



## A GUIDE TO THE AWARD CATEGORIES

Take a look at the categories for the 2021 Awards to decide which best suit your work. There may be more than one suitable category. You are able to enter your submission into more than one category, or to make separate submissions.

### [Business Culture in a Crisis \(>500 employees and <500 employees: 2 Separate Categories\)](#)

Coronavirus has created an unprecedented situation of such magnitude as to impact on every aspect of our lives. Economic markets have suffered historic falls and our lives at work have changed beyond recognition, with many aspects greatly impacting the future of work. The majority of the workforce has faced losing colleagues and teams to furloughing and grappled with the challenges of remote working using new tools and technologies. At the toughest of times issues of trust, fairness, innovation, agility, inclusivity and collaboration – key facets of our organisational culture - have come to the fore more strongly than ever. This award will recognise organisations [*with 500 employees or more / with less than 500 employees*] whose culture has been an absolute strength; enabling leaders to make and communicate difficult decisions with honesty and humility in the face of a rapidly-changing commercial landscape.

### [Best Business Transformation Initiative](#)

This award is open to organisations that have achieved a transformation or turnaround in their Business Culture and can demonstrate outstanding results. Entrants will show how their organisations have transformed culturally, the reasons for this transformation, and the positive impact this has had on the business. Judges will be looking for how these organisations have enacted the change, and how and why the transformed culture has advanced the confidence of stakeholders. This may include achievements in strategic (re)alignment, stakeholder management, organisational design, and development, change management, and process modification, and how these aspects relate to culture. As well as describing how your organisational culture has changed, submissions should fully outline the transformation journey, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### [NEW: Best Digital Transformation Initiative](#)

Real digital transformation is happening and Covid-19, coupled with changes in consumer habits and needs, has made the rapid adoption of new technology a commercial imperative to ensure ongoing organisational success. In some cases, companies may have had digital transformation on their 'to do' lists for years; others may have already embarked upon projects that have more recently been supercharged. This award recognises where technology has been used to enable connection and collaboration despite social distancing and remote working and entrants will be able to demonstrate a people-first approach to using technology effectively, rather than a technology-first approach. The judges will be keen to grasp how organisations have enacted this focus on technology; what the cultural impact has been; and how this has enhanced the confidence and engagement of customers and other stakeholders. Submissions should fully outline the transformation journey, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome as well as the business benefits that have arisen.

### [Building a Culture of Innovation Initiative](#)

A drive for innovation is central to how an organisation performs in the marketplace and how engaged employees and other stakeholders feel in making a difference to its success. This award will be given to an organisation that has put effective and inspirational innovation at its heart, with outstanding results. Entrants show how their organisations have progressed innovation at a cultural level, not a procedural one. Judges will be looking to understand how the focus on innovation has been enacted, and how this has

inspired stakeholders. As well as describing how the culture of the business has changed, submissions should also fully outline the transformation journey itself, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

#### Best Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative

DE&I approaches seek to create meaningful, systemic change toward more equitable environments. Organisations making a sustained effort in this area recognise the importance of diversity in high-performing organisations and teams and understand the need to create an environment where diverse groups are respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. In this category, we'll be looking for organisations who have put diversity, equity and inclusion at the heart of their Business Culture with outstanding results. Judges will be looking to understand how this focus on diversity and inclusion has been enacted, and how it has resulted in a reinvigorated organisational culture that has the renewed confidence of employees and other stakeholders. As well as describing how the culture of the business has changed, submissions should also fully outline the transformation journey itself, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

#### NEW: Leading with Purpose for Business Culture

Purpose-led businesses are proven to perform better; with purpose driving growth. A common vision and ambition stems from the central brand purpose, highlighting clearly to employees not only what they need to do but why they are doing it. During times of change and uncertainty, this purpose is strongly anchoring for employees, customers and other stakeholders, fostering a sense of belonging, ownership and responsibility. This award is open to organisations whose renewed purpose has enabled leaders to more effectively connect with their teams; offered a lens for decision-making and enabled them to learn and adapt during change. Entrants will have significantly strengthened their purpose, possibly in response to the recent crisis, successfully articulating this and connecting it to business strategy. Judges will be looking to see the impact of this reinvigorated purpose on the confidence and trust of employees and other stakeholders and the business benefits in terms of engagement, retention and other outcomes.

