



## **Partners in SME Organisations Award**

### **Information Pack**

The Partners in SME Organisations Award is a prestigious category in the PFM Awards, designed to recognise and celebrate the exceptional partnerships between small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) organisations and/or service providers. SMEs are the backbone of the British economy and this award highlights the importance of collaboration in driving growth, innovation, and excellence. Effective partnerships are crucial as they provide SMEs with the resources, expertise, and support needed to thrive in a competitive market. By honouring outstanding partnerships, the award encourages continuous improvement and innovation in business practices, inspiring others to strive for excellence. It also emphasises the critical role of SMEs in driving economic growth and sustainability.

#### **Eligibility**

- **Partnership Duration:** The partnership between the organisation and the service provider must have been in place for at least one year.
- **Size:** Service provider and/or client must fit the EU definition of an SME (Staff headcount: Fewer than 250 employees. Turnover: ≤ €50 million. Balance sheet total: ≤ €43 million.)

#### **What to Submit**

- **The Entry Form:** Submit digitally through the website.
- **Supporting Submission:** Up to 1,500 words (as a Word document, PDF, or PowerPoint presentation) to support the entry, including a nomination from the client and/or service provider, plus a 250-word summary. The criteria to include are as follows (please demonstrate as much of the following as you can):

#### **Performance and Achievement**

- **Growth Initiatives:** Demonstrated excellence in implementing practices that drive business growth and development.
- **Sustainability:** High levels of commitment to sustainable business practices, supported by initiatives that reduce environmental impact.
- **Ethical Practice:** Evidence of ensuring best practices around ESG and Net Zero within SME operations.

#### **Innovation**

- **Innovative Solutions:** Implementation of innovative business techniques, technologies, or processes that have improved efficiency or effectiveness.

- **Technology Integration:** Adoption of advanced technologies that enhance business operations and management.

#### **Professional Development**

- **Training and Development:** Commitment to ongoing training and professional development of staff in business practices.
- **Certifications:** Relevant certifications or accreditations achieved by the business team.

#### **Impact and Contribution**

- **Operational Impact:** Positive impact on the organisation's operations, supported by measurable outcomes or feedback from clients.
- **Community Engagement:** Participation in community or industry-related activities, demonstrating a commitment to the wider community.

#### **Compliance and Safety**

- **Regulatory Compliance:** Adherence to industry regulations and safety standards, ensuring a safe and compliant working environment.
- **Safety Initiatives:** Active involvement in promoting and implementing safety initiatives within the workplace.

#### **Nominations and References**

- **Client Nomination:** A nomination from the client, highlighting the achievements and contributions of the service provider in supporting SMEs.
- **References:** Supporting references from colleagues, supervisors, or clients, providing additional insights into the partnership's performance and character.

#### **Next Steps**

- **Finalists Announcement:** Finalists will be announced in June, at a date to be confirmed (please keep an eye on the website and our social media).
- **Site Visit:** The judges will be in contact to arrange a site visit at a mutually agreed date and time over the summer. More information is available on the Judging section of [pfmawards.co.uk](http://pfmawards.co.uk).
- **Awards Ceremony:** The winner will be announced at the PFM Awards on 5 November 2025. Ideally, all finalists should be present at the Awards. If you are unable to attend, please let us know in advance.

Please note that due to the number of submissions we receive, we are only able to offer feedback on those candidates selected as finalists. If you have any questions, email the PFM Editor at [amanda.vlietstra@imlgroup.co.uk](mailto:amanda.vlietstra@imlgroup.co.uk)