



GENERAL CRITERIA FOR ALL CATEGORIES

Please answer the following six General Criteria questions before completing the two category-specific questions. If entering more than one category, you can replicate your General Criteria answers.

Please refer to the **competency framework** when completing your application to demonstrate your overall performance as a director. The framework is available here:

<https://www.iod.com/training/iod-approach/iod-competency-framework>.

Performance as a Director

1. **Knowledge:** Please give evidence of how you have applied your director knowledge to perform effectively in your role as a director. Please refer to all four knowledge competencies.
(250 words maximum)
2. **Skills:** Please give evidence of how you have successfully used your director skills in your role on the board. Please refer to all six skills competencies.
(250 words maximum)
3. **Mindset:** Please give evidence of how you have brought an appropriate director mindset to the delivery of your role. Please refer to all five mindset competencies.
(250 words maximum)

Executive Summary & Company Performance

1. Briefly describe your organisation's purpose and activities; what makes your business exceptional and how you have contributed to the success, growth and profitability of your organisation?
(350 words maximum)
2. What is your vision for the future of your organisation over the next 3-5 years and how do you personally intend to drive your business forward? Can you give examples as to how you ensure that this is reviewed and communicated to staff?
(350 words maximum)
3. What practices and processes have you put in place to ensure that you acquire, grow and embed skills and knowledge in your organisation?
(250 words maximum)



AWARD CATEGORIES 2021

- **Director of the Year - Large Business**
- **Director of the Year - SME Business**
- **Director of the Year - Family Business**
- **Director of the Year - Start-up**
- **Director of the Year – Third**
- **Director of the Year - Public Sector**
- **Director of the Year - International**
- **Director of the Year - Innovation**
- **Director of the Year - Young**
- **Director of the Year - Agility & Resilience *new for 2020/21***
- **Director of the Year - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**
- **Director of the Year - Sustainability**
- **Director of the Year – CSR**
- **Director of the Year - Non-Executive**
- **Institute of Directors Chair’s Award – offline nominations only**



**DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - LARGE BUSINESS
(50 million +)**

This award is designed to celebrate those directors working in a large business that has an annual turnover of more than £50 million.

Judges will look at how financial targets and KPIs have been met/exceeded, innovation, the vision for growth, sustainability, evidence of good corporate governance and the leader's understanding of key challenges, customers and the changing business landscape.

1. Please demonstrate how you have successfully overcome challenges, including the additional challenges relating to Covid-19, to drive forward your business plan and exceed business objectives. Provide examples of sound business and financial planning, staff support, involvement and motivation to meet business objectives and a clear plan for future growth of the organisation.
(400 words maximum)
2. Please provide examples of your contribution to board composition including identifying any gaps in board competency and how you have fostered meaningful engagement with your stakeholders. You should also include details of board accountability policies and procedures.
(400 words maximum)



**DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - SMALL MEDIUM BUSINESS (SME)
(up to 50 million)**

This award is designed to celebrate those directors working in a business that employs under 250 employees and has an annual turnover of less than £50 million.

This award will go to the business that can show outstanding initiative, boldness and imagination in enterprise, sustainability, as well as sound management practice, good corporate governance and commercial success.

1. Please demonstrate how you have successfully overcome challenges, including the additional challenges relating to Covid-19, to drive forward your business plan and exceed business objectives. Provide examples of sound business and financial planning, staff support, involvement and motivation to meet business objectives and a clear plan for future growth of the organisation.
(400 words maximum)
2. Please provide examples of your contribution to board composition, including identifying any gaps in board competency, and how you have fostered meaningful engagement with your stakeholders. You should also include details of board accountability policies and procedures.
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - FAMILY BUSINESS

This award recognises individuals in a family business who have responded to the specific challenges that face directors in family firms, as well as the challenges of the pandemic, and who have contributed to the success of the diverse, dynamic and innovative family business sector. Emerging leaders in a family business are eligible as long as they demonstrate the right trajectory and ethos of this very important part of the private business community.

The judges are looking for a leader who balances the needs and relationships of the company's owners with a desire to become more successful. Whether one family is in charge or several families work together, the business leader must have the potential to continue to grow and thrive within the current ownership structure.