#### Best Brand & Values Initiative for Business Culture

This award recognises organisations that have positioned their unique workplace culture at the heart of their employer brand and/or their consumer brand. They will have clearly articulated values, and will be able to demonstrate how these have positively impacted on everyday behaviours within the organisation and/or in interactions with customers. Behaviour change should be sustained and consistent and have had an impact on business outcomes. Our judges will look to understand how the brand and values have been developed and how they have advanced; for example, how the employer brand has been aligned with the consumer brand(s). Evidence should be provided of the benefits they have brought to the organisation; for example, the impact on employer visibility and reputation; on the attraction, retention and engagement of staff and customers. Finally, entrants should clearly demonstrate the journey to achieving this strong brand and values, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

#### Best Working Environments & Practices Initiative

People's working environments and practices have begun to change with technology and employees' need for greater balance in their lives. The pandemic has caused sudden and major disruption, so that when, how and where we get work done has been called into question or permanently changed. Our working environment, whether it's the office, home, or blend of these, and practices such as flexible or part-time working, transform the way we operate, innovate and collaborate at work. This category is open both to companies who have progressed to working partly or fully remotely; perhaps reimagining or repurposing physical workspaces; and those who have introduced flexible approaches to the traditional working week for some or all employees. The judges are keen to grasp how employees themselves have helped to shape their new working environment or way of working and how the resulting environment has had a direct and positive impact on culture. They will also be keen to understand the business benefits that have arisen as a result. As well as describing how the culture of the business has been impacted, submissions should also fully outline the transformation journey itself, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Best Learning Initiative for Business Culture

Effective learning has the capacity to inspire individuals to do their best work and can have a transformative effect on the organisation as a whole. Innovation in learning and a blended approach to how interventions are delivered have enabled learning to be more effectively embedded, leading to true, long term behaviour change. Technology has also enabled approaches to be effectively delivered at scale. Entrants in this category will be able to show how their learning approach has impacted on organisational culture and the business benefits that have arisen as a result of the initiative as a whole. Judges will be looking to understand how this focus on learning has been enacted, resulting in a reinvigorated culture that has the renewed confidence of employees and other stakeholders. As well as describing how the culture of the business has changed, submissions should also fully outline the transformation journey itself, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Best Wellbeing Initiative for Business Culture

This award recognises organisations that have advanced employee health and wellbeing, increasing engagement and strengthening business culture as a result, particularly in the context of the pandemic and its detrimental impact in this area. The focus could be on physical, mental or financial wellbeing or a blend of all of these. The judges will look to understand how wellbeing initiatives have been developed and advanced, and the impact this has had. Evidence should be provided of the benefits it has brought to the organisation; for example, the impact on the attraction, retention and engagement of staff. Finally, entrants should clearly demonstrate the initiative's journey, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### NEW: Best Internal Communications Strategy for Business Culture

Effective communications make a cultural foundation stronger. Not only does a sound, well-executed strategy engender better informed, more capable and trusted leaders but also employees who feel more valued and engaged. Crucially, when facing a crisis, internal communications enable faster response times. Entrants in this category will focus on their ongoing strategy or response to an important business challenge, such as the pandemic. Judges will be looking for evidence that employee needs have been understood and considered. They will seek a clear narrative which describes the strategy's scale and impact; how the communications sit within the wider context of the organisation's culture, values and behaviours; and the business outcomes that have resulted.

### NEW: Best Employee Voice Initiative for Business Culture

Harnessing employee voice is critical to building trusting relationships between employers and their people and ultimately a positive workplace culture. Appropriate, timely response from an organisation's leaders to the issues or ideas generated formally or informally is a key driver of organisational success, with the organisation and its employees experiencing greater engagement, innovation, productivity and wellbeing. In this category, entrants will demonstrate different channels through which employee voice is generated; including how diversity of thought and opinion is sought. They may describe how psychological safety has been created as an enabling factor for people to speak up. Judges will be looking to understand how this reflects and enhances organisational culture and how it has generated business impact such as new innovations, retention and engagement uplift.

### Business Culture Leadership Award

In this category, we'll be looking for professionals who have created or advanced an exceptional Business Culture, and have demonstrated both passion and commitment to creating the type of workplace which has the confidence of staff and other stakeholders. Judges will be looking for evidence of business culture impact, and how this individual in particular contributed. They will need to understand the person's approach and values, and the reasons why they have been so influential. As well as describing how your organisational culture has changed, and the individual's role in this transformation, submissions should also fully outline the transformation journey itself, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Business Culture Team Award

This category is designed to recognise the power of teams in championing and influencing outstanding Business Culture. Their achievement will have been defining because of their passion and commitment to creating a unique workplace that has the confidence of its stakeholders. Judges will be looking for examples of innovative approaches to addressing organisational culture. This could include evidence of effective working across boundaries; a quantifiable contribution to organisational achievements; underpinning project work; operational excellence in execution; and measurement of the direct benefits of these aspects. Submissions will include insight into the team's values and approach, with the reasons why they have been so influential. As well as describing how the culture of the business has changed, submissions should also fully outline the transformation journey itself, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Best Talent Approaches for Business Culture

Organisations are becoming increasingly dependent on a blended, multi-generational and geographically dispersed workforce to deliver on their business strategy. The most forward-thinking companies enact a holistic talent approach, which takes into account that business culture is key to all segments of the workforce. Entrants to this category may focus on different aspects of their talent approach, for example, flexible working approaches; strategies to integrate and develop multi-generational talent; meeting the needs of contingent or outsourced talent alongside permanent employees; or recruiting talent according to organisational values. Judges will be looking to understand the attraction, development and engagement of different talent segments; whether culture resonates for them wherever they sit in the organisation; and to what extent the integration of different workforce segments is aligned with organisational goals.

