

# LegalBusiness Awards 2026

Venue: Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London

Date: Tuesday 29 September 2026

## Sending submissions

Please submit your entry using our awards platform from 10 February 2026:  
**lbawards.awardsplatform.com.**

Using the awards platform will allow you to:

- Login as many times as you would like and edit your entry up until the submission deadline on Thursday 2 April 2026.
- Enter more than once in each category, as long as the work submitted meets the criteria.
- Attach documents, links to videos and input testimonials

Please ensure submissions include:

- Partner contact and email address
- Press contact and email address
- Body text (max 600 words) explaining how you have met the specific criteria of the chosen award category
- Client testimony where appropriate
- We will assume that all information supplied to us may be published unless you indicate clearly otherwise.

Please feel free to submit in as many categories as you wish.

For enquiries relating to the submission process, please contact Ben Wheway at [ben.wheway@legalease.co.uk](mailto:ben.wheway@legalease.co.uk).

## The closing date for nominations is Thursday 2 April 2026

All shortlists will be finalised in May 2026 and all nominees will be notified of their inclusion in the shortlists shortly afterwards. The editor's decision is final.

## **AWARDS CATEGORIES**

### **AI Initiative of the Year**

This award will celebrate the law firm, in-house legal team or chambers demonstrating the most impressive deployment of AI within their business. Winning entries should clearly set out how AI is being used, and the savings in time, money or efficiency created. Information about adoption and plans to scale will also be considered.

### **Barrister of the Year**

This award recognises standout individual contributions from the Bar during the last year. Entries are welcomed from King's Counsel and junior barristers, regardless of experience, who are tenants at any chambers. Judges will be looking for evidence of exceptional performance in any area that makes the chosen barrister stand out from their peers.

### **Boutique Law Firm of the Year**

With specialist law firms striking an increasingly confident note in the market, this award will be handed to a niche practice that has performed exceptionally in terms of rapidly establishing itself, approaching its chosen market creatively and effectively competing against far larger competition.

### **Business Services Team of the Year**

This category is open to the business services teams demonstrably using their skills and knowledge to aid the success of law firms and chambers. Critical to the success of entries for this category is evidence of a successful outcome, with strong testimony, rather than marketing-speak. Judges will be looking for evidence of one specific campaign or initiative that has delivered tangible results for a firm or chambers during the last year.

### **Capital Markets Team of the Year**

This award will recognise a team putting in an outstanding performance on a high profile capital markets deal with a significant UK component. The entry should outline the significance of the mandate, with judges looking for evidence of involvement in market-defining transactions that demonstrate why the firm stands out from the competition.

### **Chambers of the Year**

This award highlights the set that stands out for its impressive performance over the past year. Key factors considered will be evidence of an outstanding track record in winning high-end disputes, innovation, effective leadership, high-quality clerking, impressive financial performance and increased market share.

### **Client Service Firm of the Year**

This award – which is not open to submissions – will be awarded to the firm which received the highest overall client service scores during the annual Legal 500 research.

### **Competition Team of the Year**

This award will be given to the team that can demonstrate crucial antitrust advice on a specific case, transaction or investigation, or was instrumental in steering a client through a regulatory minefield.

### **Disputes Team of the Year**

This category will recognise the team setting the pace in the disputes market with its role on a complex dispute in the UK. The key requirement is not necessarily a substantial award of damages but rather an impressive result for the client, which could include an important out-of-court settlement or avoiding a costly appeals process. This category covers all disputes regardless of sector, and encompasses both litigation and arbitration.

### **Energy/Infrastructure Team of the Year**

This award recognises the team that has attracted the most impressive instructions of the year in this critical and challenging sector group. We welcome submissions highlighting one standout example taken from a variety of work, including standout corporate transactions, financing, disputes and arbitration, as well as regulatory issues. This award could as easily go to a boutique firm or chambers for handling a critical dispute as it could go to a large international firm for a substantial project financing.

### **ESG Programme of the Year**

In recognition of either a single law firm, in-house team or chambers, or a wider association, this award will be given to those in the industry that have made the strongest overall contribution to promoting the environmental, social and governance (ESG) agenda in the past year. Reference can be made to a range of areas, including pro bono and community activities, environmental and workplace initiatives and responsible client selection.

### **Finance Team of the Year**

Winners of this award will operate at the cutting edge of the finance industry. We will consider one standout example of work taken from a wide range of disciplines, including bank lending, acquisition finance, structured finance, project finance and debt capital markets.

### **GC of the Year**

The winner of this award will be a general counsel (or those in the most senior in-house legal position) who has truly led the way for their business in the last year. Key factors influencing our judging panel include board profile, outstanding strategic thinking, superb communication skills and the extent to which individuals have the support of their teams in delivering exceptional value to the wider business to help it move forward.

