

The Buckinghamshire *Business Awards* 2024

Awards Category **Guide** 2024



Awards Categories **2024**

Apprentice and Young Person Employer

Business Leader

Community Champions

Creative Business

Digital Innovation

Enterprising Business

Excellence in Customer Experience

Growth Business

Innovative Business

Net Zero Ambition Business

New Business

Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure Business



Company of the Year



Any questions?

Email awards@bbf.uk.com or call **01494 927130**





The Buckinghamshire *Business Awards* 2024

Your guide to entry in 4 easy steps

How to enter

Our online entry process makes the compilation and submission of your entry even easier.

Step 1. Read this Category Guide and select up to 2 categories to enter.

Step 2. Get hints and tips on creating the best entry from previous winners, judges and PR experts. Watch our top tips video (it's an oldie but a goodie!): bit.ly/BBAtopTips

Step 3. Enter online at bbf.uk.com/bba2024

Step 4. Submit your entry online by 9am on Monday 20th May 2024.

You will need an account on the Buckinghamshire Business First website in order to submit an entry. Existing members can simply log in to their account. Those without an account can create one quickly and easily at bbf.uk.com/register.

Once started, you can return to your entry to update it at any point in the 'My account' area of the website, before submitting your final application.

Receipt of entries will be acknowledged - if you haven't received an acknowledgment within 24 hours of entering, please call **01494 927130** or email awards@bbf.uk.com.



Key dates for your diary

Closing date for entries 20/05/2024

Finalists announced 25/07/2024

Awards ceremony 09/10/2024

General Questions

The first part of your entry will be made up of some general questions about your business.

You will be asked:

1. Organisational structure

- The make-up of your workforce, i.e. numbers and types of employees – Full-time, part-time, contractors etc.
- How the business is structured.

2. Business environment

- What is your vision for the business over the next 5 years?
- Your main products and/or services.
- How you deliver your products and/or services to your customers.
- Your key customer groups/segments that you provide goods and/or services to.
- How your organisation measures and monitors financial, customer, workforce and business results.
- The steps you have taken if any in the last year and the steps you will undertake in the following year to reduce your carbon footprint.

3. Organisational relationships, advantages and challenges

- Any other key relationships and how they contribute to your business.
- Your competitive position in your industry.
- The principle factors that determine your success and give you competitive advantage relative to your competitors.

- The key challenges currently facing your business and/or sector.

4. The future

- Your company's three-year goal.

5. Finance, staff development, customer satisfaction and community

- Your company's financial performance and growth in the past 12 months.
- How your company has delivered against its non-financial strategic objectives in the last 12 months.
- Your company's policy for staff development and how training is established, demonstrating employee involvement if appropriate.
- Your company's track record in customer care and satisfaction.
- How your company has had a positive impact on, and involvement in the local community.

6. Financial summary

- Last year (from accounts); This year (estimated); Next year (forecast).

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 January 2022 which has involved training.



Winner of the 2023 Apprentice and Young Person Employer of the Year Award: CUBE.
Abi Cobley - Production Coordinator,
Academy Programme:

"This is a massive recognition of what we are doing. We tailor-make each programme to match the unique needs and interests of our apprentices. We want to give them the best chance of success, and it's great to see all this hard work come to life!"

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. To describe your organisation's commitment and future plans for taking on young people and providing training to them.
2. To describe the benefits that employing people under the age of 24 has brought to your business.
3. To give examples of how your young employees have benefited from the training you have provided.
4. To advise why you consider your company an exemplar employer for the provision of training to young people.

What are the judges looking for?

