

Awards Criteria

Innovation Awards

1. Innovation in Social Value

- **Innovative Social Impact Initiatives:** Demonstrates original and forward-thinking strategies that create measurable, lasting benefits for communities or social groups.
- **Sustainable & Ethical Practices:** Evidence of embedding sustainability and ethical standards into operations, including responsible sourcing and supply chains that have helped enhance business operations and commercial success.
- **Community Engagement:** Shows meaningful collaboration with local communities or stakeholders to address social or environmental challenges.
- **Environmental Responsibility:** Implementation of eco-friendly practices that reduce environmental impact and promote long-term sustainability.
- **Long-Term Impact & Legacy:** Demonstrates a social value model with the potential to deliver enduring benefits and inspire future initiatives beyond the initial scope.

2. Innovation in Technology

- **Technological Innovation:** Demonstrates the creation or application of cutting-edge technology that represents a significant advancement within the industry.
- **Business Growth Impact:** Clear evidence of how the technology has driven measurable business growth, efficiency, or market success.
- **Problem Solving & Value Creation:** Highlights how their technology addresses specific challenges or creates added value for customers, stakeholders, or the business.
- **Integration & Adoption:** Shows successful integration of the technology within business operations, with evidence of staff engagement, training, or system transformation.
- **Future Readiness:** Demonstrates potential for scalability, adaptability, or influence on future innovation within the sector or wider economy.

3. Innovation in Skills and Talent

- **Innovative Talent Development:** Demonstrates fresh, creative approaches to training, upskilling, or personal development that go beyond traditional methods.
- **Inclusive Workforce Strategies:** Evidence of inclusive practices that actively support diversity, accessibility, and equal opportunities in recruitment and career progression.
- **Empowerment & Engagement:** Shows how individuals are empowered to grow, contribute, and lead within the organisation through mentoring, leadership pathways, or flexible learning models.
- **Future-Ready Workforce Planning:** Highlights how the organisation is preparing talent to meet future business or industry needs through strategic skills development; including effective succession planning.
- **Impact & Measurable Outcomes:** Clear results showing positive impact on employee satisfaction, retention and productivity through talent initiatives.

4. Innovative Product or Service

- **Originality & Creativity:** Demonstrates bold thinking through the creation of a new product or service, or a transformative reinvention of an existing one.
- **Market Differentiation:** Clearly stands out in its market by offering a unique value proposition or solving problems in ways competitors do not.
- **Real-World Impact:** Evidence that the product or service addresses a genuine need, challenge, or opportunity with meaningful results for users or customers e.g. sustainability.
- **Commercial Potential:** Shows strong performance or potential in terms of market adoption, revenue growth, or long-term scalability.
- **Intellectual Property & Innovation Process:** Highlights the development journey, including use of original IP, R&D, or collaboration that underpinned the innovation.

5. Innovation in Global Excellence (Under 30 employees)

- **Innovative Export Strategies:** Demonstrates creative and strategic approaches to entering or growing in international markets, overcoming barriers or competition.
- **Market Adaptation & Responsiveness:** Evidence of how products, services, or business models have been adapted to meet the needs of global audiences and fluctuating international trade landscapes in 2025.
- **Sustainable Global Growth:** Shows consistent or scalable export success backed by long-term vision, planning, and resilience in international operations.
- **Cultural Intelligence & Collaboration:** Highlights understanding of diverse markets and successful international partnerships or stakeholder engagement.
- **Impact on Business Performance:** Clear link between international innovation efforts and positive outcomes such as revenue growth, brand recognition, or job creation.

6. Innovation in Global Excellence (Over 30 employees)

- **Innovative Export Strategies:** Demonstrates bold, strategic approaches to expanding in international markets, leveraging scale, resources, or structure to overcome complex global challenges.
- **Market Adaptation & Responsiveness:** Evidence of how the organisation has tailored products, services, or business models to diverse global markets, supported by local insights or research; with the consideration of fluctuating international trade landscapes in 2025.
- **Scalable Global Growth:** Shows sustained and scalable export success driven by strategic planning, cross-border infrastructure, and effective international leadership.
- **Cultural Intelligence & Global Partnerships:** Highlights investment in cultural understanding, international team collaboration, and strategic alliances that enhance market success.
- **Business-Wide Global Impact:** Demonstrates how international expansion has influenced broader organisational growth, from job creation and innovation to increased competitiveness and brand strength.

Legacy Awards

7. Liverpool Legacy

- **Enduring Commitment to the Region:** Demonstrates a long-standing presence and consistent contribution to Liverpool's economic, social, or cultural landscape over several decades.
- **Sustained Business Success:** Evidence of continued growth, resilience, and relevance in an evolving business environment.
- **Community Impact & Involvement:** Highlights meaningful engagement with local communities e.g. local employment, charitable work, partnerships, or civic leadership.
- **Contribution to Regional Identity:** Shows how the individual has helped shape or promote Liverpool's reputation, character, or industry strengths.
- **Legacy & Outlook:** Balances a proud legacy with a clear vision for ongoing impact, showing how their work in business plans evolves while honouring its roots.

