



Your Guide to Entering The Buckinghamshire Business Awards 2019



A Buckinghamshire Business First Event

bbf.uk.com/bba2019

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What are the Buckinghamshire Business Awards?

The Buckinghamshire Business Awards are an annual celebration recognising the innovation and success of businesses in Buckinghamshire. The awards are an opportunity to applaud the entrepreneurial spirit of both large and small businesses throughout the county and to honour those who have contributed to an outstanding year.

With huge potential to raise your company profile through a range of public relations and marketing activities, your entry to the Buckinghamshire Business Awards 2019 is an opportunity not to be missed.

“The Buckinghamshire Business Awards are designed to be relevant to all businesses in the county, whatever their size. It is the perfect opportunity to recognise the hard work that goes into running a business and to celebrate local entrepreneurship.”

Philippa Batting, Buckinghamshire Business First

Why enter?

Whatever the size, sector or age of your business, you will benefit.

Development begins at entry

Use the entry process as an MOT for your business. Entering creates an opportunity to focus on your business in a structured way and identify core strengths and competitive advantages.

Recognition of excellence

Award winners receive public recognition of business excellence, being acknowledged as the best in Buckinghamshire by peers, the business community and media. There are also bottom line benefits, winning companies often secure new contracts as a direct result of their success.

Appreciation

The award process provides a platform that acknowledges the contributions made by employees to your organisation's success and an invitation to the awards ceremony can reward their efforts.

This year there are even more ways to win!

We have introduced 3 new categories this year:

- Digital Innovation Award 2019
- Student Entrepreneur Award 2019
- Low Carbon Workspace Award 2019

‘Company of the Year’ will be awarded to the organisation that, in the opinion of the judges, best represents Buckinghamshire in terms of its success, its commitment and contribution both to the local community and economy.

Publicity

Award participation provides another dimension for showcasing your services and products to a wider audience, together with recognition within the local community as being an outstanding business.

Tangible benefits to your business

- Showcase your services and products to the wider community
- As a finalist or winner, companies receive official Buckinghamshire Business Awards branding and logos to use for promotional purposes
- Finalists and winners will be featured in an awards supplement produced and distributed by local press in Buckinghamshire
- All winners receive a bespoke trophy designed locally
- Finalists receive one free ticket to the award ceremony for each category they are a finalist in

The 2019 categories

The Buckinghamshire Business Awards 2019 will feature 12 categories, reflecting the diverse and dynamic business community operating throughout the county.

How many categories can I enter?

Businesses can enter up to two of the categories below. There is an additional chance to win by entering a third category - The Best in District award.



Apprentice and Young Person Employer of the Year

This award is open to all employers who have employed or provided work experience for a young person under the age of 24 (at the time of recruitment) since September 2017



Low Carbon Workspaces

Low Carbon Workspace Award

The Low Carbon Workspace category is open to any business that has reduced the environmental impact of their premises or operations, by improving water or energy efficiency and/or reducing waste generation, since January 2017.



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Digital Innovation Award

This award recognises businesses that have introduced new digital technologies to their companies which have improved their productivity / efficiency / profitability. Businesses in this category need to evidence why change is necessary to their business, the innovation introduced and the benefits derived from it.



Excellence in Customer Service Award

This award seeks to recognise excellence in customer service at a time in which it has never been more important to make the right impression on customers.



Growth Business of the Year

This award seeks to celebrate businesses who have grown or 'scaled-up' over the last 12 months. The definition of a 'scale up' refers to businesses that have shown rapid growth in recent years with the potential and ambition to continue that trajectory.

Heathrow

International Trade and Export Award

The award will be presented to the business who can demonstrate expansion of their markets beyond the UK, the successful launch or expansion of non-UK operations within the last 24 months, and an overall increase in sales revenue.



THE UNIVERSITY OF BUCKINGHAM

Student Entrepreneur Award

Start and run your own business and achieve an honours degree.

Win a £25,000 Scholarship to study BSc Hons Business Enterprise (BBE). The BBE is a 2 year undergraduate degree programme.



bucks new university

New Business of the Year

This category is open to any business that started trading after January 1st 2016. The business cannot be an expansion of an existing business, have simply undergone a name change, or simply be operating from a new location.

Buckinghamshire

Thames Valley LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
THE ENTREPRENEURIAL HEART OF BRITAIN

Small Business of the Year

The small business category is open to any business that employs fewer than 20 full time employees or equivalent.

Best in District – an additional chance to win!

Buckinghamshire's four district councils are demonstrating their commitment to supporting a vibrant economic community by offering businesses based in each of their district's the chance to be crowned 'the best of the best'.

This category is optional. Simply tick the relevant box on the category entry form to let us know that you are happy for your entry to be submitted to your local district council.

Best in District can also be entered in its own right should a company not wish to enter any other specific category.



Michael Garvey celebrates with Ashridge Group, the 2018 Company of the Year



Company of the Year 2019

'Company of the Year 2019' will be awarded to the business that, in the opinion of the judges, best represents Buckinghamshire in terms of its success, commitment and contribution both to the local community and economy. Previous winners include, Ashridge Group (2018), Silversen Machines (2017), Monodraught (2016), CoCredo (2015) and Global Infusion Group (2014).

The winner of this category will become an Ambassador member of Buckinghamshire Business First, for one year.

Recommend a business

Do you know a great local business that deserves recognition? If so, please let us know who they are and we will contact them and encourage them to enter the awards.

Please use the recommendation form on our website:

bbf.uk.com/bba2019

Who can enter?

Any registered private sector organisation or company located in Buckinghamshire that has been trading for at least 12 months is eligible to enter the awards.

If your organisation is part of a larger business or a franchise your organisation must function as a separate business unit in the county of Buckinghamshire.