1. How do you ensure that there is effective decision making across the family, taking into account management and ownership issues, conflict resolution, facilitating effective ownership of the business, balancing the involvement of family members with their skill set and those required by the business whilst above all operating in the best interests of the business and family as a whole? Provide examples of how you have contributed to good corporate governance.
(400 words maximum)
2. What are the greatest challenges you personally face as a Family Business Director? Describe the systems you have in place to ensure ongoing professional development for you and your employees. How would you define company culture and what approaches have you taken to ensure staff support during the uncertainties surrounding the pandemic?
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - START-UP

(exempt for IoD Student Members)

This award celebrates founders/co-founders of start-ups. It looks at the market opportunity identified by entrepreneurs, the model to capitalise on it and how it has been executed within the first three years of trading.

Judges will look at how initial targets and KPIs have been met or exceeded, the vision for growth, innovation and the leader's understanding of key challenges, customers and the competitive landscape, as well as a recognition of the importance of good corporate governance/ company culture.

1. Please provide evidence of the market opportunity you identified, your model to capitalise on it and how it differentiates you from your competitors. Please outline the key innovation(s) you introduced or developed that have created competitive advantage for your business – and the impact on the wider industry if applicable. Include details of your personal story (if appropriate), career to date and any notable additional information.
(400 words maximum)
2. Please explain how you define growth (i.e., revenue/profit, staff, client-base, regional/international expansion, etc.) and key milestones achieved over the last 12 months, given the additional challenges of the pandemic. Include top line data to explain how you have increased your customer base, or engagement from existing customers and the impact this had on your financial performance.
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - THIRD SECTOR

Leadership in the voluntary sector is critical to good governance, including planning, efficiency, transparency and accountability. This award is open to directors whose organisations are charities, community organisations or social enterprises that do not generate profit for individuals.

The judges are looking for leaders that can demonstrate how to get the best out of others for the benefit of their organisation and the people/communities it serves. You will have a compelling vision and demonstrate a commitment to empowering others, inclusive decision-making, collaborative leadership, and innovative solutions to fulfil your organisational purpose and values.

The judges will also consider how you demonstrate impact in the context of your operating environment, financial sustainability and good governance.

1. Describe what you have put in place to engage with your stakeholders to ensure your strategy or vision is successful. Give an example of what you have done to improve your organisation's financial sustainability, given the additional challenges associated with the pandemic.
(400 words maximum)
2. Describe how you support, motivate and empower the people in your organisation, creating a culture that inspires people to optimise their contribution, and highlight your key achievements of the last 12 months and the difference you have made. Describe how you have used your leadership role to promote anti-discriminatory practice and improve equality, diversity and inclusion.
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - PUBLIC SECTOR

Leadership is critical to good public governance, including good planning, efficiency, transparency and accountability. This award is open to leaders of public services, including public agencies, national bodies and governmental departments.

The judges are looking for leaders that can demonstrate how to get the best out of others' professional expertise and their contribution to civic society.

Wider considerations include how leaders have explained their societal contribution and impact to their stakeholders in the context of the environment in which they operate, their viability and good corporate governance.

1. Describe the processes or programmes that you have put in place to engage with your stakeholders that have been successful in delivering your strategy or vision. This should include how you support and motivate employees and establish a positive working atmosphere that inspires people to deliver good public services.
(400 words maximum)
2. Please highlight key milestones and innovations achieved in the last 12 months and demonstrable impact, including responses to the additional challenges associated with the pandemic.
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - INTERNATIONAL

We are looking for an international business leader with evidence of credible growth and development plans in place to build further on their company success globally.

The leader will operate across borders and could be in any industry sector but is likely to be gaining market share due to strong international growth from a great product or service.

The company must be trading a minimum of 30% of its business outside of the country it is registered in.

The Institute of Directors recognises the additional pressures in 2020 on international businesses due to the pandemic and Brexit preparations.

1. Please explain how you have increased market share, growth or expansion through international business operations, including export sales turnover and details of your plans for sustained growth. Please also give examples of good corporate governance and details of your effective leadership and management skills in international engagement.
(400 words maximum)
2. Describe your activities over the past 12 months, e.g., new products launched, innovation, new markets entered, countries you trade with, E-commerce trading and how you responded to the challenges of Brexit planning.
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - INNOVATION

This award recognises leaders that have achieved success through bringing an innovative and disruptive approach to their marketplace.