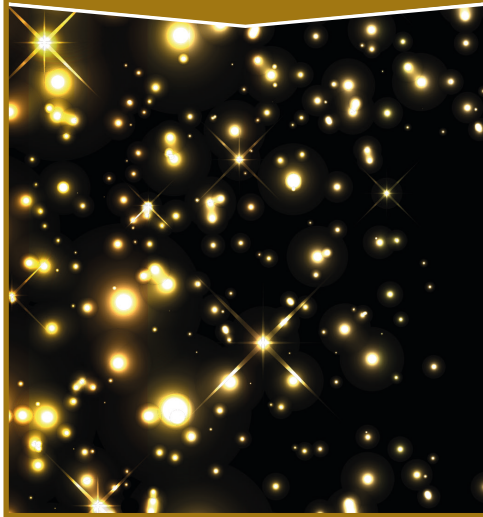
- **Commitment** - Demonstrating commitment to training the young workforce; to having an embedded training culture; the range/number of Apprenticeship frameworks supported (as appropriate); future training opportunities, and providing career prospects for young people.
- **Business benefits** - The training has enabled the business to improve, grow and perhaps even survive; the benefits are measurable and quantifiable.

Business Leader of the Year

The Business Leader of the Year Award identifies and celebrates business leaders who are really going places. This person(s) will be someone who has already:

- Started and built a business/es
- Can demonstrate that they have ambition, energy and skill
- Developed a vision to allow them to scale the heights within their market sector

New Category for 2024



Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. To provide the name of the business leader being entered for this award.
2. To describe the level of creativity and innovation that you / this business leader developed within your business in the last three years.
3. How have you / they identified new markets for your products/services?
4. Define how you / they have showed exemplary leadership in your company.
5. How would the employees describe this person?
6. What is your / the business leader's long-term vision and what is the plan to get there?

What are the judges looking for?

- A high level of creativity and innovation in the development of the business and its products/services in the last 3 years.
- A track record of innovative and enterprising activity.
- Identification of niche markets and/or new opportunities within existing markets.
- Strong leadership that has been integral to the company's success.
- Financial performance and evidence of how you have managed cash flow and your long-term sustainability.
- Strategic direction – what's your long-term vision and how do you plan to get there?

Community Champions Award

This award recognises those businesses which have a strong track record of playing a responsible part in society and giving back to it through fundraising and active support from company employees in providing opportunities for worthy causes, for which there is no direct financial benefit to the company.



Winner of the 2023 Community Champions Award: Aylesbury Waterside Theatre. Sarah Fleming - Head of Marketing and Communications:

"This award means so much to us. The community is at the heart of our organisation, and this is an amazing recognition and celebration of our hard work supporting local initiatives and giving back to the community we operate in. What a great way to celebrate with the team!"

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. What is your organisational Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy for working with worthy causes?
2. Which cause(s) has the company been working with?
3. How have you been working with the identified cause(s) during the past 12 months?
4. How have employees and managers been involved in this work?
5. What benefits has the company received from CSR activity?
6. To include any testimonials you have received directly from those whom the company supports.

What are the judges looking for?

- A track record of support towards social, economic, educational or charitable issues.
- A significant impact on the cause(s) during the past 12 months. This could be through direct activity such as providing a service or improving an existing one, or philanthropic giving.
- Fundraising for local or national charities and worthy causes.
- The commitment and/or volunteering of staff.
- A company commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Creative Business of the Year

This award is about finding the most successful and innovative creative business in Buckinghamshire. The types of businesses who are eligible to enter this category are those whose main business is involved with:

Advertising & Marketing; Architecture; Art & Antiques Market; Crafts; Design (Fashion, Graphic, Product); Film, TV, Video, Radio and Photography; Gaming; Interactive Leisure Software; I.T., Software & Computer Services; Museums, Galleries and Libraries; Music; Performing and Visual Arts; Publishing.



Winner of the 2023 Creative Business of the Year Award: CUBE. James Hakesley – Co-Founder and CEO:

“Creativity is the heart and soul of our business. It has empowered us to grow, adapt, innovate and succeed. Combining this creativity with market knowledge and an in-depth understanding of client objectives, we deliver ideas that inspire and state-of-the-art services that challenge old ways of thinking, meeting our audiences’ needs in new ways.”

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. To describe the level of creativity and innovation you have developed within your business in the last three years.
2. How have you identified new markets for your products/services?
3. How do you involve staff in new product/service development?
4. To describe your customer experience and the measures you have taken to improve it in the last 12 months.

What are the judges looking for?

The award will be presented to the business which can demonstrate year-on-year financial progress and business growth since January 2022. Judges will be looking for demonstrable excellence in the following areas:

- Commercial performance.
- Expansion and growth.
- Innovation and delivery.
- Security and ethical trading policy.
- Staff engagement.
- Customer service.

