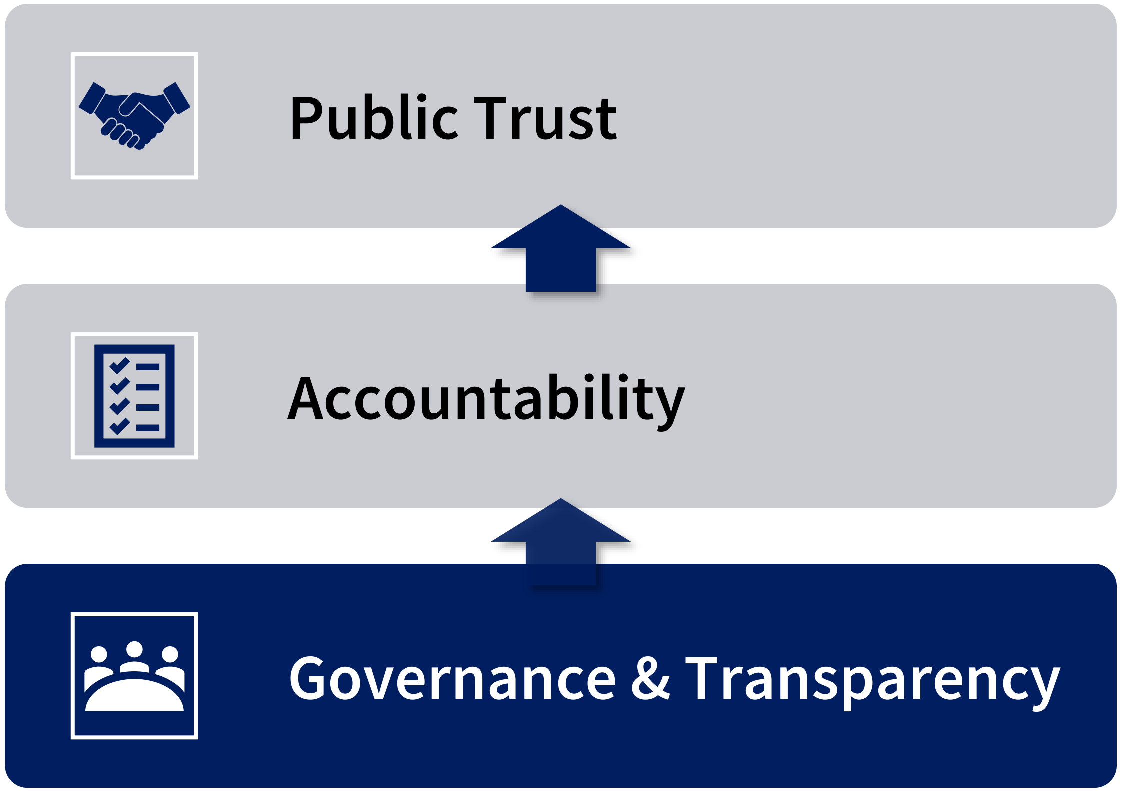
- **One language**
  A common understanding of governance expectations and good practices
- **One platform**
  A structured submission process that helps charities navigate related requirements more efficiently
- **One community**
  A sector-wide space for shared learning, reflection, and continuous improvement

Governance & Transparency to Earn & Sustain Public Trust



- Governance **structures** accountability.
- Transparency makes accountability ***visible***.
- Governance and Transparency help charities earn and sustain **public trust**
- PILLAR Framework helps charities show that governance practices exists, and that this practices can be explained and evidenced.

Governance: The Foundation of Accountability



Governance

The exercise of authority, oversight, and strategic control.

Effective governance ensures that charities remain true to their mission, steward resources responsibly, and uphold public trust.

Strong governance is underpinned by three key elements:

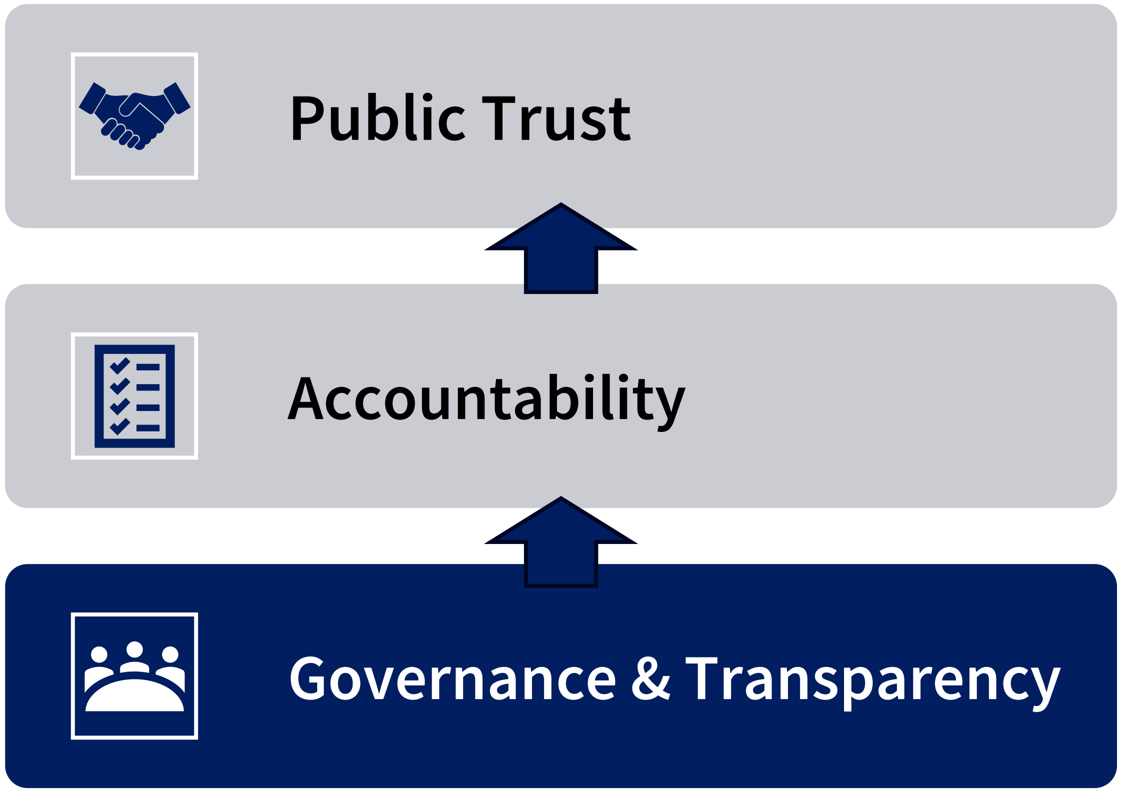
- Internal mechanisms
- External mechanisms
- Structured accountability

Structured Accountability Illustration

Governance Level	Accountable To	Main Responsibilities	Accountability Mechanisms
Staff & Volunteers	Managers	Service delivery, compliance	SOPs, supervisor review, KPIs
Department Heads	CEO	Department performance	Budget reporting, operational reporting
CEO / Executive Head	Board	Mission achievement, operational management	Board reports, audits, strategy reviews
Board Committees	Board	Specialised oversight	Committee reports, internal reviews
Board of Directors	Regulators & stakeholders	Governance and stewardship	Annual reports, disclosures, governance evaluation
Charity as Institution	Public	Public trust and mission impact	Transparency and regulatory compliance

Abbrev: **SOP** Standard Operating Procedure; **KPI** Key Performance Indicator

Transparency: Making Accountability Visible



Transparency

Accessible and accurate disclosure of information about what a charity does, how it is governed, and how resources are managed.

Effective transparency is supported by four key elements:

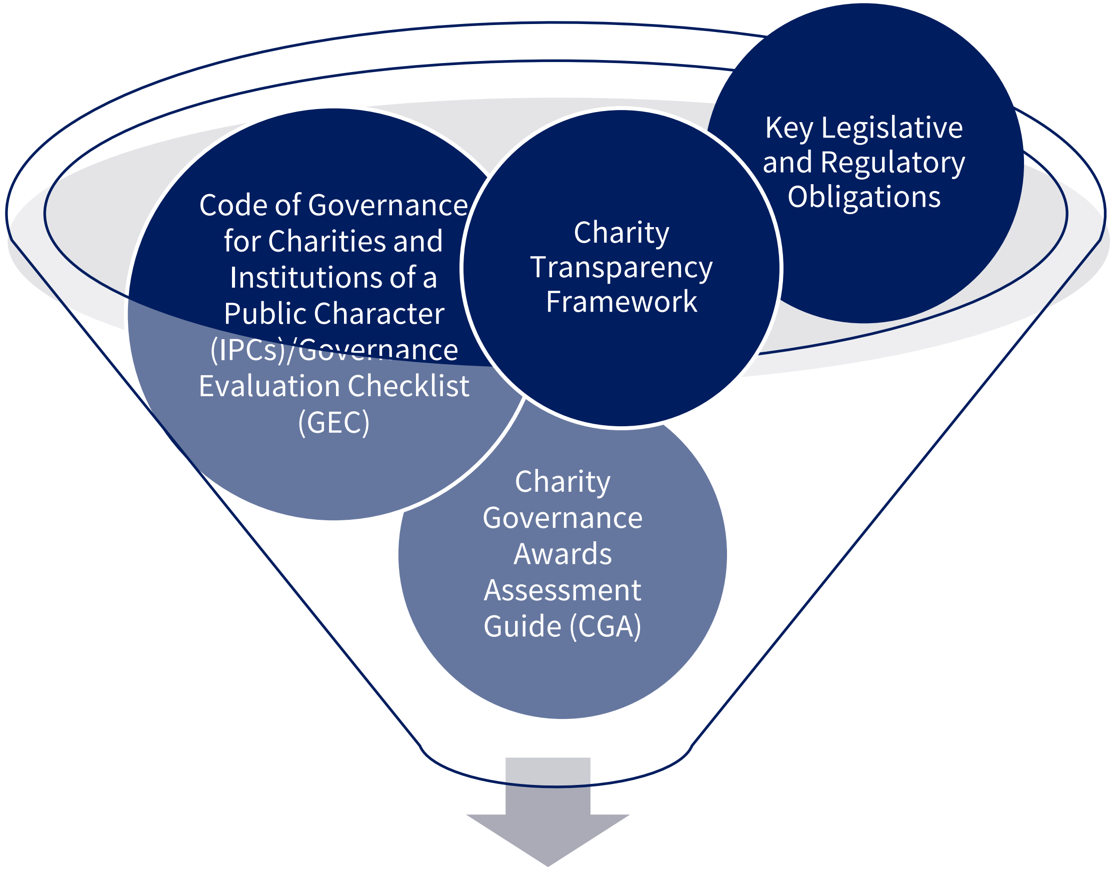
- Public disclosure
- Self-reporting mechanisms
- Third-party monitoring
- Building confidence

Overview of PILLAR Framework

Overview of the PILLAR Framework

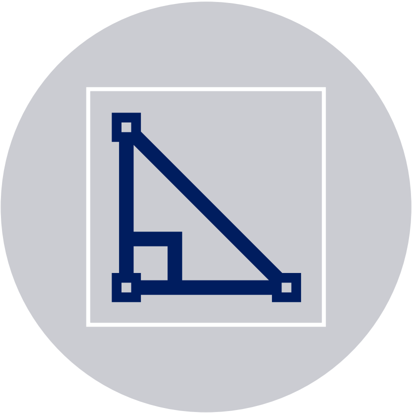
PILLAR has two functions:

- ✓ Self-assessment tool that helps charities reflect on governance and transparency practices
- ✓ Assessment framework for the Awards



PILLAR Framework

PILLAR Framework Strengthens Self-regulation



Engineered to enable charities to keep accurate and current governance documents

Aligns self-assessment with familiar governance expectations

Encourages charities to verify practices systematically through evidence

Structure of the PILLAR Framework

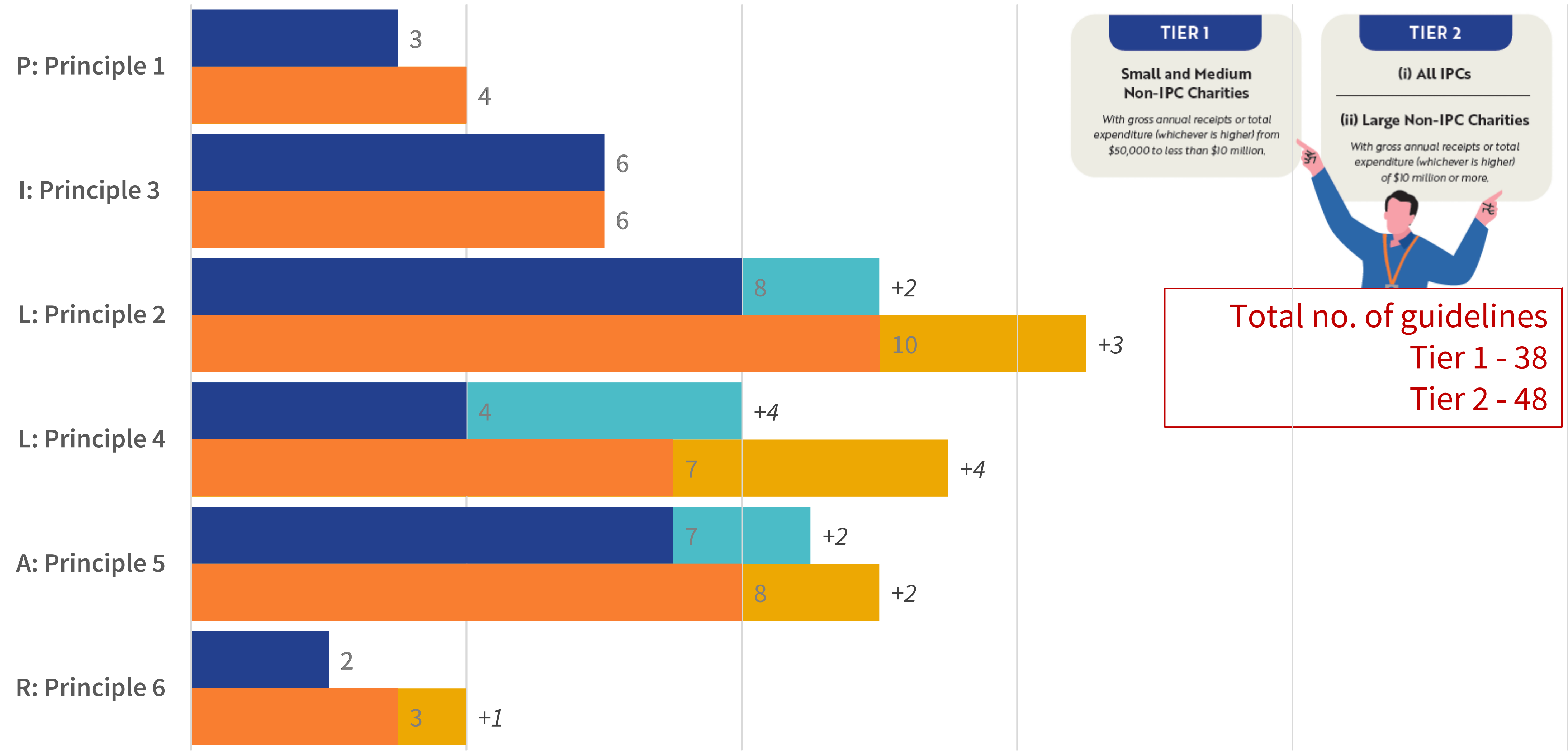
The framework is organised around six governance principles, aligned with the Code.

