Awards categories

**Newcomer** - Recognising a business in the region that began trading on or after January 1, 2017 that has demonstrated outstanding performance and impact in its sector.

**Innovation** - Celebrating original or disruptive business thinking. Innovation can be around process, products, services or route to market, for example. Judges are looking for an impact on the business that has delivered results.

**International Trade** - Recognising international trade success from a business in the region - whether entering new markets or achieving significant growth in existing countries.

**Investment** - This award is to recognise a significant commitment made by a business in the region. The shortlisted companies can either be new to the region or already here, but they will all be able to show a real commitment in terms of investing in facilities, people or products that will have a long-term benefit.

**Contributing to the Community** - Identifying a business or individual in the region that has demonstrated a commitment to ‘giving something back’ to the region, through CSR initiatives or charitable activities.

**Professional Services** - Rewarding outstanding performance from a professional services firm in the region. Judges will be looking for achievements and activity that is being driven from within the region and sets the firm apart.

**Property Business** – This award, recognising the strength and importance of the property sector, will go to the business which has had a successful year and can show how its work has positively impacted on the regional economy.

**Family Business** – The winner will be able to show how it is thriving because it is a family business, utilising the skills of different generations and having a long-term vision for sustainable success.

**Small Business (up to 50 employees)** - Shortlisted businesses will be able to demonstrate outstanding development and growth, for example through significant investment, creating jobs, entering new markets or launching new products - and be able to show the impact this has had on the company’s performance. Businesses which are being disruptive

**Medium Business (51 to 250 employees)** - Judges will be looking for businesses with sustained growth or have achieved a step-change in their performance. Other factors, such as disrupting their market, entering new markets, investing in the business, and strong employee engagement, will be features of the successful entries.

**Large Business (251+ employees)** - This award will go to one of the region’s strong success stories that is really setting the pace. The winning business will have outstanding financials but will also have a great story to tell and be making a significant impact in the region.

**Fast Growth** - Rewarding outstanding growth demonstrated by a business in the region over the past 12 months, as part of a sustainable strategy.

**Ambassador of the Year** - Recognising outstanding leadership, vision and commitment to business over a sustained period. The winner will be a person who has made a significant contribution in their sector or to the region. The judges may also nominate individuals for this award, and no shortlist will be published.