Your guide to entry in 4 easy steps:

Step 1) Attend the Buckinghamshire Business Awards Launch event to discover what it takes to make your business stand out from the crowd (optional).

Step 2) Check the 'Category Guide', select up to 2 categories plus a 'Best in District Award' and enter at bbf.uk.com/bba2019

Step 3) Download and complete – 'A General Information Form' and the relevant 'Category Entry Form(s)'

Step 4) Return your entry forms to Awardsentries@bbf.uk.com by midnight on 18th April 2019.

Key dates for your diary

Closing date for entries	18/04/19
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Tickets for the Awards Ceremony go on sale	18/07/19
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Finalists announced	25/07/19
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Ceremony	09/10/19

Terms and conditions

General

- Entries cannot be accepted from any business which is part or wholly funded by any local authority.
- Sponsors of awards are eligible to enter the Buckinghamshire Business Awards - but not in the category that they are sponsoring.
- All entrants are expected to declare if they consider themselves to have any interest in the sponsoring organisation of the category(ies) that they are entering. Our conflict of interest policy is designed to preserve the impartiality of the judging process by ensuring that all parties recognise and disclose any potential conflicts. All steps will be taken to avoid and/or manage these situations as they arise.
- All entrants must agree to be interviewed by awards judges.
- Additional supporting information, such as photographs and testimonials, is acceptable, and should be relevant to the last 12 months.
- We regret that information in support of entries cannot be returned and will be destroyed securely post-awards.
- All entrants and finalists are invited to attend the Buckinghamshire Business Awards Dinner. This is a formal event during which the awards ceremony is held and the winners are announced. No results will be announced before this date.
- By applying for the Buckinghamshire Business Awards, you automatically qualify for membership of Buckinghamshire Business First. For details of membership, please visit bbf.uk.com/bba2019

Judging

- Once your entry is submitted, the hard work begins for the judges tasked with assessing all entries.
- Shortlisted entries will receive site visits in order to determine finalists and category winners. You will need to be available from mid May - 5th July.
- Being shortlisted and visited by a sponsor/judge doesn't necessarily secure your place as a finalist.

- All selections of finalists and winners will be reviewed by the independent judging panel made up of experienced business professionals.
- Category finalists will be considered for the overall Buckinghamshire Company of the Year 2019 Award. No 'entry' is required for this award as this is judged on the overall application of category finalists as well as subsequent finalist site visits .
- Charities will not be considered for the overall Company of the Year Award.
- All entries are treated in confidence. Judges are required to sign a confidentiality agreement that prevents them from sharing any information in relation to entrants outside of the judging process.
- When judging has concluded, entry submissions will be destroyed by the judges.
- The judges' decision is final and no communications will be entered into.
- Buckinghamshire County Council and Buckinghamshire Business First have no influence over the judges' decisions.

Finalists

- Judges will choose 3 finalists for each category, and finalists will be officially announced on 25th July 2019.
- A representative from each of the finalist companies will need to attend the awards ceremony. One free ticket will be provided and more can be bought for staff and family in order to make the night a true celebration.
- Each finalist must agree to take part in publicity, and by entering the awards you agree to this.
- The winner of each category will be announced from the 3 finalists on the night.
- A list of winners will be available on the Buckinghamshire Business Awards website at: **bbf.uk.com/bba2019**

Make the most of your entry

- Make sure you include contact details for the key person you would like to be contacted and let us know who we should communicate with about the awards.
- Read the entry criteria carefully and more than once, this will tell you what the judges are looking for.
- Make your submission clear and concise, using facts and statistics to illustrate your narrative. Judges will be reviewing a number of entries, so make yours the one with instant impact.
- Maximise your chances of becoming a winner by entering two categories and tailoring the information to each category.
- Each section of your submission should be within the specified word limit. However, charts and graphs are permitted in addition to this limit.
- Quality is more important than quantity, and content more important than presentation, although all entries must be typed.
- Evidence-base your statements to prove what you have done/achieved. Demonstrate changes you have made to the business to improve your profit, increase your customer base, reduce costs, employ more staff etc.
- Be innovative. Include samples, press articles and other relevant information.
- If you wish to be considered for a Best in District Award, please make sure you tick the box advising that you are happy for us to send on your entry.
- No entry is required for the Company of the Year Award as this is judged on the overall application of category finalists as well as subsequent finalist site visits.

Don't miss the deadline for entries - 18th April 2019

Not sure where to start?

Get hints and tips on how to make the most of your entry from previous winners, judges and PR experts. Watch our top tips video bit.ly/BBA_TopTips

Attend the Awards Launch Event

Give your company the best chance of being a finalist at the glittering gala dinner in 2019 by joining us for canapes and sparkling wine, whilst discovering what it takes to make your business stand out from the crowd.

Date: 5th December 2019

Time: 5.30pm - 7.00pm

Venue: Missenden Abbey, Great Missenden

This is the perfect opportunity to ask questions and talk with other entrants.

Where to submit your entry

By email to: AwardsEntries@bbf.uk.com

or

By post to:

Buckinghamshire Business Awards 2019
West Wing,
University Campus,
Queen Alexandra Road,
High Wycombe,
HP11 2GZ

Receipt of all entries will be acknowledged – if you have not received acknowledgement within 24 hours please contact us on 01494 927158

Any questions?

- Give us a call on **01494 927158**
or email awards@bbf.uk.com

Good luck and we look forward to receiving your entry!

Checklist

Have you remembered to:

- Book your place at the 2019 Launch Event (optional)
- Submit your entry to AwardsEntries@bbf.uk.com and have attached:

A fully completed 'General
★ Information Form'

Fully completed 'Category Entry
★ Form(s)'

A high resolution company logo (EPS
★ if available, JPEG at min 300 dpi)

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