### Best Next Generation Initiative for Business Culture

This award will be presented to an organisation that has deployed an innovative and effective strategy to maximise the talent opportunity offered by the next generation of their workforce. They will demonstrate that putting the recruitment and development of this segment of their workforce at the heart of Business Culture has yielded exceptional results. Entries may focus on internships and traineeships; graduate schemes; apprenticeship programs; internal development of future leaders; and external engagement with young people on sector-specific skills and interest. Judges will be looking to understand how these next generation engagement / attraction / selection / development processes develop business culture, and who, from across the organisation, is involved. They assess how next generation talent progresses and develops; and how these initiatives have positively impacted on the organisation. Entrants may provide testimonials, as well as key metrics outlining the success of the approach. As well as describing how the culture of the business has changed, submissions should also fully outline the transformation journey itself, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Best Coaching, Mentoring & Personal Development Initiative

Coaching, mentoring and developing individuals through ongoing, targeted and specific one-to-one conversations can have wide-reaching benefits for the organisation and for individuals. It can develop and retain your critical talent; provide a stabilising factor during change; facilitate knowledge-sharing and skill-transfer; as well as boosting people's performance and motivation and supporting their career transition. Judges will be looking to understand how your coaching, mentoring and personal development/performance management initiative and conversations have supported the organisation's performance and success and how far-reaching the impact has been in terms of developing a coaching culture or more effective performance management. You will need to outline all steps of the project, including planning, implementation, measurement, outcome, and next steps. You will also need to outline clearly who has been involved (and include a rationale as to why these people were selected in the case of coaches and coachees).

### Best Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative

Corporate Social Responsibility has the power to capture the hearts and minds of employees and other stakeholders, by giving even greater meaning and purpose to their efforts. This category is open to companies

who have put CSR at the heart of their Business Culture and seen outstanding results. The judges are keen to grasp how organisations have enacted this focus on corporate social responsibility, and how this has had a direct and positive impact on culture. Entries will cover how organisations have progressed corporate social responsibility at a cultural, rather than a procedural, level, and the business benefits that have arisen from this. As well as describing how the culture of the business has changed, submissions should also fully outline the transformation journey itself, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

#### [Best Integration & Merger Initiative for Business Culture](#)

This award is open to organisations that have achieved a merger or acquisition and made an outstanding impact on the Business Culture, creating a sense of unity in the newly-formed company. Entrants will demonstrate how their organisations have embedded the merger or acquisition at a cultural level, not a procedural one; in particular, how they have been able to strike a balance between the pre-existing cultures in the creation of a new one. They will also show how they have engaged their stakeholders and delivered business results. Submissions may include achievements in strategic (re)alignment, stakeholder management, organisational design, and development, change management, and process modification, and how these aspects relate to culture. Judges will look to understand both how the organisational culture has changed, and the reasons for this, as well as the change journey itself, including how any challenges and barriers were overcome.

#### [Best International Initiative for Business Culture](#)

This award is open to multi-national organisations and organisations with considerable reach outside the UK that have undertaken an international Business Culture initiative with outstanding results. Entrants will show how their organisation has acted across geographical boundaries at a cultural level, not a procedural one, and what business benefits have arisen as a result. The judges will be looking for achievements in the areas of leadership, communication, innovation, strategic alignment, stakeholder engagement, and learning, for example, but with focus on delivering success through a business culture that transcends borders. Submissions should clearly outline all project steps including planning, implementation, measurement, results and what the next stage will be. NB. Any submission for this Award must be substantively different if the organisation has also made a UK submission.

#### [Best Large Organisation for Business Culture](#)

This category is for companies with 2,500 or more employees that have undertaken a substantial initiative which has had a demonstrable impact on their Business Culture. Judges will be seeking to understand all steps of the project including planning, implementation, measurement, outcome, and next steps. They will assess how these organisations have advanced their workplace culture, and what the business benefits of this have been. Entrants should include achievements in areas including strategic alignment, leadership development, stakeholder engagement, improving communication, and advancing innovation. As well as describing how your organisational culture has changed, submissions should fully outline the transformation journey, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