BOX 4: SIX GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES FORM THE THEMATIC CODE "PILLAR"

Theme	Principle Number	Principle in Description
P Purpose-driven Mission	Principle 1	The charity serves its mission and achieves its objectives.
I Integrity & Ethics	Principle 3	The charity acts responsibly, fairly and with integrity.
L Leadership & Governance	Principle 2	The charity has an effective Board and Management.
L Long-term Planning	Principle 4	The charity is well-managed and plans for the future.
A Accountability	Principle 5	The charity is accountable and transparent.
R Reputation & Communication	Principle 6	The charity communicates actively to instil public confidence.

Source: A Charity Guide to the Pillar Framework

PILLAR: Number of Guidelines by Principle



Total no. of guidelines
Tier 1 - 38
Tier 2 - 48

Tiering & Applicability

BOX 7: DIFFERENTIATED REQUIREMENTS BASED ON CHARITY SIZE AND IPC STATUS

TIER 1	TIER 2
Small and Medium Non-IPC Charities	**(i) All IPC Charities** **(ii) Large Non-IPC Charities**
With gross annual receipts or a total expenditure (whichever is higher) of $50,000 to less than $10 million.	With gross annual receipts or a total expenditure (whichever is higher) of $10 million or more.

Source: A Charity Guide to the Pillar Framework

Eligibility Criteria for the Awards

1	Status of Charity Be a registered charity and/or an IPC in Singapore
2	Annual Submissions Have submitted their annual report (AR), financial statement (FS), and Governance Evaluation Checklist (GEC) on time for the last financial year (FY)
3	Financial Information Have gross annual receipts of at least $50,000 in the last FY
4	PILLAR Self-Assessment Complete the self-assessment

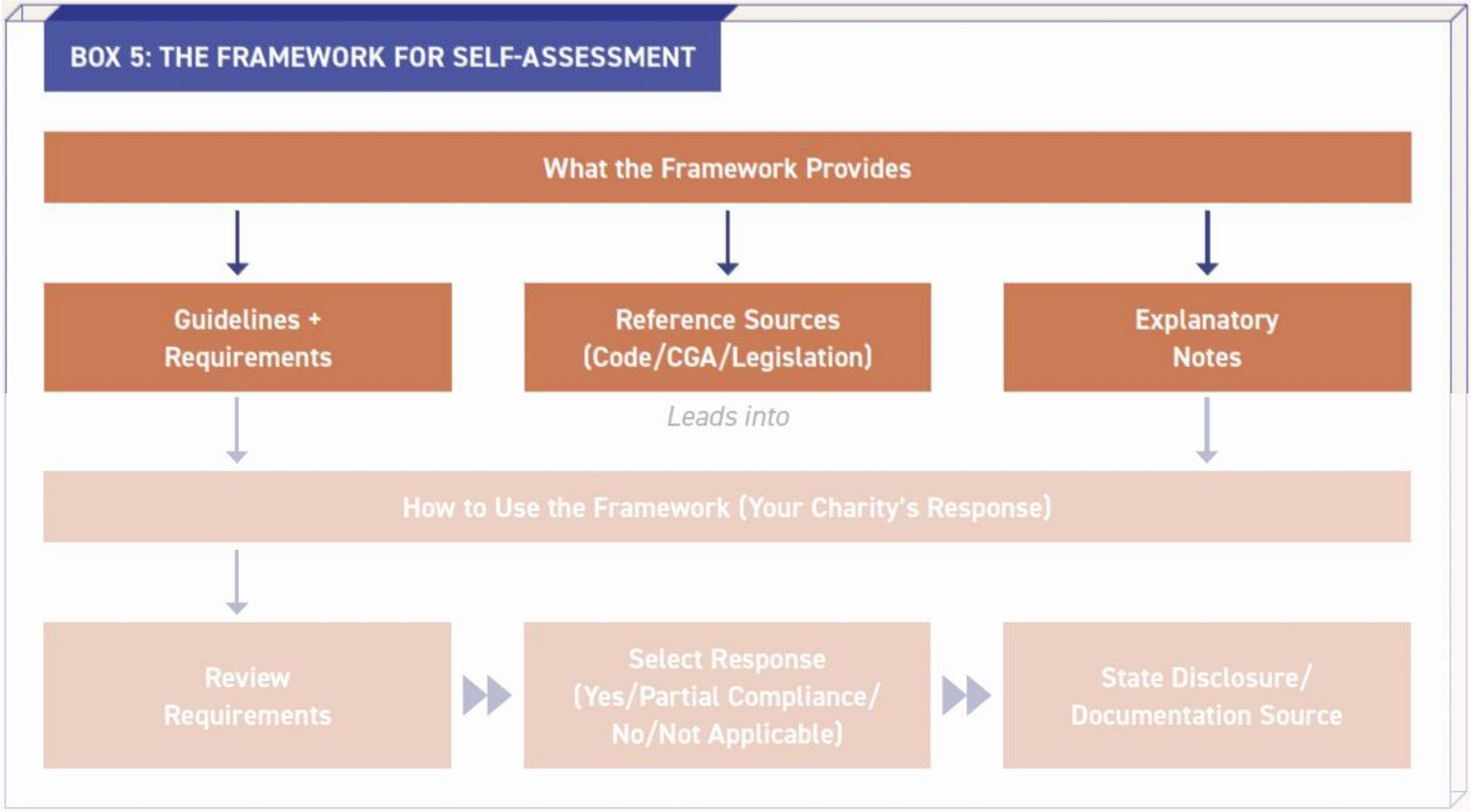
- ✓ In 2026, provide supporting evidence from FY2025's submission; and
- ✓ All on-time submission on Charity Portal would complete by 30 Jun 2026.

How to Complete the Self-Assessment

NotebookLM

PILLAR Self-Assessment Guide

Using the PILLAR Framework

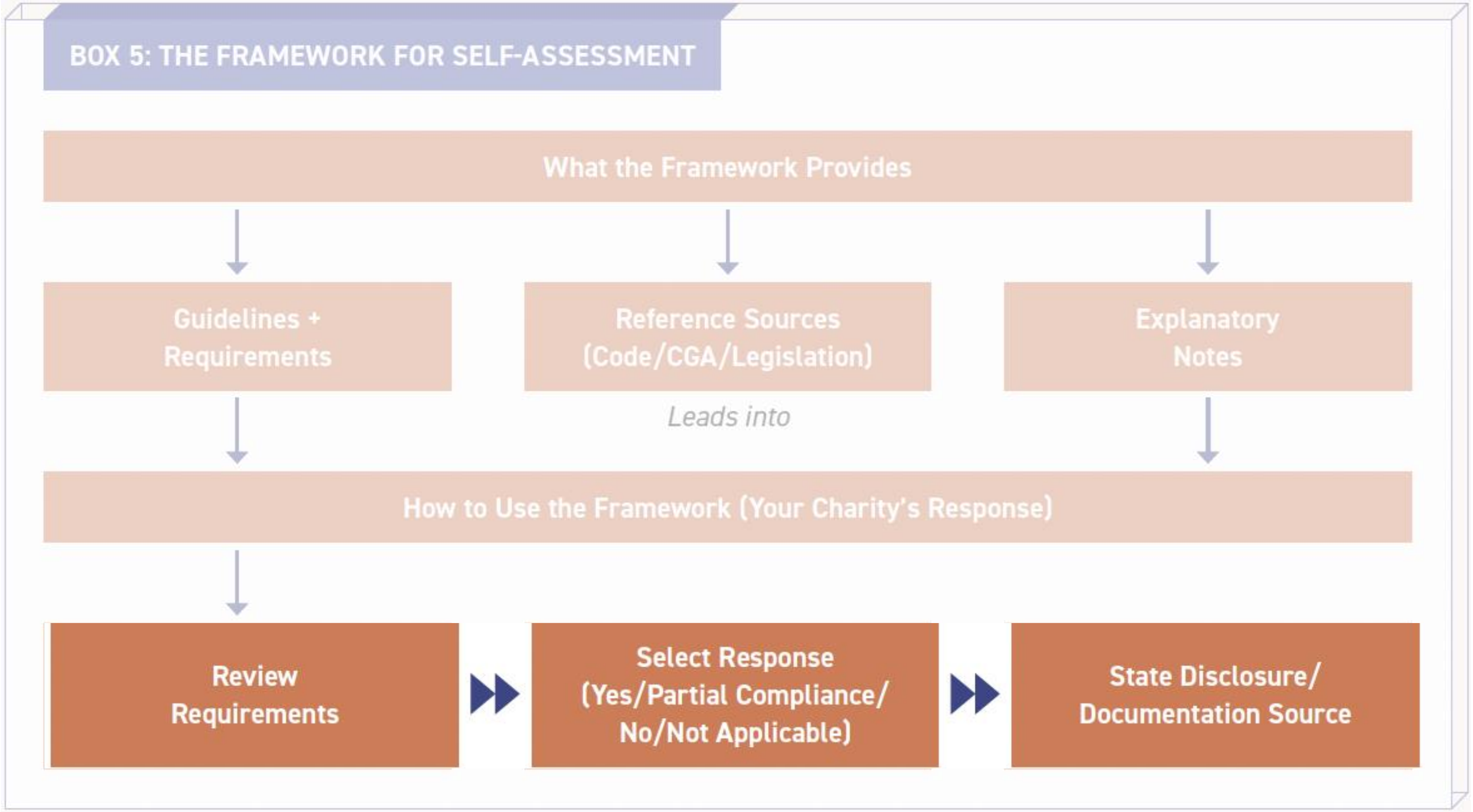


Framework for self-assessment

- Principle ⟶ Guidelines ⟶ Requirements
- Reference source of the Guideline (e.g. Code, guides, legislative requirements)
- Explanatory notes to clarify expectations and guide implementation

Source: A Charity Guide to the Pillar Framework

Self-Assessment: Apply the PILLAR Framework



Response to each guideline organized into 3 parts:

- Action: read ⟶ respond ⟶ evidence
- Yes or Partial: cite evidence source/s
- No, Partial or NA: explain in brief

Source: A Charity Guide to the Pillar Framework

Completing the PILLAR Framework

Relevant | **Sufficient** | **Verifiable**

- Strong evidence is relevant, sufficient, and verifiable.
- Relevant: evidence relates to the guideline.
- Sufficient: evidence addresses the material requirements.
- Verifiable: the assessor can locate and understand it.