Digital Innovation Award

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



**Winner of the 2023 Digital Innovation Award: National Paralympic Heritage Trust.
Vicky Hope-Walker - CEO:**

"This award feels like a stamp of approval for all our hard work setting up as a new charity. A recognition of a really diverse team that has worked really hard to achieve amazing results. And this is only the beginning for us. For a small charity, we are looking forward to achieving many more milestones in the coming years."

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. What new digital innovation/s have you introduced to your business and why?
2. What were the main objectives for introducing it/them?
3. What were the specific challenges faced in introducing it/them? How were these overcome?
4. Were your objectives reached?

What are the judges looking for?

Businesses and organisations that enter this category will need to demonstrate why new digital innovation was needed, how the company overcame change to incorporate the new innovation/s, and the benefits derived from it/them.

The judges will be looking for an organisation that:

- Demonstrates an understanding of the benefits of taking up the new digital technology.
- Has evidence of the benefit/potential for business growth from it.
- Has gained an acceptance from the workforce for the change.
- Can demonstrate an ability to exploit digital innovation to enhance business growth.

Enterprising Business of the Year

The Enterprising Business of the Year category is open to any business with a turnover of less than £7.5 million.



Winner of the 2023 Enterprising Business of the Year Award: StaffHost Digital. Gary Thompson – Director:

“This award means everything to us. We have invested in our people who are at the heart of our business. All our staff are Buckinghamshire-based, so it’s great seeing local talent being recognised. We would have never done this without them.”

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. To describe how your business has grown in the past two years and to what you attribute this to.
2. What are the organisation’s key strategic objectives and what has been done to work towards achieving them?
3. How have you analysed your market and used this data to respond to change?
4. To share an example of how your business has demonstrated adaptability and resilience in response to changing market conditions or unexpected circumstances.

What are the judges looking for?

The judges will be looking for evidence of current business performance; growth over the past two years; potential for future growth in the years ahead; examples of management responses to changes in market; and stand-out quality that makes the business a potential award winner.

Excellence in Customer Experience Award

This award seeks to recognise excellence in the customer experience and is looking for a business which can:

- Demonstrate that customer experience is treated as a priority
- Show that the company has a positive customer service culture
- Demonstrate how the customer journey and experience has improved over the past 12 months



Winner of the 2023 Excellence in Customer Service Award: Adroit Services. Peter Butt – Business Manager:

“Our customers are not only at the centre of our business, they continually inspire us to grow and innovate at rapid pace. We’re thrilled to have received an award that is a testament to our team’s hard work, dedication and unwavering focus on fostering a customer-centric culture and delivering excellent customer service every time.”

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. How is the customer experience embedded into your organisation? This should include how the customer experience is treated as a priority.
2. How has your organisation been creative in defining the customer experience? Also include how the organisation deals with complaints.
3. What policies/good practice protocols are in place to ensure that staff are providing a positive customer experience?
4. To provide any testimonials, quotes or surveys that demonstrate your positive customer service culture.

What are the judges looking for?

- How the company has planned and invested in a culture of positive customer service.
- Policies and good practice protocols.
- How the organisation communicates with the customer.
- How effectively it deals with customer complaints.
- Evidence of an excellent customer experience through surveys, testimonials, and quotes.

Growth Business of the Year

This award is open to any business which has grown or experienced significant growth since January 2022. The business must have a minimum of 5 employees since January 2022; achieved a minimum of £250k turnover in the last year; and the potential/aspiration to grow turnover and/or profit by a minimum of 50% over a 3-year period.



Winner of the 2023 Growth Business of the Year Award: Saepio Solutions. Anthony Salerno – Information Security Officer:

“Tonight’s awards have been a great opportunity to recognise the team’s hard work over the past seven years. Starting from a small room in Buckinghamshire, to achieve this growth has been phenomenal. Consistent delivery of value to our customers has led to exponential growth, and we’re thrilled to have received this award.”