#### [Best Medium Organisation for Business Culture](#)

This award is open to companies with 251 – 2,500 employees that have undertaken a substantial initiative which has had a demonstrable impact on their Business Culture. Judges will be seeking to understand all steps of the project including planning, implementation, measurement, outcome, and next steps. They will assess how these organisations have advanced their workplace culture, and what the business benefits of this have been. Entrants should include achievements in areas including strategic alignment, leadership development, stakeholder engagement, improving communication, and advancing innovation. As well as describing how your organisational culture has changed, submissions should fully outline the transformation journey, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Best Small Organisation for Business Culture

This award is open to companies with 1 – 250 employees that have undertaken a substantial initiative which has had a demonstrable impact on their Business Culture. Judges will be seeking to understand all steps of the project including planning, implementation, measurement, outcome, and next steps. They will assess how these organisations have advanced their workplace culture, and what the business benefits of this have been. Entrants should include achievements in areas including strategic alignment, leadership development, stakeholder engagement, improving communication, and advancing innovation. As well as describing how your organisational culture has changed, submissions should fully outline the transformation journey, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Best Public Sector Organisation for Business Culture

This award is open to Public Sector organisations of any size that have undertaken a substantial initiative which has had a demonstrable impact on their Business Culture. This covers publicly-funded organisations including Government departments, NHS organisations, and local authorities. Judges will be seeking to understand all steps of the project including planning, implementation, measurement, outcome, and next steps. They will assess how these organisations have advanced their workplace culture, and what the business benefits of this have been. Entrants should include achievements in areas including strategic alignment, leadership development, stakeholder engagement, improving communication, and advancing innovation. As well as describing how your organisational culture has changed, submissions should fully outline the transformation journey, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Best NGO/Non-Profit Organisation for Business Culture

This award is open to all NGOs, including Non-Profit, Not-for-Profit and charitable organisations, of any size that have undertaken a substantial initiative which has had a demonstrable impact on their Business Culture. Judges will be seeking to understand all steps of the project including planning, implementation, measurement, outcome, and next steps. They will assess how these organisations have advanced their workplace culture, and what the business benefits of this have been. Entrants should include achievements in areas including strategic alignment, leadership development, stakeholder engagement, improving communication, and advancing innovation. As well as describing how your organisational culture has changed, submissions should fully outline the transformation journey, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Business Culture Consultancy of the Year Award

The partnership of consultancies and practitioners can yield transformative results, and this award recognises the contribution of consultancies to Business Culture change initiatives. It will be presented to a consultancy that has enabled outstanding results in Business Culture work on a major client project or selection of projects. Entrants will show how they have worked hand-in-hand with their clients to deliver projects with a maximum cultural, rather than solely operational, impact. Judges will be looking for client testimonials, key metrics and why the consultancy is said to have excelled in their work. They will consider evidence of solution appropriateness, innovation, business impact, and client satisfaction. The consultancy must have their client(s) permission to enter. As well as describing how organisational culture has changed, and the reasons for this transformation, entrants should clearly demonstrate the initiative's journey, including how any barriers or challenges were overcome.

### Business Culture Gold, Silver & Bronze Awards

Recognition will be given to the organisation that the Judges assess as having delivered the most exceptional Business Culture initiatives overall. The Business Culture Gold, Silver & Bronze Awards are open to category winners only, and cannot be entered separately. They will be presented to the category winners who have shown the broadest deployment of their initiative; and most comprehensible approach in their methods, when examined both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Judges will be looking for the highest standards in stakeholder engagement, innovation, strategic alignment, leadership, communication, learning and more. Each category winner will be assessed according to all aspects of project planning, implementation, measurement, outcome, and next steps.

**Category List:**

Business Culture in a Crisis (>500 employees)  
Business Culture in a Crisis (<500 employees)  
Best Business Transformation Initiative  
*NEW for 2021:* Best Digital Transformation Initiative  
Building a Culture of Innovation Initiative  
Best Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative  
*NEW for 2021:* Leading with Purpose for Business Culture  
Best Brand & Values Initiative for Business Culture  
Best Working Environments & Practices for Business Culture  
Best Learning Initiative for Business Culture  
Best Wellbeing Initiative for Business Culture  
*NEW for 2021:* Best Internal Communications Strategy for Business Culture  
*NEW for 2021:* Best Employee Voice Initiative for Business Culture  
Business Culture Leadership Award  
Business Culture Team Award  
Best Talent Approaches for Business Culture  
Best Next Generation Initiative for Business Culture  
Best Coaching, Mentoring & Personal Development Initiative  
Best Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative for Business Culture  
Best Integration & Merger Initiative for Business Culture  
Best International Initiative for Business Culture  
Best Large Organisation for Business Culture  
Best Medium Organisation for Business Culture  
Best Small Organisation for Business Culture  
Best Public Sector Organisation for Business Culture  
Best NGO/Non-Profit Organisation for Business Culture  
Business Culture Consultancy of the Year Award

View steps to enter, tips for a great submission and all the key dates [here](#)