



2018 - Best Annual Report (print and online)

Categories: FTSE100, FTSE250, Small Cap & AIM, and International

IR Principles

Please note that for all awards categories, companies need to emphasise how you have successfully addressed the following IR principles:

- Having an equity story and investment case that are clearly communicated
- Helping investors, analysts and others to understand the growth and value drivers of a company, such that there is a fair and orderly market in its shares
- Meeting or exceeding all regulatory requirements around disclosure

Award Description

Once a year the Annual Report provides an invaluable opportunity to tell your company's unique investment story and engage with your investors and wider stakeholders.

Best practice annual reports clearly articulate how the business differentiates itself and provide a 'shop window' into the company and its culture. Best-in-class annual reports tell a holistic story that clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of both the business model and strategy, whilst evidencing the strength of the leadership team and governance of the business. Done well, the annual report can shape your reputation and build confidence with investors.

Judges are looking evidence of an innovative and effective annual report that plays an integral part in the communication of the strategy and investment case of a company. It should provide a sense of the purpose, culture and identity of your organisation. Judges will also be looking for evidence of clear and concise communications, considering key stakeholders needs and how these are met through both your report and the digital expression of it.

Please note that this award takes into account both the printed annual report and online version and how together they present a holistic 'story of your company'. Please provide a hard copy of your annual report with your entry - this is essential for the judging process.

Entry requirement

The award is assessed on an equally weighted qualitative and quantitative basis.

To be considered for the award you only need to provide a statement in relation to the qualitative element, so in 600 words or less write a short statement referring to the following:

Qualitative assessment

Objectives

- What were the key objectives for your Annual Report?
- How does the Annual Report (print and online) fit into your overall IR/communication strategy?

Strategy and approach

- What is the strategy behind your approach to your reporting? And how do you deliver that through your printed and online report?
- How do you use your reporting to meet the communications needs of your external and internal key audiences?
- How do you ensure that your reporting is 'fair, balanced and understandable' while also meeting 'clear and concise' objectives?
- How does the design enhance the company's messaging, and reflect the company culture and values?
- How has your Annual Report been promoted internally and externally?

Outcomes

- What evidence do you have to demonstrate how your annual report has met your business objectives, and supported your equity and investment story?
- Do you have any quantifiable or anecdotal results or outcomes to support this and your initial objectives?

Guidance Notes

For the quantitative element, assessment criteria guidance includes:

Strategy and positioning

- Company's purpose, culture, equity story and investment proposition
- A clear, concise, fair, balanced, honest and transparent overview of your company – what you do, how you do it and why you are different?

Content

- Explains the market or industry context in which your company operates and how your organisation fits into that environment.
- Articulates company's differentiators and unique story
- Provides a holistic insight into your company with company-specific market context, the business model, strategically important issues and clear connections between strategy, KPIs, risk and remuneration
- Communicates how you work with shareholders, including reference to your relationships with investors and other key stakeholders, their needs and how you are responding to these and how these are being built into decision-making
- Provides a review of past performance and forward-looking information
- Goes beyond the relevant regulatory disclosure requirements to embrace the 'spirit of the law'

Communications strategy, design and tactical delivery

- Demonstrates an effective use of printed and online version to present key messages and holistic view of company in an engaging, accessible and relevant way