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. To describe how your business/organisation has grown in the last 2 years.
2. To describe your routes to market and/or distribution channels.
3. To outline how your business has leveraged emerging technologies or innovative practices to drive scalability and accelerate growth.
4. To describe your staffing structure and job-appropriate training for staff.
5. To describe the measures you have in place to attract and retain top talent, ensuring that your team is equipped to support and drive your business’s growth objectives.
6. To summarise your strategic plans and objectives for further scaling your business in the future, and how you anticipate staying ahead of the competition in your industry.

What are the judges looking for?

- Evidence of business growth and sustainability.
- Innovative ways of promoting products and creating routes to market.
- Creating employment and proven development of staff.
- A robust business plan plotting future growth and business sustainability.

Innovative Business of the Year

This award is open to businesses that can demonstrate an innovative or inventive approach to new services, products or processes since January 2022.



Winner of the 2023 Innovative Business of the Year Award: Lunaz. David Lorenz – CEO and Founder:

“We are innovating to accelerate the globally required transition to clean-air powertrains. We chose Buckinghamshire because it is a globally recognised centre of excellence with the skills and talent required to realise our ambitions of true global scale. This award is testament to all of our staff at Lunaz working to deliver a clean-air future.”

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. What new innovation/s have you introduced to your business and why?
2. What were the main objectives for introducing it/them?
3. What were the specific challenges faced in introducing it/them? How were these overcome?
4. Were your objectives reached?
5. To explain the impact of the innovation/s on your business and the wider community.

What are the judges looking for?

- A clearly-written description of the innovation in the service, product, or process, and its background.
- A plan for continued future implementation and development of the innovation, if appropriate.
- How innovation can be shown to have had a demonstrable, actual and projected quantifiable benefit, for example in:
 - Sales turnover/profit growth
 - Cost reduction
 - Reduction in delivery days or stock holding
 - Customer satisfaction
 - Staff efficiency and satisfaction
 - New markets

Net Zero Ambition Business of the Year

This award is open to businesses that have put a net zero ambition and carbon saving at the heart of their business planning and can demonstrate the measures that have been implemented, along with significant carbon savings achieved.



Winner of the 2023 Net Zero Ambition Business of the Year: Moogies.
Helen Barrett - Head of Marketing and Sustainability:

“On behalf of the whole team, we’re thrilled to receive this award. We’ve been working really hard to achieve our sustainability goals, and even though it can be challenging, it’s part of our core values as a company. We encourage other businesses to get involved and we’d love to share with them what we have learnt so far to keep the conversation

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. To describe the carbon-saving measures you have implemented and the savings you have achieved.
2. To describe the process the company took to making the decision to implement the above measures.
3. To explain how staff members have been included in any decisions and how the results have been shared across the company.
4. To describe your future environmental plans for your company.

What are the judges looking for?

- A clearly-written detailed description of the carbon-saving measures that have been implemented.
- A plan for continued future implementation and development of further carbon-saving measures.
- The measures implemented can be shown to have had additional benefits for the business in, for example:
 - Sales turnover/profit growth
 - Staff efficiency and satisfaction
 - New markets



New Business of the Year

This category is open to any business that started trading after 1st January 2022. The business cannot be an expansion of an existing business, or simply have undergone a name change or be operating from a new location.



Winner of the 2023 New Business of the Year Award: Elite HNW. Max Thorne – Founder:

“It’s so nice to be recognised for what we set out to bring to the community. It’s amazing to see all our hard work being rewarded with this award on this beautiful evening that brings the business community together.”

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. What inspired you to open a business, and in particular, this business?
2. What would you say your company’s Unique Selling Point (USP) is and why? How do you promote it?
3. What is your competitive advantage?
4. What early successes have you achieved and what obstacles have you overcome?
5. What is the most important lesson that you have learned in the past year?

What are the judges looking for?

- How start-up was achieved.
- Growth to date.
- Strength and stability of the business.
- Understanding of the market in which the business operates.
- Vision/strategy for future development.
- Funding arrangements and investment plans for the business.

Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure Business of the Year

This category is open to any businesses from within the tourism, hospitality or leisure sectors within Buckinghamshire that can demonstrate that they stand head and shoulders above their competitors.