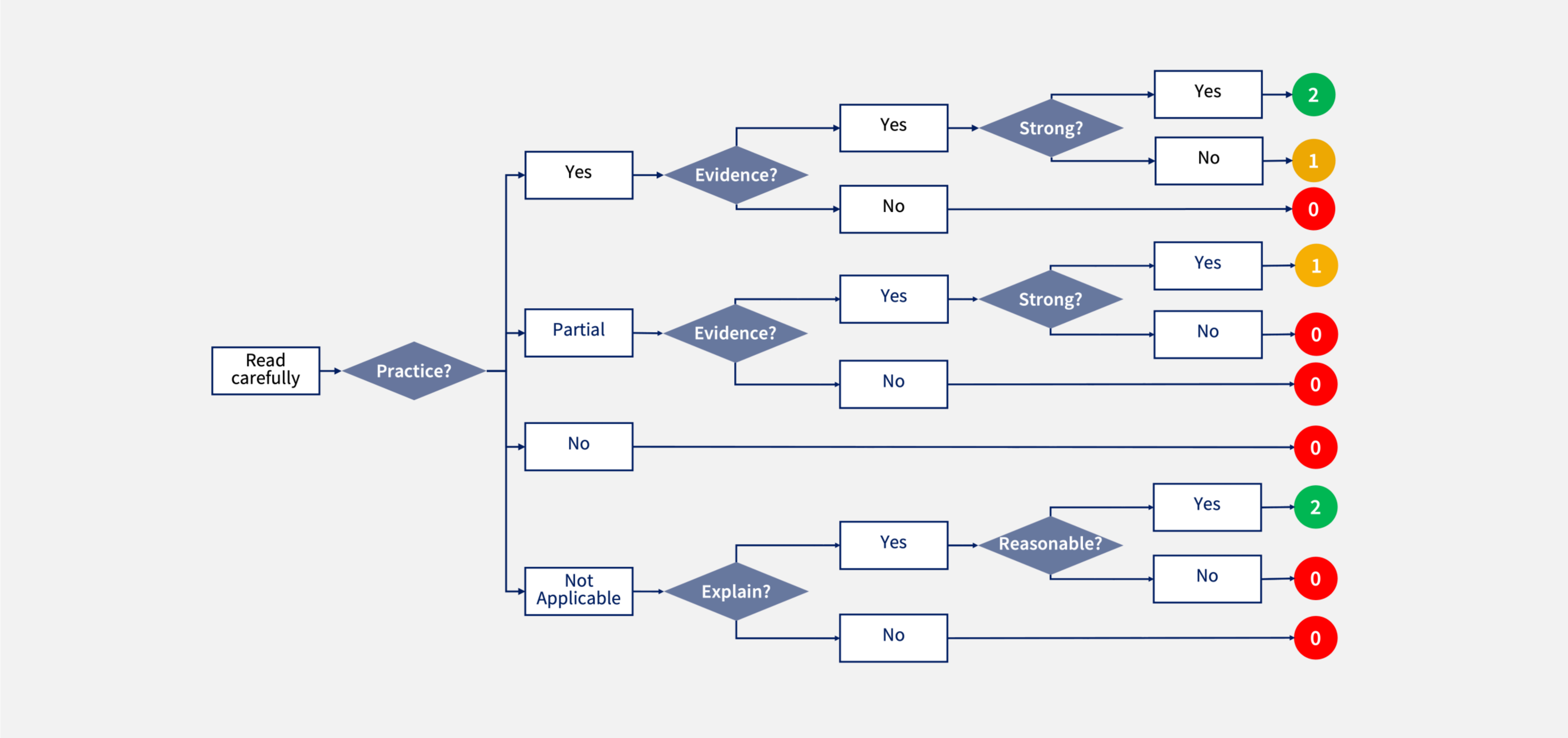
Scoring Values

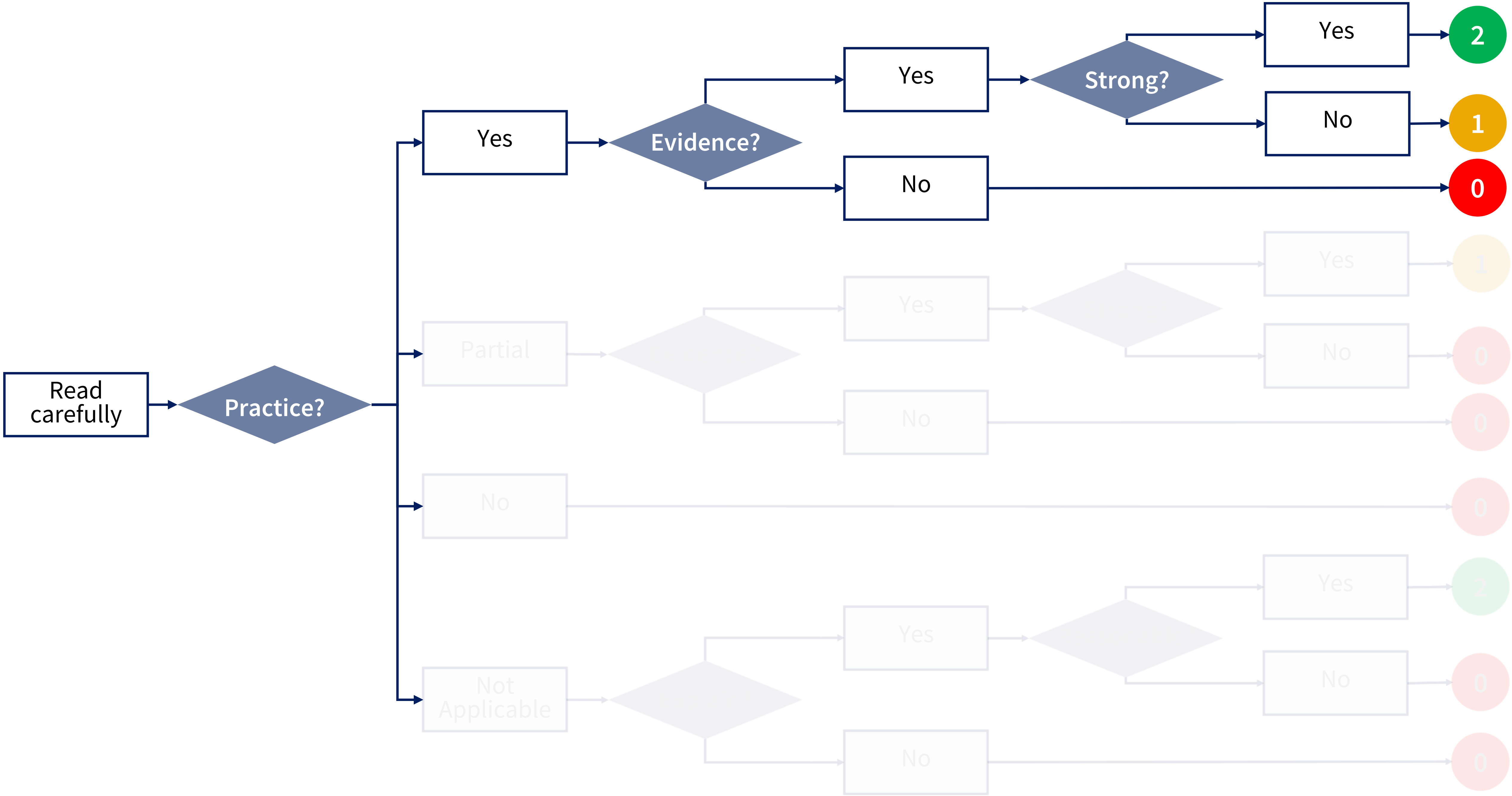
Response	Score	When to use
Yes	2	All material requirements of the guidelines are supported by named evidence; ***relevant***, ***sufficient*** and ***verifiable*** (strong)
Partial Compliance	1	Some relevant documents but insufficient i.e., not all material parts are supported; some degree of verifiability (partial)
No	0	Evidence is missing, irrelevant, cannot verify requirement; contradictory* (no/not scoreable)
Not Applicable#	2	Requirement genuinely does not apply, and explanation is specific and reasonable (strong)

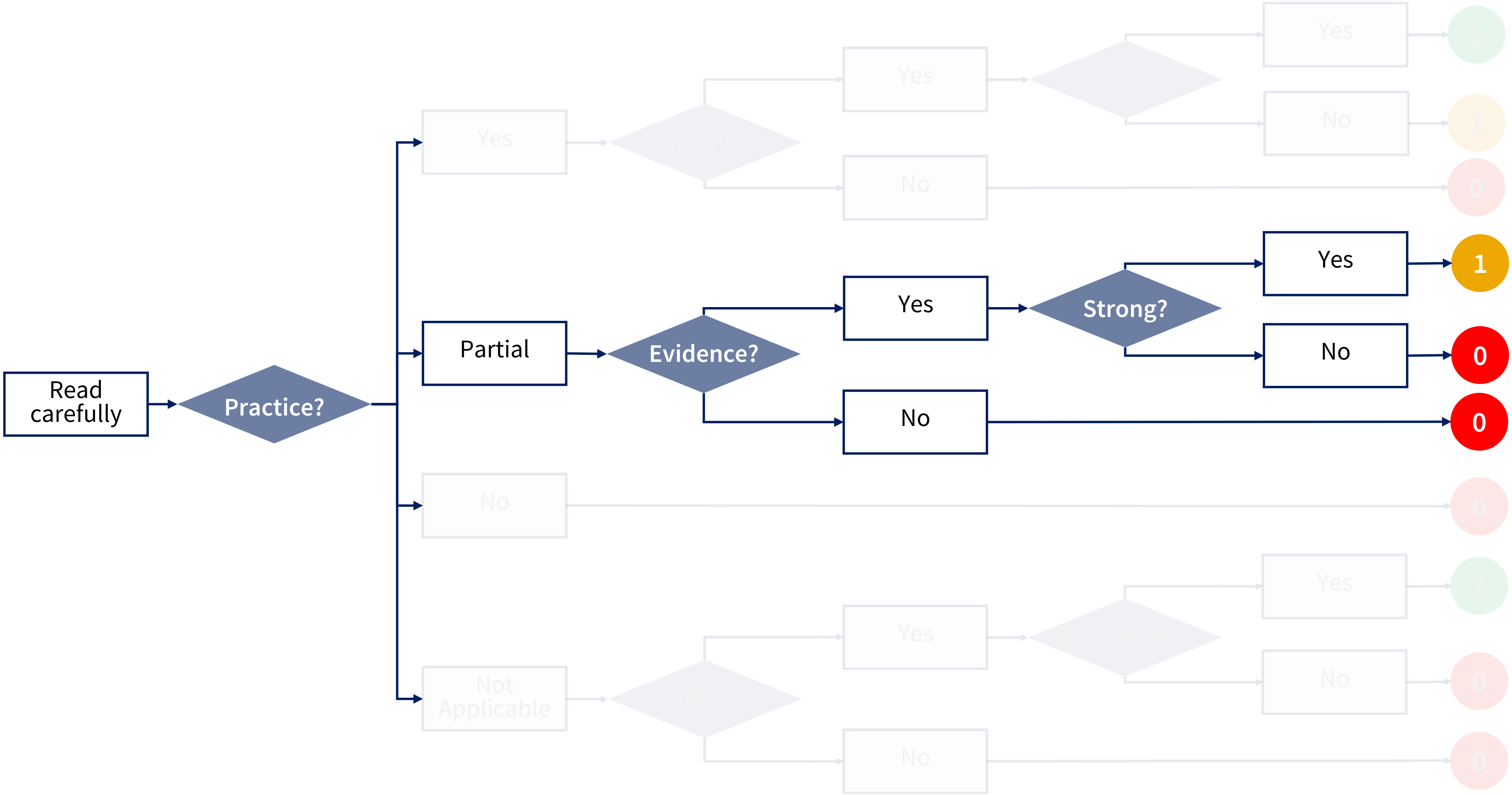
** E.g., charity claims no fundraising activity, but FS show expenses for fundraising campaigns; charity submitted “yes” for public disclosure of Board appointment date, but information is missing from AR.*

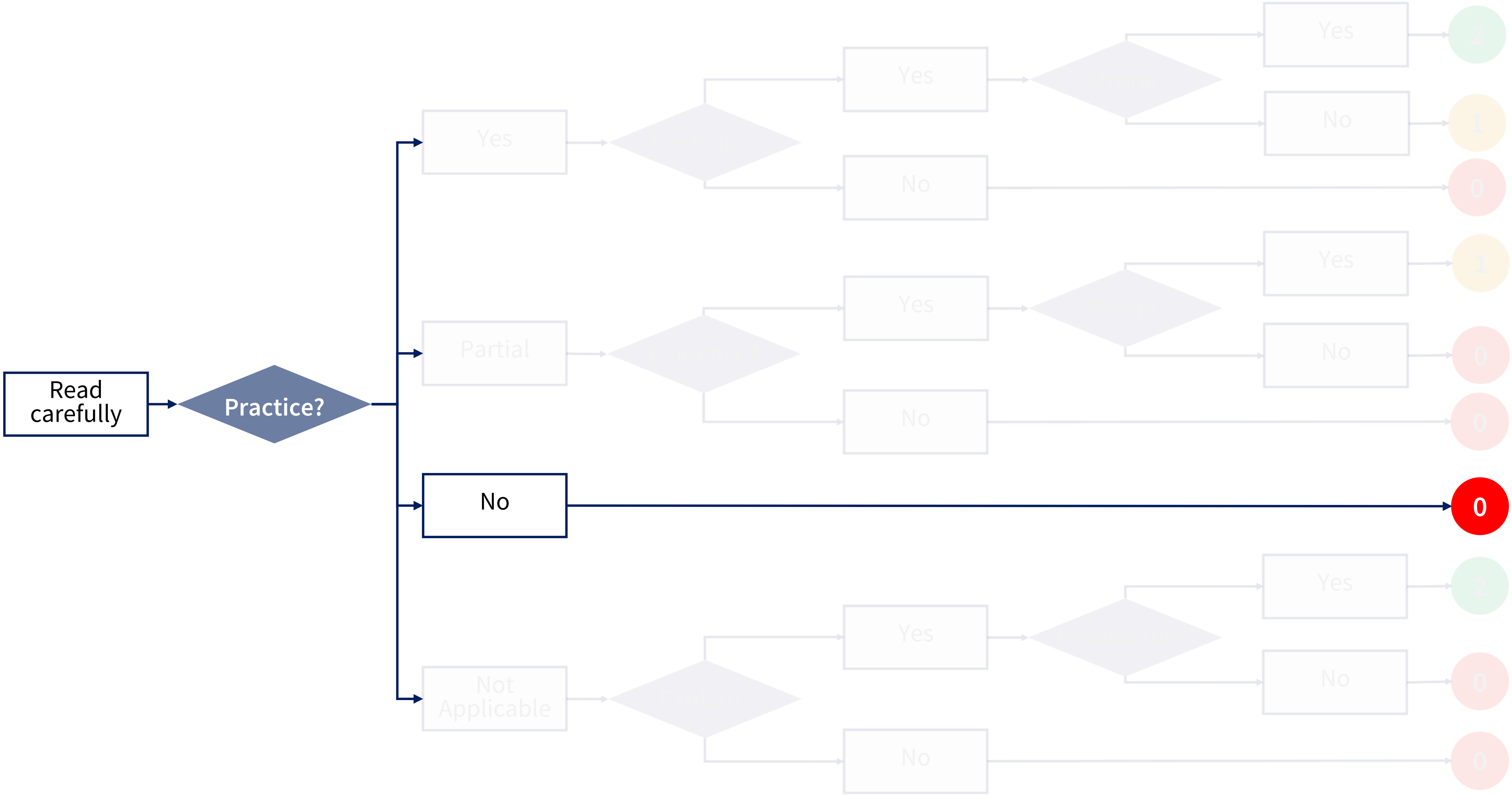
 # One of the response options in LP5 and LP6.

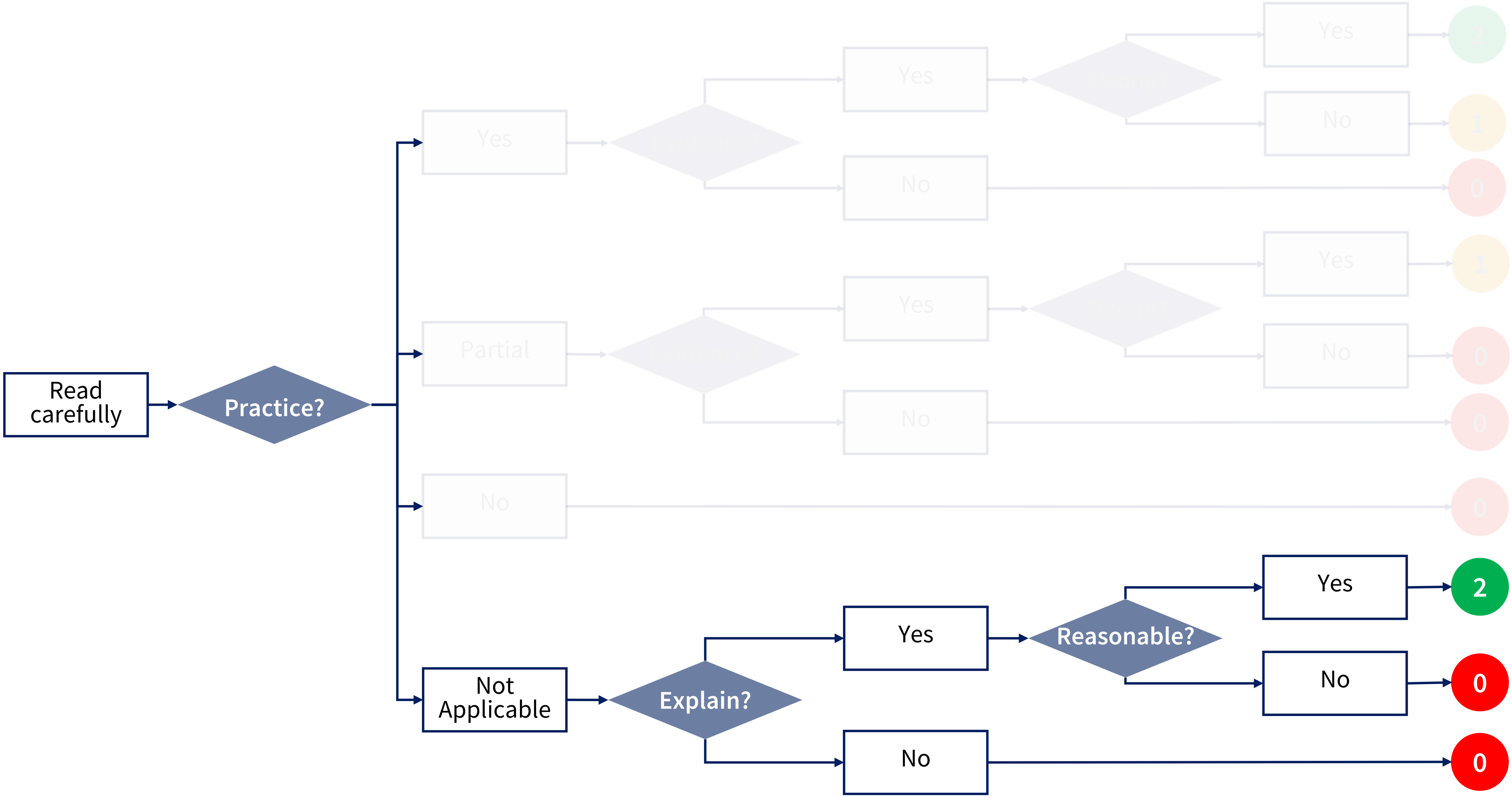
Apply the Scoring Logic




Read carefully
Practice?
Yes
Evidence?
Yes
Strong?
Yes
2
No
1
No
0
Partial
Yes
No
No
No
Not Applicable
Yes
No
No


Read carefully
Practice?
Partial
Evidence?
Yes
Strong?
Yes
1
No
0
No
0


Read carefully
Practice?
Yes
Partial
No
Not Applicable
0


Read carefully
Practice?
Yes
Partial
No
Not Applicable
Yes
No
Yes
No
No
Yes
No
Yes
No
Explain?
Yes
No
Reasonable?
Yes
No
2
0
0

Scoring, Evidence & Explanation

From Trust to Verifiability

Many charities are built on public goodwill. Public trust must be supported by verifiable structures.