The judges are looking for a leader that has developed an innovative and transformational idea that displays creative thinking, has beaten the competition and has been developed and applied to improve commercial performance, operational effectiveness or customer engagement.

The judges will consider all aspects of an innovative new product/service launch, including research and development, launch activity and the actual or likely commercial success of the product/service.

Key success factors will include degree of innovation, time taken to market, design process/best practice, market edge, USP, potential for growth/competition and profitability. Other factors might include job creation/safeguarding, environmental sustainability, good corporate governance, use of teamwork, project management capability, customer delight/novelty factor and use of market research.

1. Please provide a brief description of your change, alteration, transformation, restructuring, remodelling or revolution in a product or service, including details of how this innovation has delivered competitive advantage through tangible and quantifiable results and/or improved overall financial performance.
(400 words maximum)
2. Please provide examples of how your role has supported and implemented this innovation through strong leadership and management, including responses to the additional challenges associated with the pandemic.
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR – YOUNG

This award recognises upcoming leaders who have demonstrated excellent entrepreneurial potential, ability, ambition, creativity and vision in new or established businesses who have operated at director level for less than three years.

We are looking for someone with an entrepreneurial approach who is a calculated risk taker and innovator who is already generating excitement in the marketplace and who also recognises the importance of good corporate governance/ company culture.

1. Please provide examples of how you have demonstrated an outstanding level of teamwork and/or leadership within your organisation. Please outline key milestones you have achieved over the last 12 months, including responses to the additional challenges of the pandemic.
(400 words maximum)
1. Please provide examples of how you have used new, innovative ways to generate ideas and opportunities to enhance performance or effect change and delivered tangible business benefits and results.
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - AGILITY & RESILIENCE **new for 2020/21**

This award recognises a director who has demonstrated determination, resilience and good leadership throughout the pandemic and tackled challenges head-on – who went ‘above and beyond’ during 2020.

Examples may include transforming your own operation or adapting your offering for new or existing customers, thus allowing your and/ or their business to survive and be ready to face and take advantage of future trends.

1. Please provide a brief description of the transformation, remodelling or revolution of your operation, or of a product or service, and why the events of 2020 caused this change. Please give details of how this change has strengthened your business and delivered competitive advantage through tangible and quantifiable results and/or improved overall financial performance.
(400 words maximum)
2. Please provide examples of how your role has supported the business in remaining resilient through strong leadership and how you have supported employee mental health and wellbeing.
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Diversity and inclusion within any business are key factors in determining organisational success. Over the years many organisations have worked hard to embrace diversity within their workplaces and create an environment where everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race or cultural background or disability, can flourish and succeed.

More needs to be done to ensure that every business is inclusive, that people feel valued for what they bring to any organisation and that everyone has the same access to opportunities.

Judges are looking for examples that demonstrate that you have specific initiatives already in place to promote diversity and inclusion. These initiatives must be appropriate and relevant to your organisation and its employees. These should demonstrate:

- The impact of, and positive outcomes from, an intersectional approach (viewing personal demographics such as age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social mobility, disability and gender in combination instead of isolation)
 - Active recruitment to encourage diversity
 - A voice, belonging and authenticity
 - Doing things differently by incorporating Diversity & Inclusion values and behaviours, which results in a positive impact on organisational culture
 - That initiatives or new practice leave a lasting legacy
1. Please give examples of initiatives that have successfully contributed to the promotion of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. What is the potential for expansion and/or inspiration for replication of the initiative? What tangible impact has this initiative had on your employees?
(400 words maximum)
 2. As part of good corporate governance how do you ensure your board are accountable for diversity and inclusion goals and how could receiving this Award be used to further promote diversity and inclusion in your region and/or industry?
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

This award is aimed at leaders who can demonstrate how they integrate the success and smooth running of their business with a strong sense of responsibility and consideration for their role as a corporate citizen.

Judges are looking for directors that are aware of the impact of their business on all aspects of society including economic, social and environmental.

You must be able to demonstrate where applicable your commitment and involvement in one or more of the key areas of CSR in addition to the core purpose of your business:

Organisational Governance

The system to make and implement decisions in pursuit of objectives - accountability, transparency and ethical behaviour and respect for obligation and values.