Winner of the 2023 Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure Business of the Year Award: Aylesbury Waterside Theatre. Sarah Fleming - Head of Marketing and Communications:

"We're extremely proud to have won this award, which is down to our hard-working and talented team who give visitors in our wonderful county a great experience every time. We also want to congratulate the other shortlisted businesses for the great work they do to attract visitors to our county and sustain jobs for the local community."

Entry Questions

You will be asked:

1. To describe how your business delivers exceptional experiences to guests or customers, setting you apart from competitors in the industry.
2. To summarise any successful marketing and branding strategies that have effectively positioned your business as a premier destination or experience within the tourism, hospitality or leisure sector.
3. To describe the innovative initiatives or offerings that have enhanced the overall guest experience and contributed to the success of your business.
4. To describe how you will develop and promote your business in the next year and the reasons why.

What are the judges looking for?

- Commitment to promoting tourism, encouraging leisure pursuits and promoting customer-focused hospitality venues in Buckinghamshire.
- Evidence of business growth.
- Adding value to the county as a leisure and hospitality-focused sector with an understanding of the importance of tourism both nationally and internationally to Buckinghamshire.
- Creating employment and proven development of staff for the sector in Buckinghamshire.
- Evidence of customer feedback detailing satisfaction with the service/facilities on offer.

Company of the Year



Philippa Batting celebrates with Lunaz, the 2023 Company of the Year.

The 2024 Company of the Year Award will be awarded to the business which, in the opinion of the judges, best represents Buckinghamshire in terms of its success, commitment and contribution to the local community and economy. Previous winners include: Lunaz (2023), Origin (2022), Total Carbide (2021), UFIT Drinks (2019), Ashridge Group (2018), Silverson Machines (2017), Monodraught (2016), CoCredo (2015), and Global Infusion Group (2014).

The Company of the Year will become an Ambassador member of Buckinghamshire Business First for one year.

Winner of the 2023 Company of the Year Award: Lunaz. David Lorenz – CEO and Founder:

“We are a proud part of a thriving business community here in Buckinghamshire. This region is a driver of innovation in a diverse range of industries. As a highly ambitious clean-tech company with a path to global scale, we could not be more delighted to fly the flag for this vibrant and prospering region around the world. This award is testament to our people and the incredible work they have put in to realising our vision to accelerate the global transition to clean-air mobility.”

Recommend a business

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

Please use the recommendation form on our website: bbf.uk.com/bba2024



2023 Award Winners

Could you be a winner in 2024?

Company of the Year

Sponsored by Buckinghamshire Business First

Winner: **Lunaz**

Apprentice and Young Person Employer of the Year

Sponsored by Buckinghamshire Council

Winner: **CUBE**

Creative Business of the Year

Sponsored by Pinewood

Winner: **CUBE**

Enterprising Business of the Year

Sponsored by B P Collins

Winner: **StaffHost Digital**

Growth Business of the Year

Sponsored by Richardsons Chartered Accountants

Winner: **Saepio Solutions**

Net Zero Ambition Business of the Year

Sponsored by GRIDSERVE

Winner: **Moogies**

Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure Business of the Year

Sponsored by Stoke Park

Winner: **Aylesbury Waterside Theatre**

Community Champions Award

Sponsored by Chandler Garvey

Winner: **Aylesbury Waterside Theatre**

Digital Innovation Award

Sponsored by Alcom IT

Winner: **National Paralympic Heritage Trust**

Excellence in Customer Service Award

Sponsored by CUBE

Winner: **Adroit Services**

Innovative Business of the Year

Sponsored by Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Winner: **Lunaz**

New Business of the Year

Sponsored by Buckinghamshire New University

Winner: **Elite HNW**

Young Entrepreneur of the Year

Sponsored by The University of Buckingham

Winner: **Duncan Lee – XYZ Music Academy**



The Buckinghamshire
Business Awards
2024

**Take your first steps to success
in 2024. Enter the
Buckinghamshire Business Awards!**

For further details and a link to the online entry forms,
visit: bbf.uk.com/bba2024

Any questions? Give us a call on **01494 927130**
or email awards@bbf.uk.com.

Closing date for entries is **9am on Monday 20th May 2024.**