Trust Claim	Governance & Transparency Evidence
“We are dedicated to relieving human suffering, protecting human lives and dignity and responding to emergencies.”	Governing instrument, strategic plan, programme outcome/impact report
“The Board’s primary role is to provide strategic direction to <charity> and monitor the management’s performance.”	Board minutes, delegated authority framework, performance reports, conflict of interest (COI) declarations
“Your donation fund transport services for needy patients’ hospital visits.”	Financial statements, internal controls, procurement policy, reserves policy, approval records
“We strive to be as transparent as one can be to our stakeholders, including partners, donors and beneficiaries.”	Annual report, website disclosures, GEC, financial statement
“The charity has put in place documented procedures for committee members to declare actual or potential conflicts of interests on a regular and need-to basis.”	COI policy and procedures, declaration records, recusal records, related-party disclosure.

Evidence types

Read carefully

Assess practice

Select the appropriate response box; cite supporting evidence/s

PRINCIPLE 3:

The charity acts responsibly, fairly and with integrity.

Principle/Guideline	Reference Source	Explanatory Note	Did the charity put this principle into action?
I5. Establish a Code of Conduct that reflects the charity's values and ethics and ensure that the Code of Conduct is applied appropriately.	Code of Governance Code ID 3.4	This item assesses whether the charity established a Code of Conduct that reflects its core values and ethical principles, and whether the Code is communicated to and applied across the organisation, including staff, Board members, Management, and volunteers. The Code of Conduct should set out clear expectations for ethical behaviour and decision-making. In developing the Code, charities may consider addressing areas such as, confidentiality and data protection; fair and non-discriminatory employment practices; prevention of conflicts of interest; professional and respectful workplace conduct; prevention of harassment and misconduct; and the appropriate use of organisational resources.	☐ Yes ☐ No (please explain) ☐ Partial Compliance (please explain)

Evidence source(s) (required if Yes or Partial Compliance):

☐ Annual Report ☐ Financial Statement ☐ Internal

☐ Website ☐ Social Media ☐ Others (to specify)

If No or Partial Compliance: Reason/planned action:

Source: A Charity Guide to the Pillar Framework

PRINCIPLE 3:

The charity acts responsibly, fairly and with integrity.

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External and Internal Sources of Evidence

External Source

- Publicly accessible information
- Examples: Website, annual report, published policy, Charity Portal page
- State active URL, date and relevant page/s
- When the guideline uses verbs e.g., “publish”, “disclose”, “make publicly available”

Internal Source

- Organisational records not necessarily public
- Examples: Board minutes, registers, policies, TORs, declarations, dashboards
- State the document title, date of the document, and a brief explanation of how the document shows that the guideline has been put into practice
- When the guideline uses verbs like “develop”, “document”, “ensure”, “implement”, “review”

Note: *Internal evidence can support governance but cannot provide evidence of transparency when the guideline specifically requires public disclosure.*

Types of Evidence: B-DRIP

The same evidence type can support different purpose depending on the guideline.

Evidence type	Purpose	Examples (primary function)
Board oversight	The Board approved, reviewed, or monitored an agenda	Board minutes, delegated authority framework *E.g.*, Board Minutes approving FY2025 Budget, dated 20 Dec 2024
Disclosure	Required information was made publicly accessible	Annual report, Financial Statement *E.g.*, AR FY2025, p. 12, discloses Board members' attendance
Review	The charity checked whether the policy, plan, activity, risk or arrangement remains relevant, effective or fit for purpose	Review minutes, programme evaluation report *E.g.*, Minutes of Risk Committee Meeting with evidence that key risks were monitored and progress of risk treatment was reviewed
Implementation	The plan, policy or procedure was put into practice	COI declaration records, training register *E.g.*, Whistle-blowing Case Register and Follow-up Log FY2025
Policy	The charity has a formal rule, standard, framework or documented arrangement	Governing instrument, procurement policy *E.g.*, Board committee TOR stating the term limit

Practice #1

P2. Develop and implement strategic plans to achieve the stated charitable purposes; make its plan publicly available (e.g., on its website, annual report).

PRINCIPLE 1:
The charity serves its mission and achieves its objectives.

Principle/Guideline	Reference Source	Explanatory Note	Did the charity put this principle into action?
P2. Develop and implement strategic plans to achieve the stated charitable purposes; make its plan publicly available (for example, on its website, annual report).	Code of Governance Code ID 1.2 Charities (Accounts and Annual Report) Regulations 2011 Reg 7(b)(iv)	This item assesses whether the charity has established, implemented and communicated strategic plans to achieve its stated charitable purposes. Strategic plans set out key priorities, objectives, and actions over a defined period, and are informed by evidence, stakeholder needs, and the charity's available resources.	☐ Yes ☐ No (please explain) ☐ Partial Compliance (please explain)

Evidence source(s) (required if Yes or Partial Compliance):

☐ Annual Report ☐ Financial Statement ☐ Internal

☐ Website ☐ Social Media ☐ Others (to specify)

If No or Partial Compliance: Reason/planned action:

- Read the guideline
- What is the action verb?
- Is the evidence internal, external or both?
- Which BDRIP types are triggered?

Practice #2

I2. Disclose the policy on the management and avoidance of conflicts of interests, and document the processes for the Board and staff to declare actual or potential conflicts, along with the measures to deal with such conflicts when they arise.

a. A Board member with a conflict of interest in the matter(s) discussed should recuse himself/herself from the meeting and should not vote or take part in the decision-making during the meeting.

A hypothetical charity's response:

A charity responded "Yes" and cited below documents: –

i. Published COI policy dated 2021 along with active URLs

ii. Annual declaration forms signed by Board consolidated 12 Feb 2025

iii. Board minutes showing one member recuse himself from a procurement decision dated 27 Nov 2025

- What is the action verb?
- Is the evidence internal, external or both?
- Which BDRIP types are triggered?
- Is the cited evidence strong?

Practice #3

L7. Ensure the Board has suitable qualifications and experience, understands its duties clearly, and performs well.

a. No staff should chair the Board and staff should not comprise more than one-third of the Board.

A hypothetical charity's response:

A charity responded "Yes" and cited below documents: –

i. Board skills matrix updated 7 Nov 2025
ii. Board Code of Conduct updated 22 Mar 2025
iii. Board annual self-evaluation conducted on 16 Sep 2025
iv. 2025 Organisation chart including Board and Management detailing members and reporting structure
v. Policy prohibiting staff from chairing the Board in Constitution dated 1989

What is the action verb?

Is the evidence internal, external or both?

Which BDRIP types are triggered?

Is the cited evidence strong?

Practice #4

LP11. The charity should also measure the impact of its activities, review external risk factors and their likelihood of occurrence, and respond to key risks for the sustainability of the charity.

A hypothetical charity's response:

A charity responded "Yes" and cited : –

i. Q4 FY2025 enterprise dashboard

What is the action verb?

Is the evidence internal, external or both?

Which BDRIP types are triggered?

Is the cited evidence strong?

Practice #5

A1. Submit its Annual Report, Financial Statements and Governance Evaluation Checklist (GEC) on time.

A hypothetical charity's response:

A charity responded "Yes", no explanation nor evidence was identified.

What is the action verb?

Is the evidence internal, external or both?

Which BDRIP types are triggered?

Is the cited evidence strong?

Practice #6

R3. Implement a media communication policy to help the Board and Management build positive relationships with the media and the public.

A hypothetical charity's response:

A charity responded "Yes" and provided:

i. active URL to media policy dated 10 Jun 2025 along with a brief explanation *"policy differentiates role of board and management, delegates spokesperson during crisis, guides employees when interacting with online community, and ensures ongoing media training for board and management"*

ii. active URL to media releases and public statements in 2025

- What is the action verb?
- Is the evidence internal, external or both?
- Which BDRIP types are triggered?
- Is the cited evidence strong?

Consultation Clinics & Support

Support for Completing the PILLAR Self-Assessment

- Complimentary consultation clinics are available to support charities in completing the PILLAR Framework self-assessment.
- These clinics will be facilitated by trained student assessors from SMU and SUSS.
- Charities may use the clinics to clarify:
  1. how to interpret PILLAR guidelines;
  2. what types of evidence may be relevant;
  3. how to complete the self-assessment accurately.
- More information will be provided for charities to register a clinic session

Use of Consultation Clinics

Clinics can help with	Clinics cannot do
Clarify what a guideline means	Confirm final scores
Explain evidence types	Approve submissions in advance
Help charities understand how to map requirements to evidence	Draft policies, constitution or Board papers
Clarify how to use the platform	Provide legal, audit or professional assurance

Assessment & Award Pathway

PILLAR Self-assessment

Charities complete and submit self-assessment using the awards platform

Assessment & Validation

Trained assessors from SMU and SUSS conduct the first round of assessment using the PILLAR Framework, followed by professional validation

Champions of Governance & Transparency Award

Charities that meet the PILLAR assessment threshold will receive the award

Invitation-only Awards Pathway

Strong-performing charities may be shortlisted for: PILLAR of Trust Award and Beacons of Governance Award

PILLAR of Trust Award and Beacons of Governance Award

Shortlisted charities will complete an Assessment Questionnaire, with finalists invited to an independent judging panel interview

Additional Reading

Lim, C. S. L., Soh, K. H., & Wang, J. (2026). Measuring Impact of Charities. Singapore Institute of Directors Q2 Bulletin. https://doi.org/10.82106/suss.32080980.v1

Question & Clarification

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Charity Council

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29 June 2026

Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

Application Platform

https://go.gov.sg/charityawardsplatf
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https://go.gov.sg/charityawardsplatform

Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

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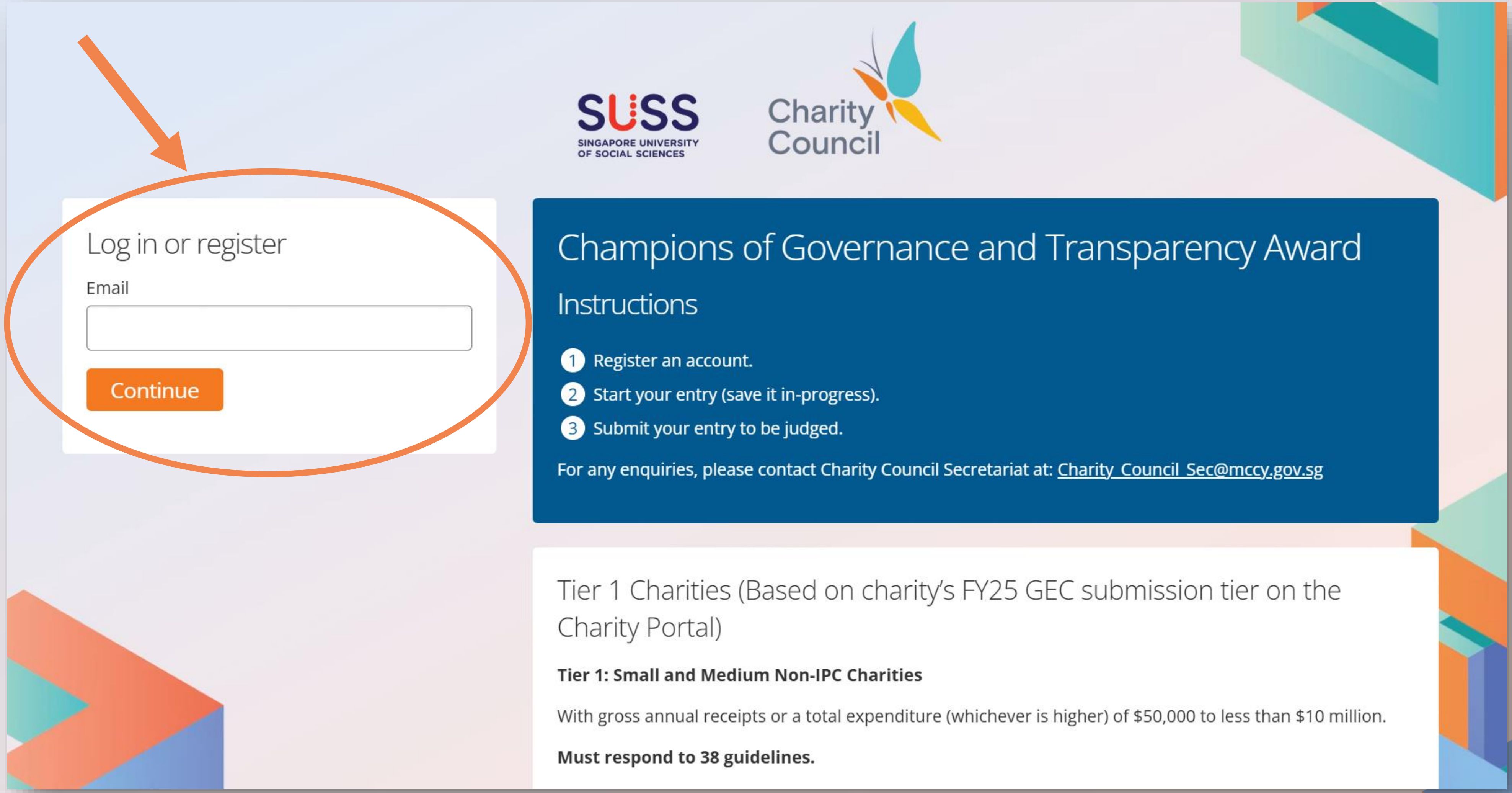

Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

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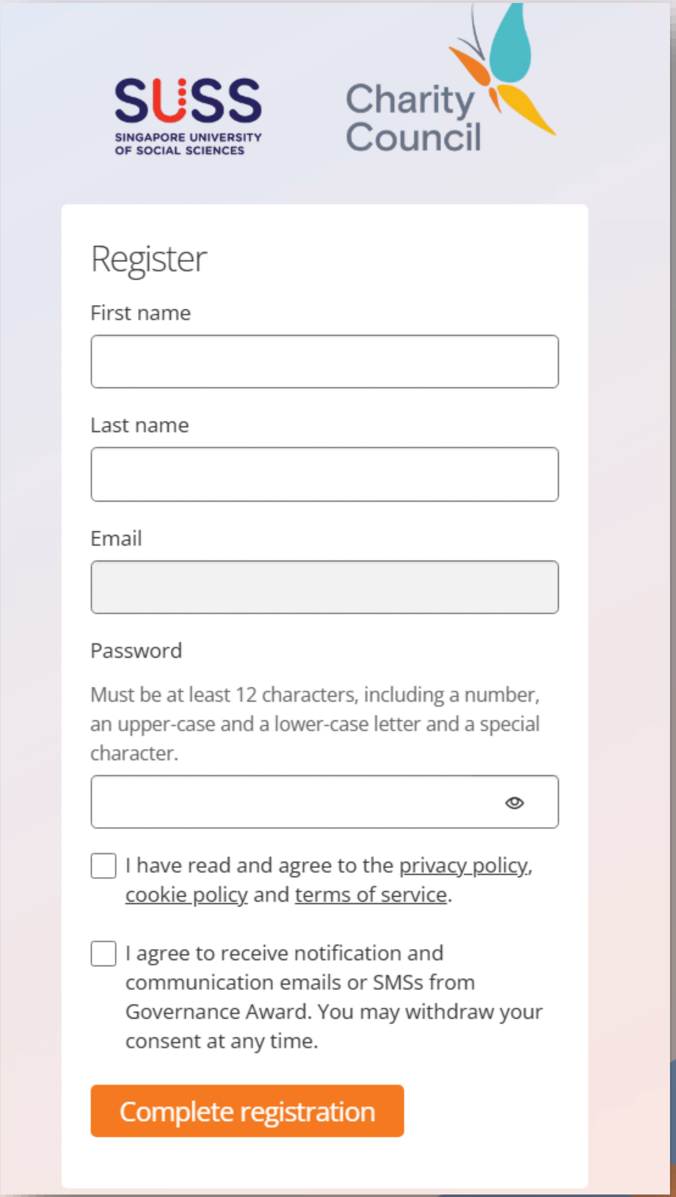


Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

4

Tier 1 Charities (Based on charity's FY25 GEC submission tier on the Charity Portal)

Tier 1: Small and Medium Non-IPC Charities

With gross annual receipts or a total expenditure (whichever is higher) of $50,000 to less than $10 million.