Human Rights

Due diligence, human risk situations, resolving grievance, discrimination and vulnerable groups, civil and political rights, economic social and cultural rights, and rights at work.

Employment Practices

Employment and employment relationships, conditions of work and social protection, social dialogue, health and safety at work and staff development and training in the workplace.

Environmental Issues

Prevention of pollution, sustainable resource use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, protecting the environment, biodiversity and restoration of natural habitats.

Community Involvement and Development

Community involvement, education and culture, employment creation and skills development, technology development and access, wealth and income creation, health and social investment.

Fair Operating Practices

Anticorruption, responsible political involvement, fair competition, promoting social responsibility in the value chain and respect for property rights.

Consumer Issues

Fair marketing, protecting consumers, health and safety, sustainable consumption. Consumer service support and complaint dispute resolution, consumer data protection and privacy, access to essential services and education and awareness.

1. Taking into consideration the key areas of CSR above, please provide examples of how you encourage your company to act in an ethically and socially responsible manner, and your own direct and active role in this, including responses to the additional challenges of the pandemic.
(400 words maximum)
2. Please describe the outcomes including social, environmental and economic benefits and measurable impacts and how you drive schemes forward and how others could adopt your procedures?
(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - SUSTAINABILITY

This award is aimed at leaders who can demonstrate how they integrate the success and smooth running of their business with a strong sense of social responsibility and corporate values and is designed to recognise the most ethical, socially responsible or green business leader in the UK.

Judges are looking for directors that are aware of the impact of their business on all aspects of society including economic, social, and environmental and your own direct and active role in this.

1. Please provide examples of how you have demonstrated commitment to the overarching vision/ strategy and to the wider sustainability agenda and how you have effectively engaged with others to drive the global climate agenda. Please include a description of the outcomes including social and economic benefits and measurable impacts.

(400 words maximum)

2. Describe how you have promoted and delivered corporate sustainability improvements, driven the development of the green economy and led the delivery of successful sustainability programmes over the past year, including responses to the additional challenges of the pandemic , working closely with colleagues/ partners to develop and execute effective environmental initiatives.

(400 words maximum)



DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR - NON-EXECUTIVE

NEDs can bring exceptional value to any organisation; their role is to provide a creative contribution to the board by providing independent oversight and constructive challenge to the executive directors on a broad range of subjects.

The most important qualities are judgement, wisdom and the ability to gain respect and attention from their colleagues.

This award recognises individuals that have made a significant contribution to the organisation's strategy, impacted on the financial success of the company, demonstrated high ethical standards and promoted the practice of good corporate governance.

1. Please provide examples of how you have efficiently identified and managed risk (operational, financial or reputational), including responses to the additional challenges of the pandemic, stay up to date with company's performance and management and how you have positively engaged and contributed to the board.
(400 words maximum)
2. Describe how you have used your leadership role to promote sustainability and to improve equality, diversity and inclusion in the organisation(s) you serve.
(400 words maximum)

Please also include a testimonial (as an attachment) from a Board member of any Board that you are appointed to at the time of your entry.



INSTITUTE OF DIRECTOR'S CHAIR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

This award is the highest accolade in the Director of the Year Awards, recognising the personal imprint of the UK's most high-profile leaders on the culture and success of their organisations through outstanding professionalism and the implementation of best practice in governance and leadership. Nominations are accepted for the private, public and third sectors. Winners will be selected by your national or regional IoD Chair

Nominations must demonstrate:

- Leadership and influence – through peers and board colleagues
 - Implementation of best practice principles – based on recommended guidance appropriate to the organisation (such as the Corporate Governance Guidance and Principles for Unlisted Companies in the UK or the UK Corporate Governance Code)
 - Engagement with the business community
 - Drive, courage and tenacity in the context of overcoming difficult business or board issues
 - The qualities for achieving and implementing change management – demonstrating how or where a board can improve
1. Taking into account the above, please provide an executive summary of why you are nominating this person, including any examples of how this nominee has implemented or improved the governance structures in their organisation and how they have ensured their board continuously demonstrates good governance including any processes or programmes put in place to engage their board in successfully delivering their strategy or vision.
(500 words maximum)