### **Global London Law Firm of the Year**

This award will recognise exceptional performance by the London office of an international law firm. It is open to firms with a London presence but which are not UK-headquartered. Submissions should showcase significant progress in London over the past year, supported by a strong track record of growth. Judges will look for impressive financial results, strategic headcount expansion, headline-making matters and client wins.

### **In-House Team of the Year**

This category is open to general counsel and their teams from any industry sector. Tying in with our annual GC Powerlist report and event, this award will be presented to the team that can demonstrate outstanding performance on behalf of the company, either through innovative use of its own resources or effective management of external law firms.

### **International Law Firm of the Year**

This award recognises the international firm that has delivered the most outstanding performance over the past 12 months. This award is open to large law firms with a broad international footprint across a number of countries, celebrating those that have outpaced the competition and made a real market impact. Judges will look for bold strategic moves — from transformative growth, new market expansion and major client wins to successful mergers, standout financial results and high-impact lateral hires. While the emphasis is on the last year, shortlisted firms should also demonstrate sustained success over a longer period of time.

### **IP Team of the Year**

Entries for this award should highlight the team's role on a single, market-leading IP/patent dispute or non-contentious IP matter, with a significant UK component. The winning entry will demonstrate involvement in precedent-setting IP work that surpasses rivals through its complexity or significance.

### **Legal Technology Team of the Year**

Recognising the law firms, in-house teams and chambers that have pushed through innovation and secured competitive advantage for their business. Important factors will be fresh approaches in creating and delivering legal products, including utilising technology and new business models.

### **Life Sciences Team of the Year**

This award recognises the team that has handled innovative work and has attracted the most impressive instructions of the year in this constantly changing sector. We welcome submissions highlighting one example taken from a variety of work, including standout corporate transactions, disputes and arbitration, as well as regulatory issues. This award could as easily go to a boutique firm for successfully handling critical patent litigation for a generics company as it could go to a large international firm for handling public M&A for Big Pharma.

### **Lifetime Achievement Award**

This award will go to a high-profile individual who has played a significant role in the profession throughout an extensive career.

### **M&A Team of the Year**

This award will go to the team demonstrating impressive involvement on a particularly significant M&A deal, joint venture or disposal. The value of the deal is less important than evidence of outstanding transactional nous and commitment to the client in the context of one exceptional piece of work.

### **Management Partner of the Year**

The winner of this award will be a managing partner, senior partner, head of chambers, chief executive, chair or chief operating officer who has truly led the way for their business over the last year. Key factors influencing our judging panel include market profile, outstanding strategic thinking, superb communication skills and the extent to which individuals have the support of staff and clients in driving the firm's business forward.

### **Most Transformative In-House Team of the Year**

This award recognises in-house legal teams that have made a major contribution to change or transformation either at an industry or sector level, or have championed unusual or innovative approaches. This could range from dealing admirably with dramatic changes in a particular industry to wrestling with challenges in society linked to cultural or technological upheaval.

### **Private Client Team of the Year**

This award recognises the top private client teams handling high-value work in the areas of estates, charities, family, contentious and non-contentious trusts and probate, as well as personal tax, particularly to high-net-worth individuals and families.

### **Private Equity Team of the Year**

The winner in this category must demonstrate impressive involvement on a particularly significant private equity deal or fundraising. The value of the deal is less important than evidence of outstanding transactional nous and commitment to the client in the context of one exceptional piece of work. Judges will be looking for evidence of moving with the market, standing out from competitors on the most eye-catching transactions, and winning new clients.

### **Public Sector Team of the Year**

This award will recognise work on a high-profile matter that demonstrates the firm's market-leading public sector expertise. Entries should focus on mandates for UK government or other public sector bodies, with the matter demonstrating complexity and significance to the UK market.

### **Real Estate Team of the Year**

For this award, judges will look for a standout example of real estate-related work, including financing, development or construction, or cases and transactions in planning, environment and regeneration areas.

### **Restructuring Team of the Year**

This award recognises teams that have played a critical role on the most complex restructuring mandates of the year. In choosing the winners in this category, judges will be looking for clear examples of innovation and where the lawyers have achieved crucial outcomes for their clients.

### **Rising Star In-House Counsel of the Year**

Tying in with our annual GC Powerlist report in recognising outstanding achievements by in-house lawyers below group general counsel level, this award will focus on the rising stars tipped for great things by their colleagues, peers and advisers.

### **UK Law Firm of the Year**

This award recognises the UK firm that has delivered the most outstanding performance over the past 12 months. Open to all UK-headquartered firms, this celebrates the firms that have outpaced the competition and made a real market impact. Judges will look for bold strategic moves — from transformative growth, new market expansion and major client wins to successful mergers, standout financial results and high-impact lateral hires. While the emphasis is on the last year, shortlisted firms should also demonstrate sustained success over time.