Must respond to 38 guidelines.

Download sample entry PDF

Enter

Tier 2 Charities (Based on charity's FY25 GEC submission tier on the Charity Portal)

Tier 2: (i) All IPC Charities (ii) Large Non-IPC Charities

With gross annual receipts or a total expenditure (whichever is higher) of $10 million or more.

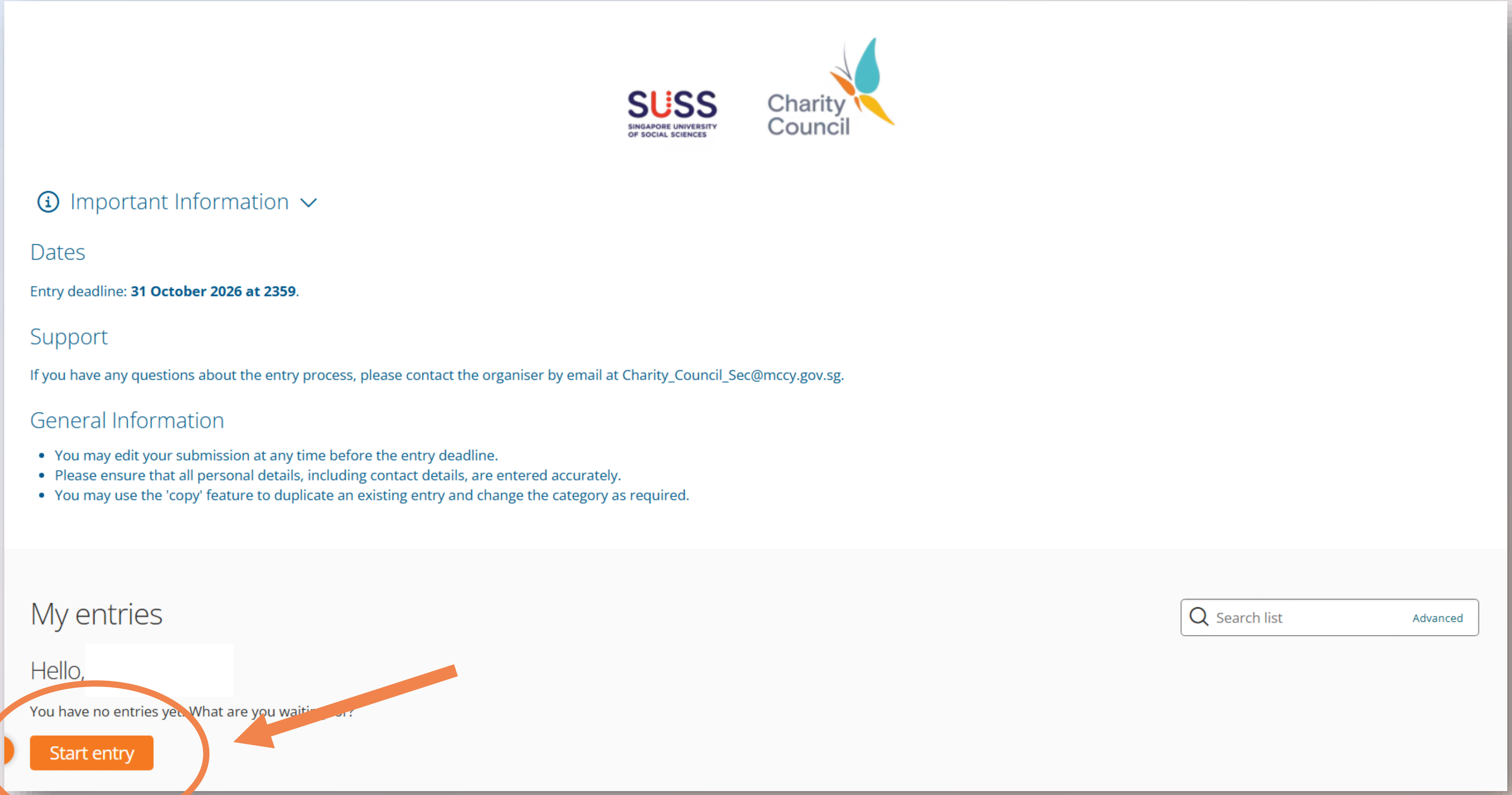
Must respond to 48 guidelines.

Download sample entry PDF

Enter

Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

5



Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

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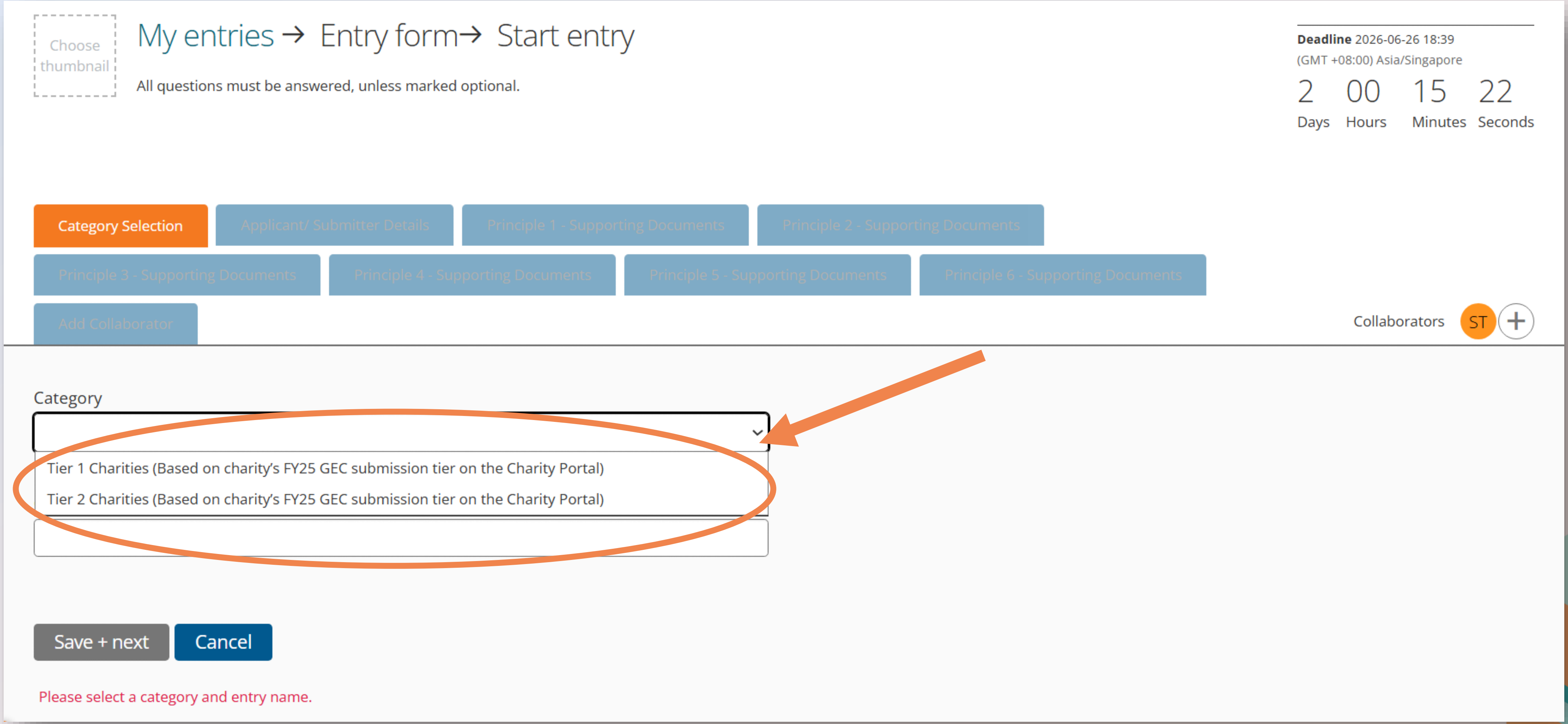

Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

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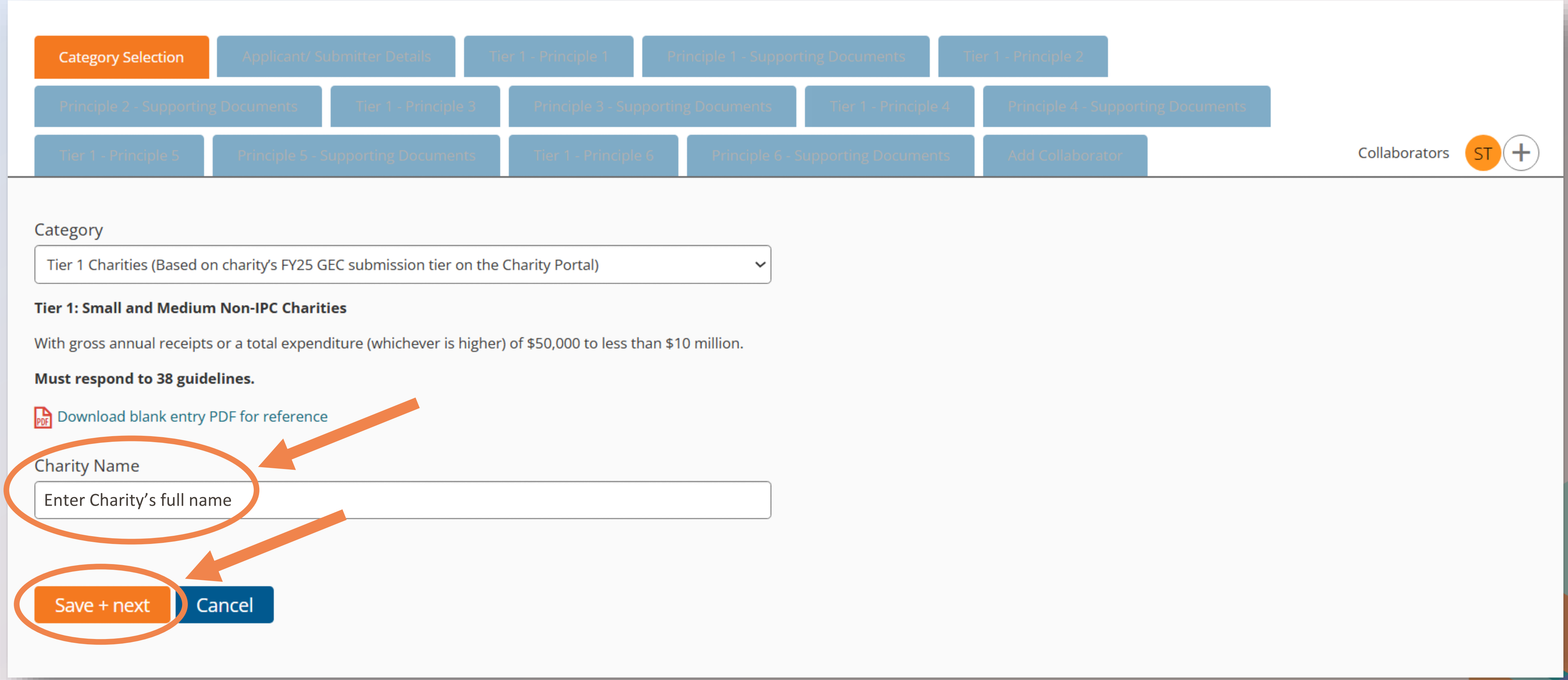

Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

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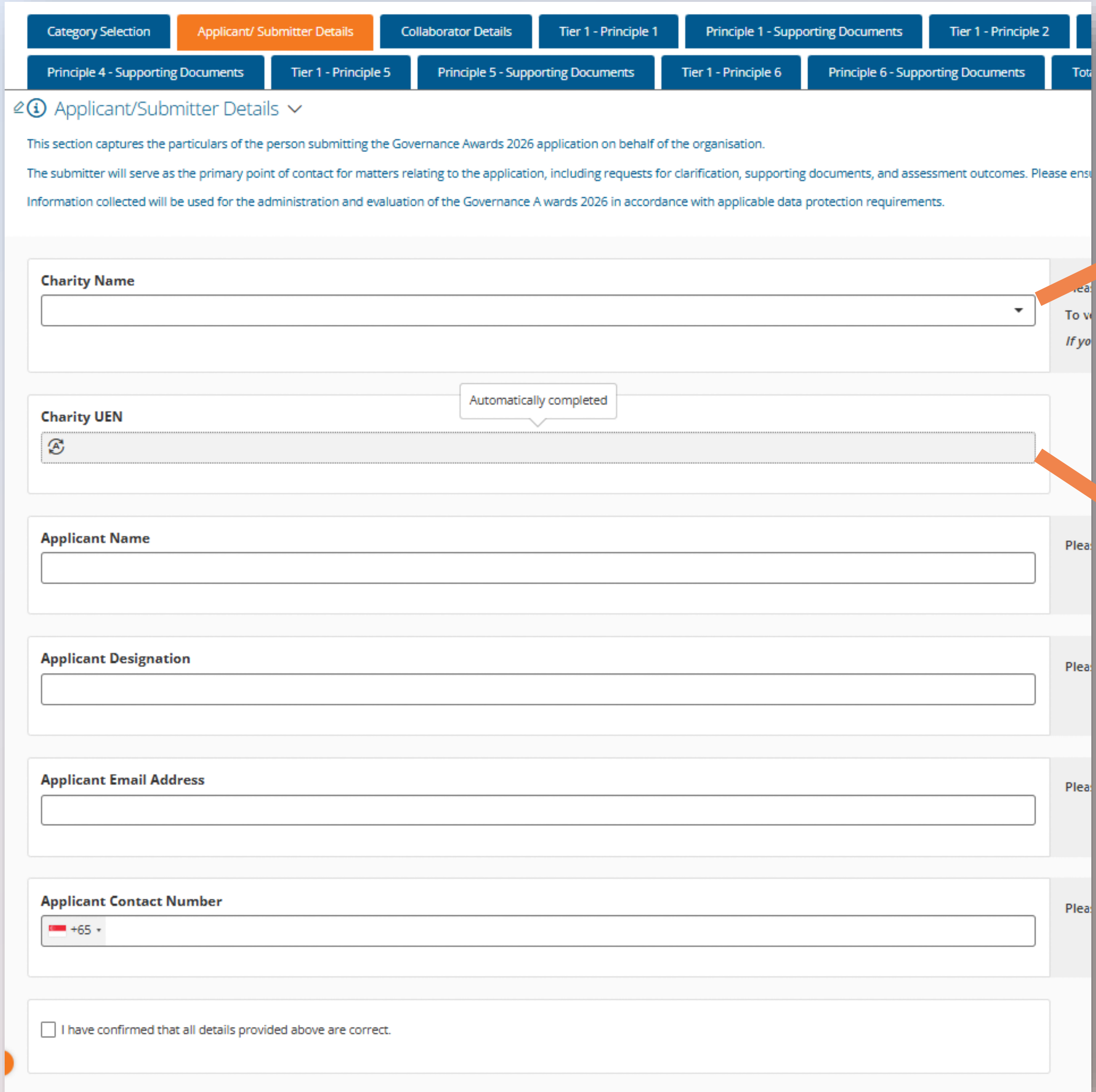
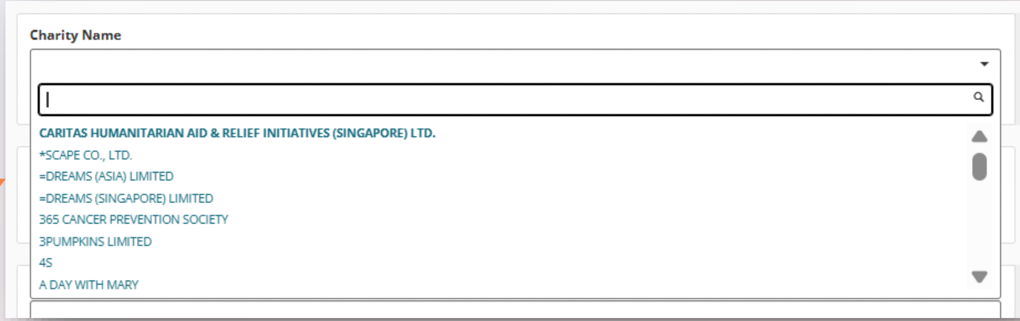


Search for Charity name



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Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

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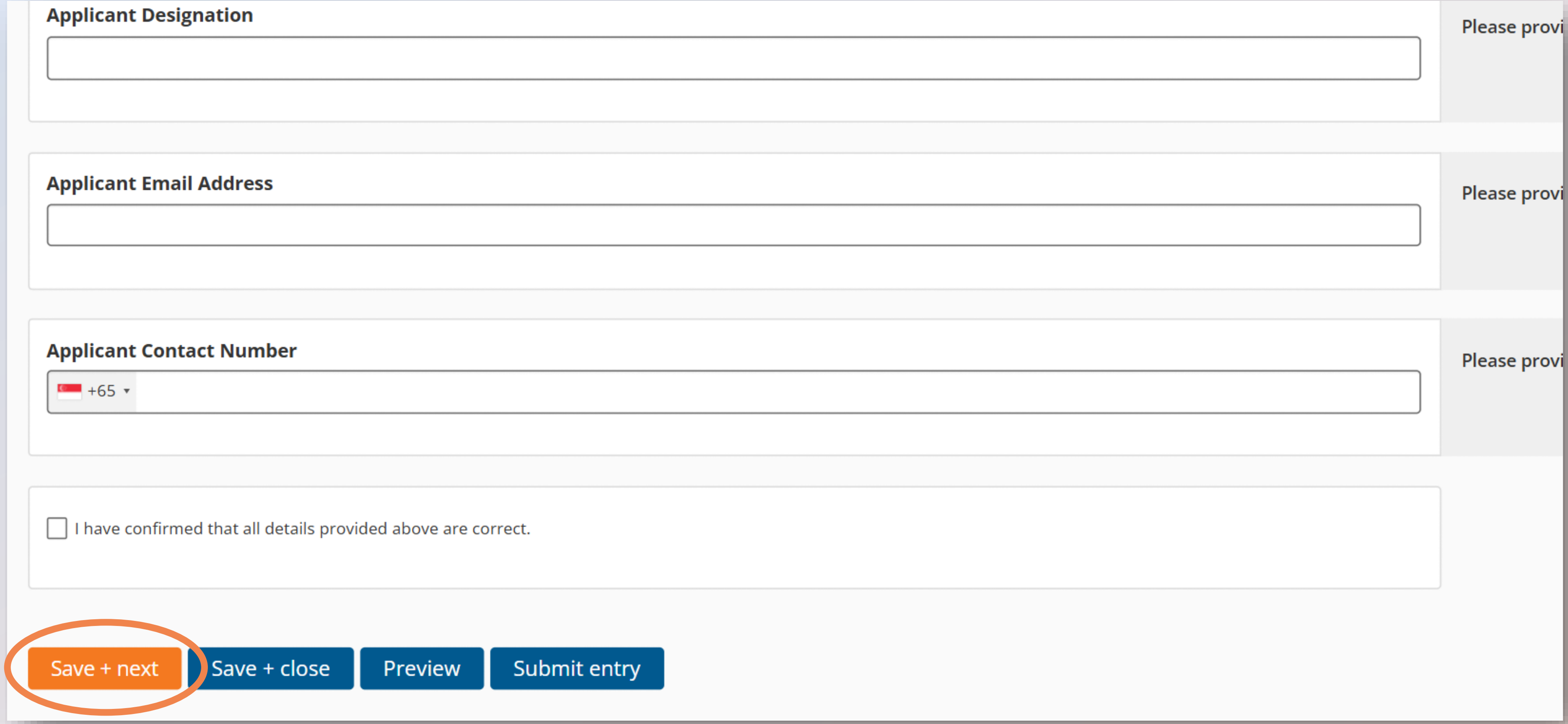
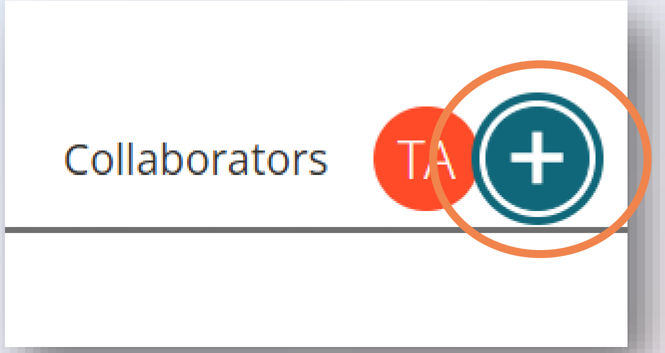


Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

To add collaborators to the form (OPTIONAL)

10a



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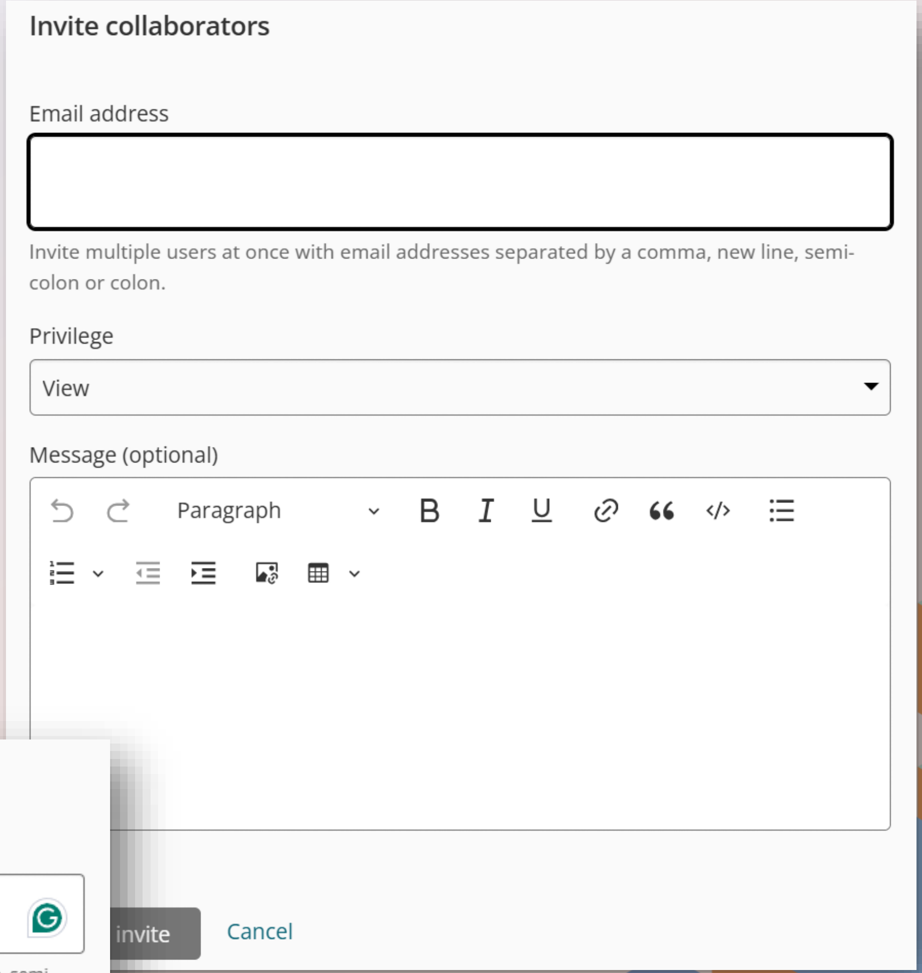
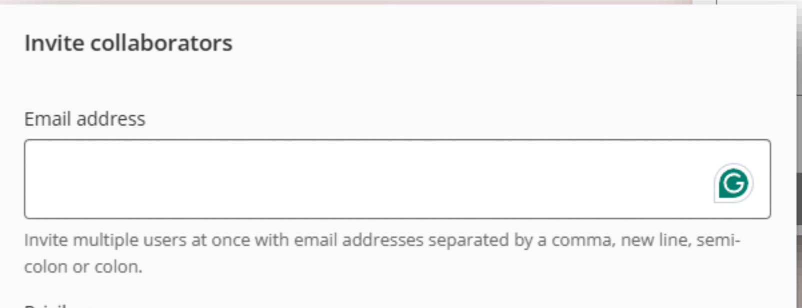
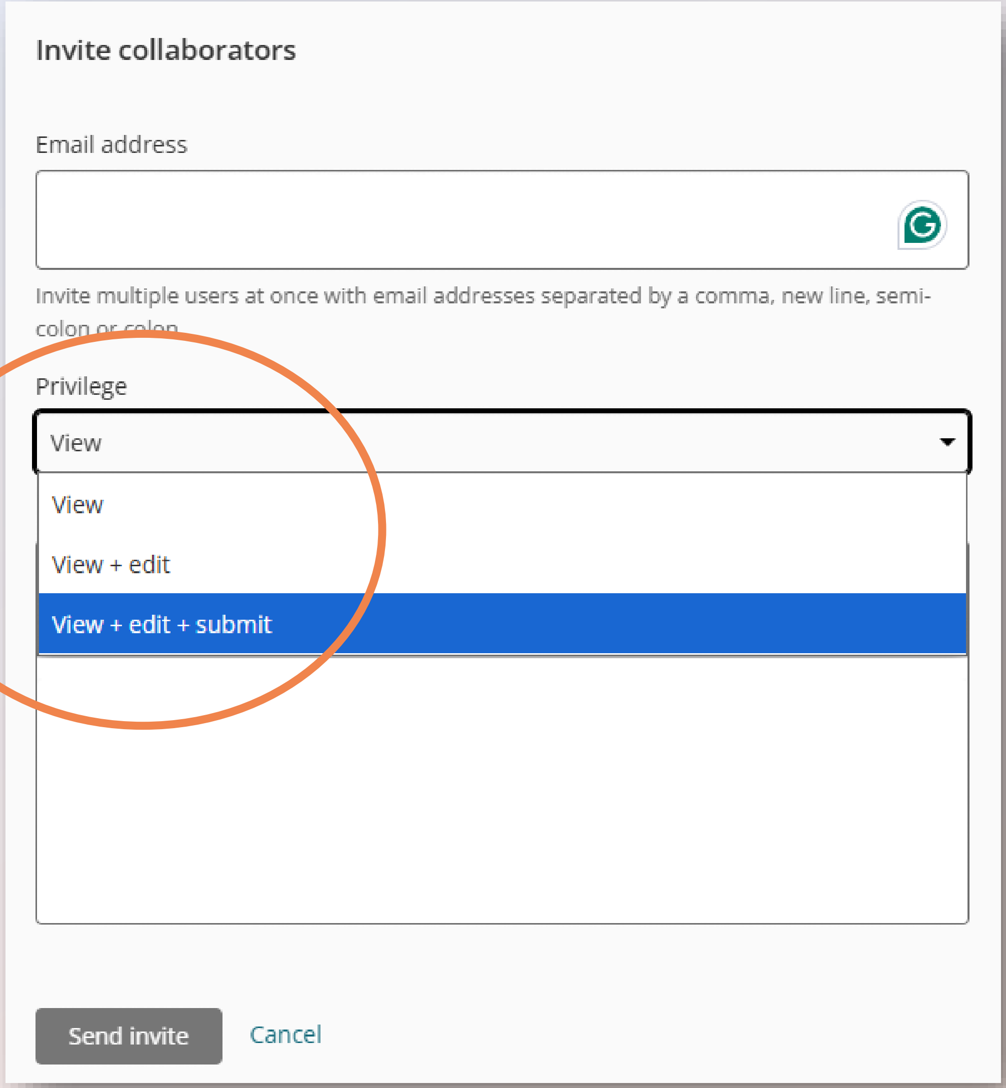




Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

To add collaborators to the form (OPTIONAL)