8. Trailblazer Award

- **Pioneering Leadership:** Demonstrates visionary thinking and the courage to challenge norms, lead change, or introduce transformative ideas within Liverpool's business community.
- **Significant Impact:** Evidence of measurable influence on a sector, organisation, or the wider regional economy through innovation, leadership, or advocacy.
- **Inspiration to Others:** Recognised as a role model who motivates, mentors, or empowers others to grow, innovate, or lead.
- **Commitment to Liverpool's Growth:** Shows a deep connection to the region, with contributions that have strengthened Liverpool's reputation, inclusivity, or resilience.
- **Legacy in the Making:** Demonstrates ongoing influence with the potential to leave a lasting legacy through continued innovation, leadership, or social value.

Future Focused Awards

9. Leading the Future

- **Visionary Leadership:** Demonstrates forward-thinking leadership with a clear vision for driving positive change and innovation within their business and the wider Liverpool City Region.
- **Business Growth & Transformation:** Evidence of delivering strong business performance, scaling success, entering new markets or leading significant transformation under their leadership.
- **Champion of Progress:** Actively drives progress in areas such as sustainability, inclusion, digital transformation, or workforce development.
- **Regional Influence:** Shows commitment to the Liverpool City Region through collaboration, advocacy, or initiatives that contribute to regional growth and opportunity.
- **Future-Focused Mindset:** Embodies a leadership style that embraces adaptability, inspires others, and positions the business—and the region—for long-term success.

10. One To Watch (Under 30)

- **Early Achievement:** Demonstrates significant accomplishments, innovation, or impact at an early stage in their career or entrepreneurial journey.
- **Drive & Ambition:** Shows exceptional motivation, resilience, and a clear vision for personal and professional growth.
- **Positive Influence:** Evidence of inspiring others, contributing to a team, or driving change within their organisation or community.
- **Innovation & Creativity:** Brings fresh ideas, new perspectives, or unique approaches to challenges in business or social impact.
- **Future Potential:** Clearly positioned for long-term success, with the talent, mindset, and trajectory to become a future leader in their field.

11. Rising Star Award (Nominated by an education or training provider)

- **Exceptional Promise:** Demonstrates clear potential to excel in their chosen field, showing early signs of leadership, creativity, or entrepreneurial spirit.
- **Dedication & Work Ethic:** Consistently displays commitment, perseverance, and a strong attitude toward learning and personal development.
- **Growth & Progression:** Evidence of significant growth in skills, confidence, or mindset during their educational or training journey.
- **Readiness for the World of Work:** Shows professionalism, adaptability, and the practical skills needed to thrive in a workplace or enterprise setting.
- **Positive Attitude & Influence:** Acts as a role model among peers, contributing positively to their learning environment or community.

12. Chair's Award for Outstanding Contribution

- **Exceptional Leadership**
Demonstrates visionary leadership that has significantly shaped or influenced business, civic, or community life across the Liverpool City Region—whether through the actions of a single inspiring leader or a forward-thinking organisation.
- **Long-Term Impact**
Evidence of a sustained and meaningful contribution over time, leaving a legacy of positive change, innovation, or progress in business, society, or civic life.
- **Champion of the Region**
Actively promotes the Liverpool City Region as a vibrant and dynamic place to live, work, invest, and thrive—driving regional pride, collaboration, and opportunity.
- **Inspiration & Influence**
Serves as a role model, mentor, or catalyst for others—whether as a person or through an organisation's culture and actions—inspiring future leaders and helping shape a stronger future for the region.

Business of the year

13. Business of the year (Under 30 employees)

- **Outstanding Performance:** Demonstrates strong business growth, operational excellence, or market success relative to its size.
- **Innovation & Agility:** Shows creative thinking, adaptability, or unique approaches that have driven success or set the business apart.
- **Leadership & Culture:** Evidence of strong leadership, a positive workplace culture, and a commitment to staff development and wellbeing.
- **Wider Impact:** Contributes to the local economy, community, or industry—acting as an ambassador for Liverpool both regionally and beyond.
- **Future Vision:** Clear strategy for sustained growth, innovation, and long-term success, with ambition that reaches beyond current achievements.

14. Business of the year (Over 30 employees)

- **Excellence in Performance:** Demonstrates sustained commercial success, strategic growth, and operational excellence on a larger scale.
- **Innovation & Leadership:** Evidence of innovation in products, services, or processes, alongside strong, forward-thinking leadership.
- **Workforce Development & Culture:** Shows commitment to employee engagement, inclusion, wellbeing, and skills development across the organisation.
- **Regional & Broader Impact:** Actively contributes to the Liverpool City Region while building a strong presence and reputation nationally or internationally.
- **Strategic Vision for the Future:** Clear, ambitious plans for continued growth, resilience, and leadership.