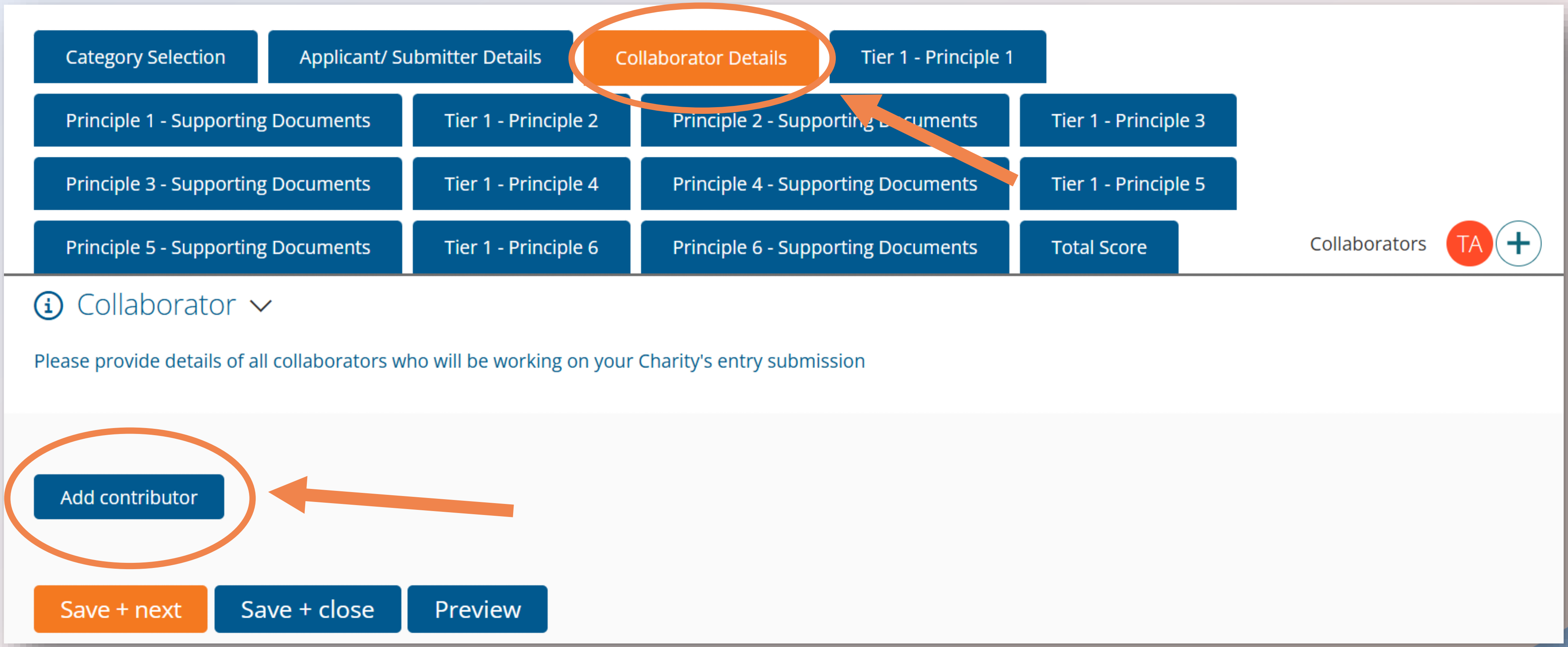
10c



Briefing on submission process via the Awards Force Platform

To add collaborators to the form (OPTIONAL)

10c



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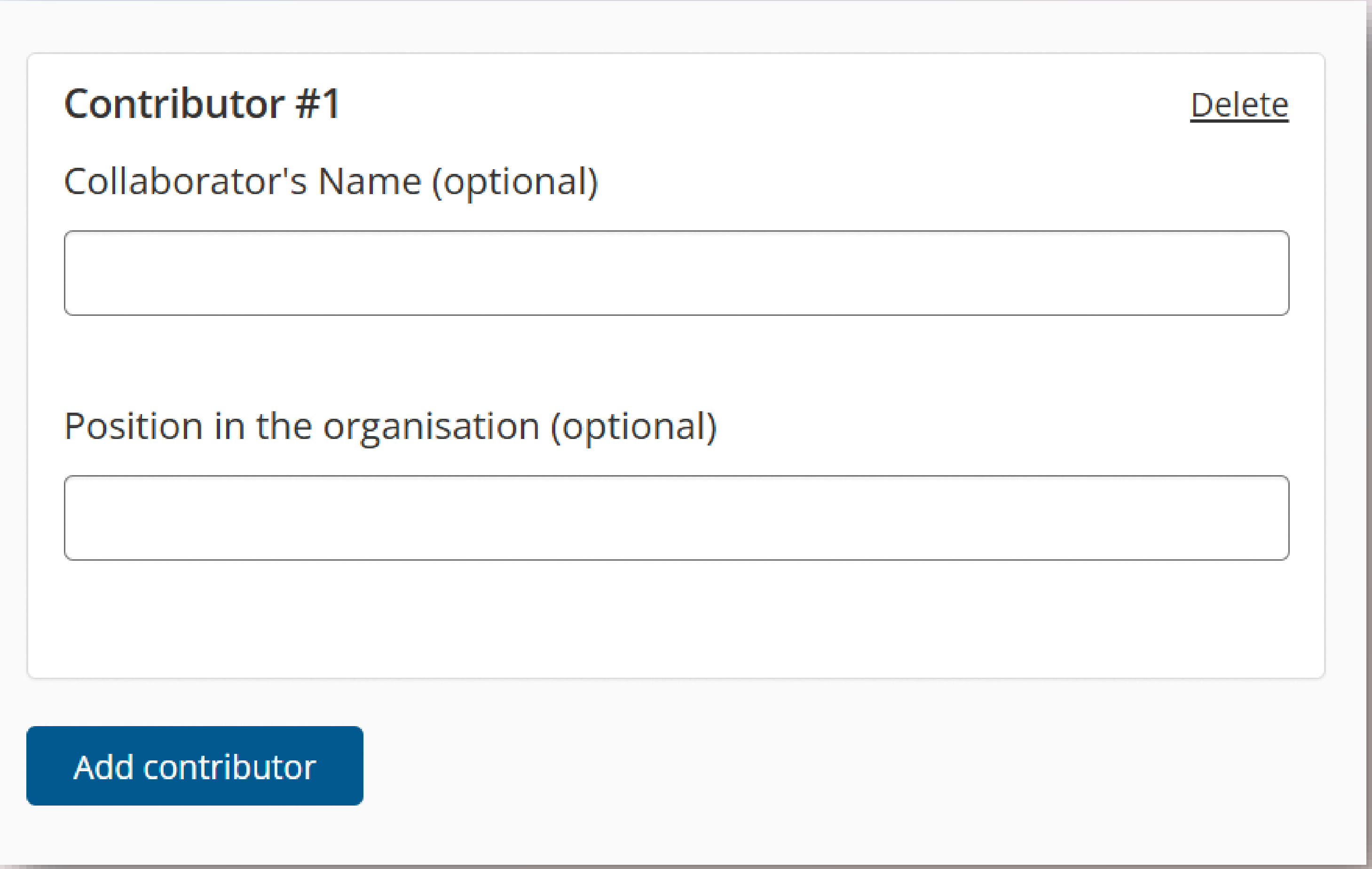
To add collaborators to the form (OPTIONAL)

10d



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Instructions to complete the PILLAR Framework

This section guides you through the completion of the PILLAR Framework on the awards submission platform.

Each guideline is organised into three parts:

1. Action: whether your charity has put the guideline into practice.
2. Evidence source: where this can be seen or verified.
3. Explanation, where needed: a short explanation if the guideline is not applicable (NA) to your charity or your charity is taking steps towards full compliance i.e., partially compliant (Partial Compliance), or is not yet compliant (No).

For each guideline, please complete the following:

1. Select your response
   - Indicate whether the guideline has been put into practice by selecting the most appropriate option, such as "Yes", "No", or "Partial Compliance".

2. Select the relevant evidence source(s)
   - Choose where the information is disclosed or available.
   - You may select more than one evidence source, where applicable.

3. Provide details for public disclosures
   - If the information is disclosed in the Annual Report and/or Financial Statements, please indicate the relevant financial year and page number.

4. Provide links for online disclosures
   - If the information is available on the charity's website or social media platforms, please provide the active URL(s).

5. Provide details for internal documents
   - If the evidence is contained in an internal document, please state the document title and date.
   - Add a brief explanation of how the document shows that the guideline has been put into practice.

6. Specify other evidence sources, where relevant
   - If the evidence is available from another source not listed in the options, please specify the source and briefly explain how it demonstrates that the guideline has been put into practice.

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PRINCIPLE 1:

The charity serves its mission and achieves its objectives.

[Principle / Guideline]

P1

Clearly state the charitable purposes (for example, vision and mission, objectives, use of resources, activities, and so on), and include the objectives in the charity's governing instrument. Publish the stated charitable purposes on platforms (for example, Charity Portal, website, social media channels, and so on) that can be easily accessed by the public.

Reference Source:

Code of Governance: Code ID 1.1

Did the charity put this principle into action?

- (•) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) Partial Compliance

[P1] Score awarded:

2

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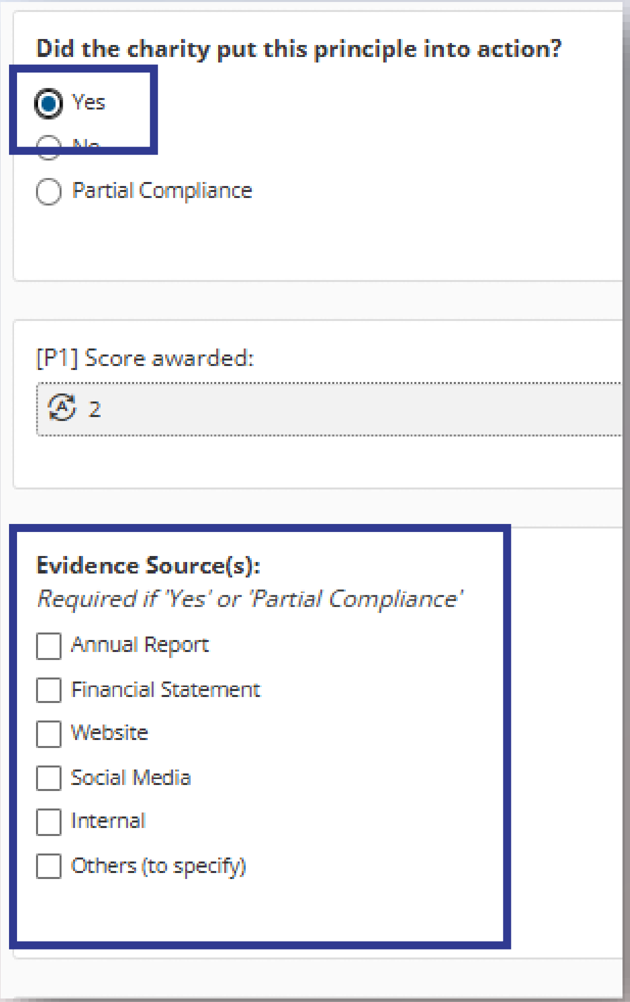

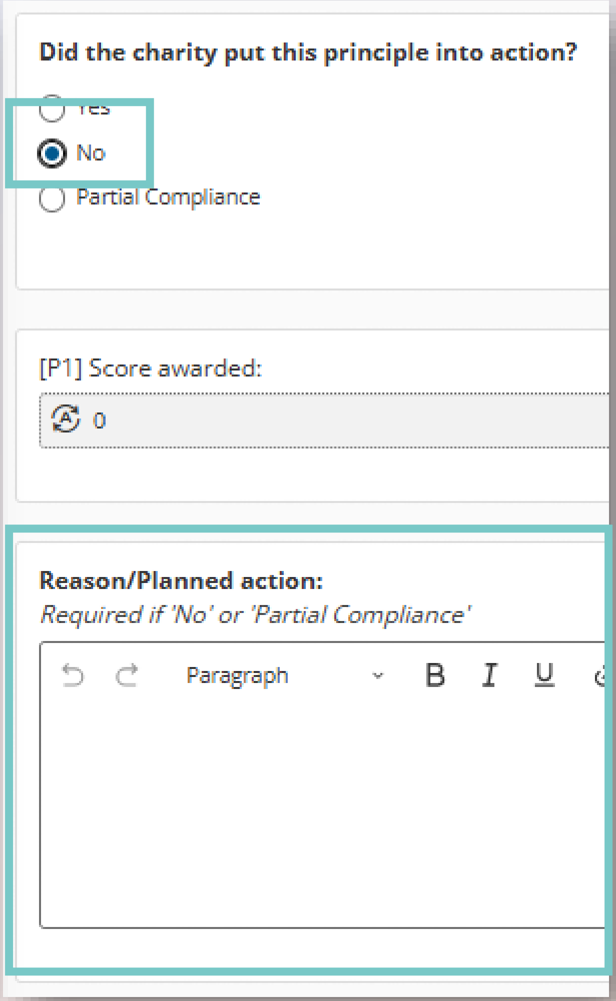

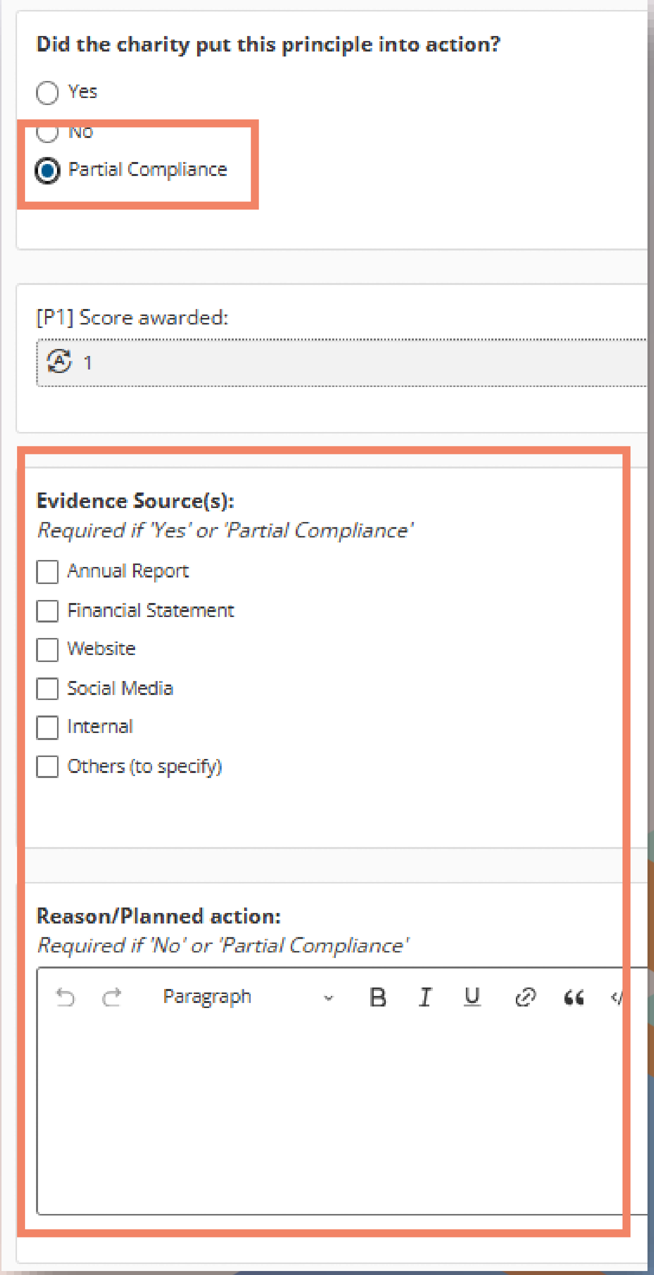

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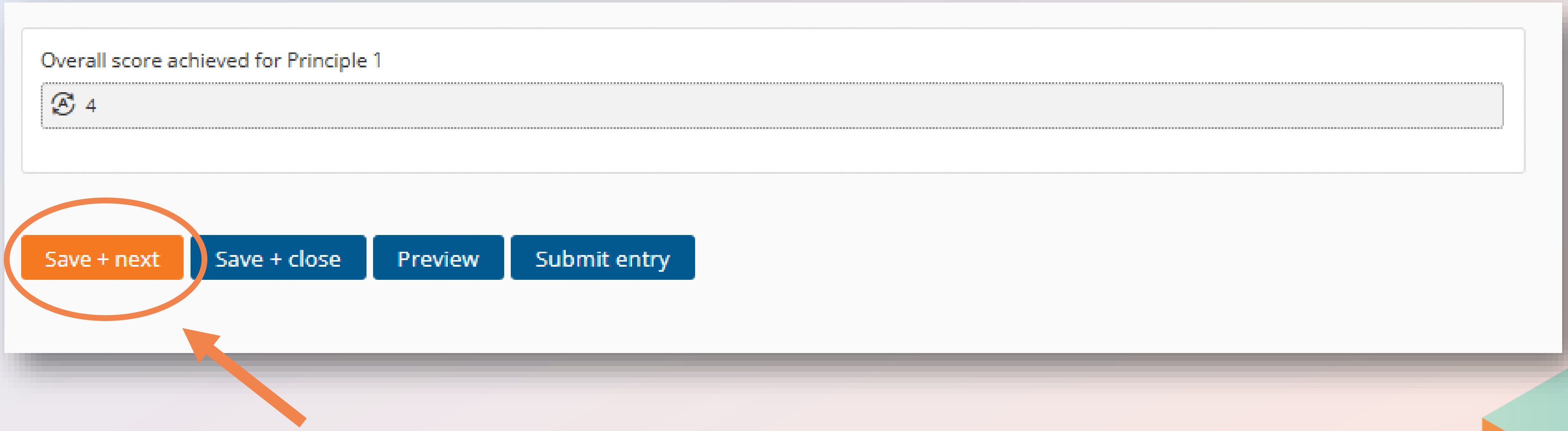

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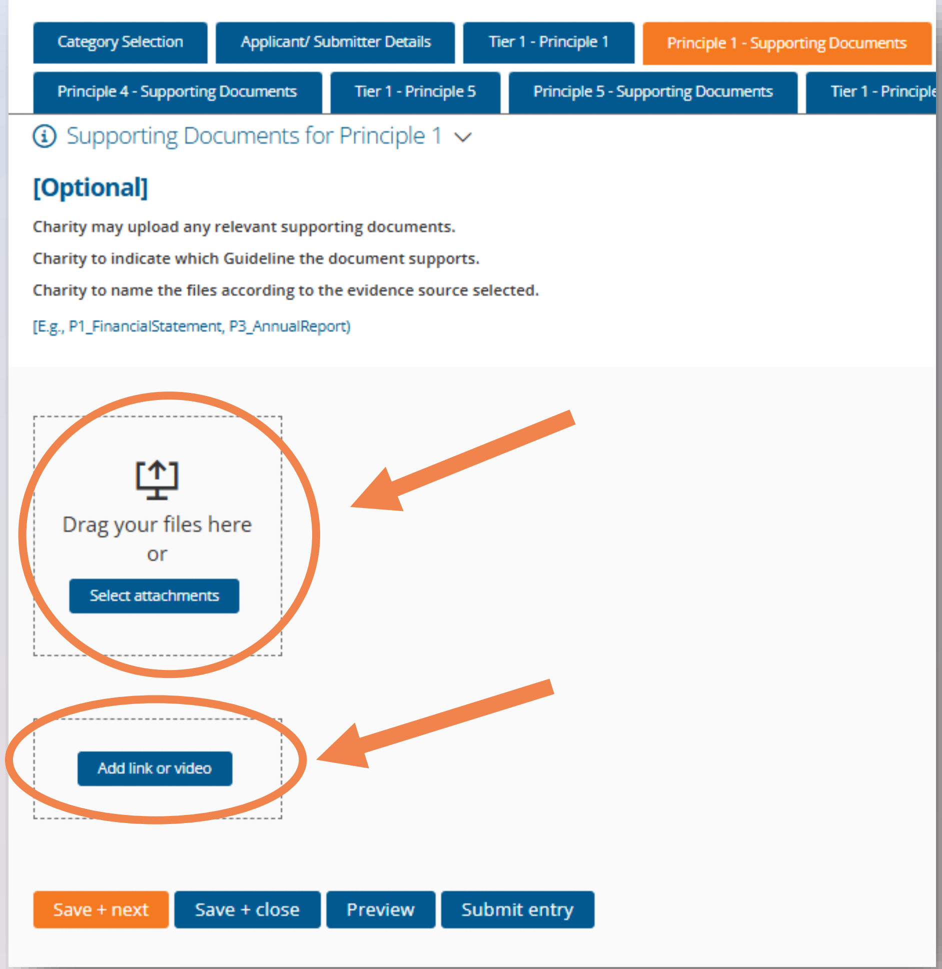

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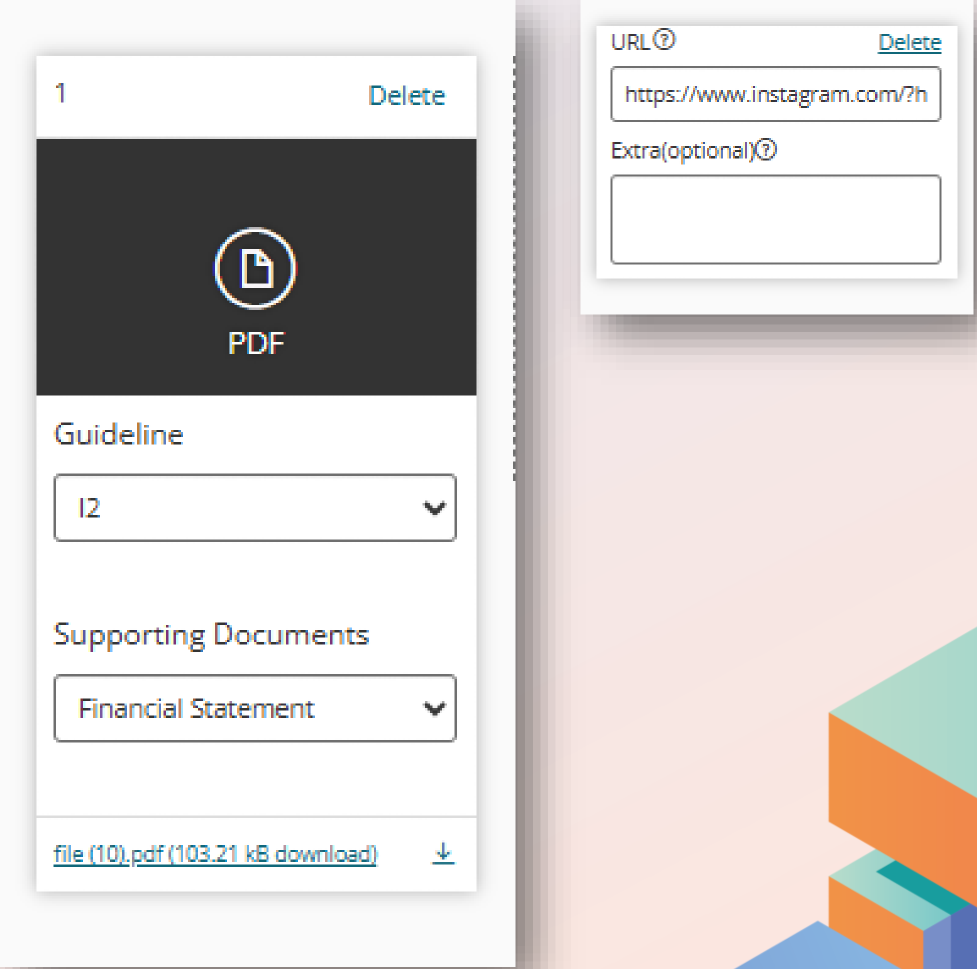

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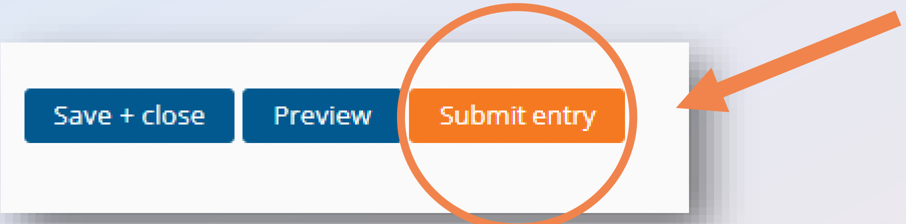

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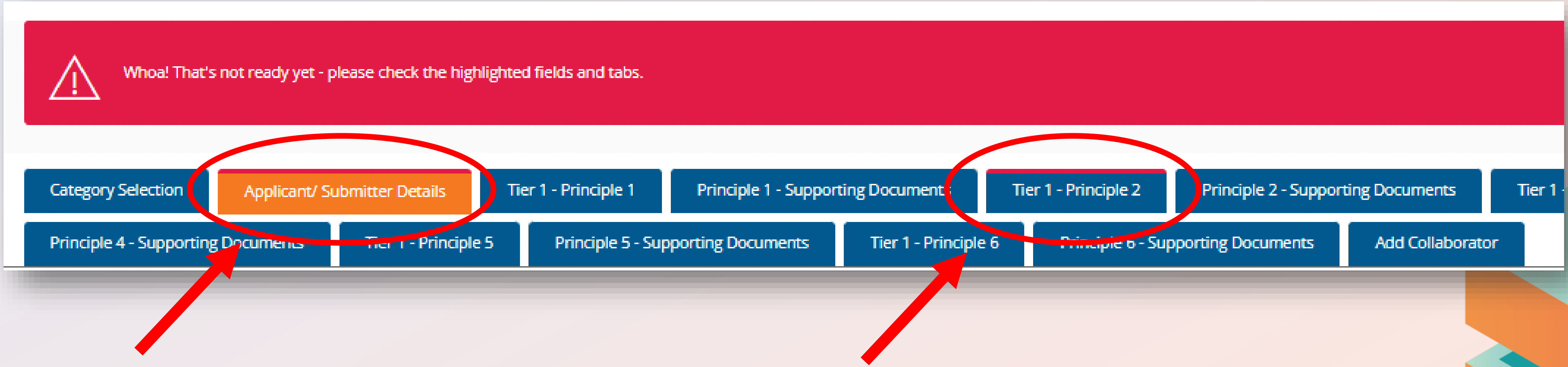

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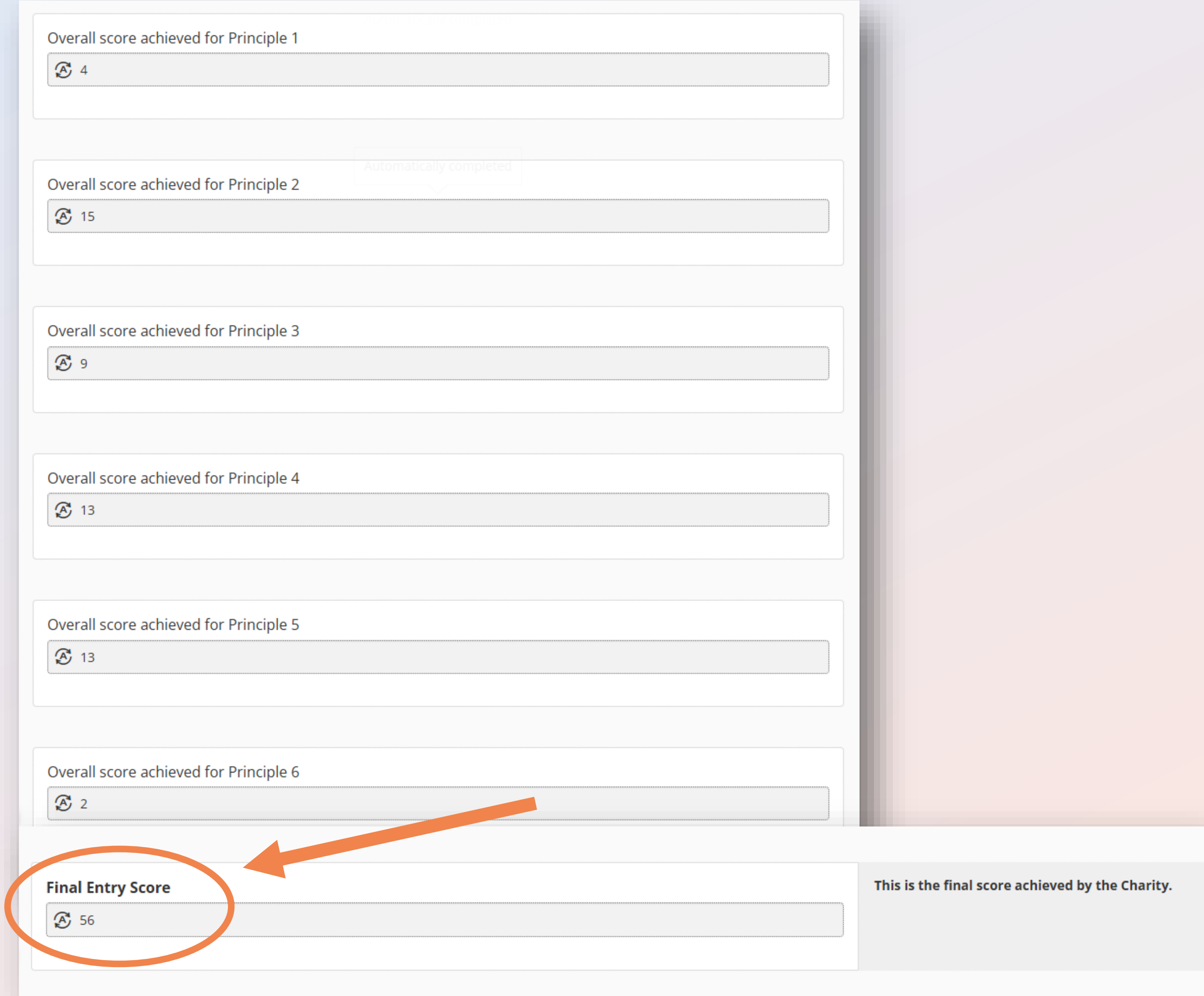

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Entry successfully submitted

We'll keep you informed of the progress of your entry via email notifications and broadcasts so please make sure you're subscribed to receive these in your user profile.

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Charity Council

CHARITY AWARDS:

Briefing on the PILLAR Framework and Awards Application Process

29 June 2026

Q & A

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Thank you!