

The Banker

Bank of the Year Awards 2025

Categories and Guidelines



Eligibility

The Bank of the Year country awards are open for direct entry to licensed full-service commercial banks, retail banks and digital lenders.

Investment Banks, whether bank-owned or independent, can submit for 12 product and coverage-based categories and six regional categories.

Six separate regional categories are also available for banks that offer transaction banking services to corporate, financial institutions or public sector clients.

In addition, all types of banks are eligible to enter The Banker's Financial Inclusion and Banking in the Community award categories.

Submission and Judging Criteria

1. Universal, retail and digital banks

For banks entering our country-based awards we ask for three years of balance sheet data in the form of end-year performance figures and detailed answers to four questions around strategic initiatives, technology, new products and services, and sustainability.

While profitability is crucial, banks must equally demonstrate where they have outperformed their peers, improvement over the award's time frame and evidence that the bank is working to serve both its retail and corporate clients.

Banks compete within their local markets and one winner is chosen in each country to receive the Bank of the Year award.

Banking groups with operations in several countries are encouraged to make an individual submission for each one, as The Banker's judging panel will consider banking groups that submit multiple country entries alongside high-performing local banks for the regional and global awards.

The regional and global categories are not available for direct entry.

Digital banks can compete within their country categories and will also be considered for the global Digital Bank of the Year award.

Categories:

Bank of the Year Global

Bank of the Year for Africa

Bank of the Year for Asia-Pacific

Bank of the Year for North America

Bank of the Year for Latin America

Bank of the Year for Europe

Bank of the Year for the Middle East

Digital Bank of the Year

Bank of the Year (country award)

2. Investment Banks

Investment banks may submit separate entry forms for each regional, product, or coverage category they wish to enter. Each submission should include responses to three key questions focused on service and execution, innovation and competitive differentiation.

Submissions will be judged on the following criteria:

- The quality of service and execution provided to clients.
- How the bank has helped clients to overcome challenges, navigate difficult market conditions and achieve their objectives.
- The extent to which the bank has introduced innovations that have benefited clients or improved market operations.
- Evidence of outperformance compared to competitors and improvements over the award's time frame in the form of metrics.

Investment banks should also include relevant supporting materials, such as deal case studies, either included at the end of the submission form or as separate documents.

Up to three deal case studies should be carefully selected to highlight key achievements concisely and effectively. Lengthy or unfocused submissions may be disregarded.

Each deal case study must include:

- Client name
- Your bank's role (e.g. joint bookrunner) and names and roles of other participating banks
- Deal description (including background and market context)
- Deal value, currency and transaction dates

To strengthen deal case studies, additional details may include:

- Key highlights – What made the deal exceptional?
- Client objectives and specific challenges
- Obstacles overcome and how they were addressed

Categories:

Investment Bank of the Year (not available for direct entry)

Independent Investment Bank of the Year (not available for direct entry)

Investment bank of the year for Africa

Investment bank of the year for Asia-Pacific

Investment bank of the year for North America

Investment bank of the year for Latin America

Investment bank of the year for Europe

Investment bank of the year for the Middle East

Investment bank of the year for Corporate Bonds

Investment bank of the year for SSA Bonds

Investment bank of the year for Emerging Markets

Investment bank of the Year for Financial Institutions Group

Investment bank of the Year for Sustainable Finance

Investment bank of the year for IPOs and Equity Raising

Investment bank of the year for Infrastructure and Project Finance

Investment bank of the year for Leveraged Finance

Investment bank of the year for Securitisation

Investment bank of the year for Syndicated Loans

Investment bank of the year for M&A

Investment bank of the year for Restructuring

3. Transaction Banks

Six regional categories are open to banks that offer transaction services to corporate, financial institutions or public sector clients.

Institutions eligible for entry include transaction banks, commercial banks or corporate banks that offer services such as cash management, payments, trade finance, trade solutions, securities services and treasury services.

Participants may submit entries for one or multiple regional categories, with a separate entry form required for each category. Each submission must address three key questions centered on strategy, deals, technological innovations and product solutions, and evidence of outperformance compared with competitors.

The judges will be looking for entries that demonstrate a clear strategy, improvement and progress during the award's timeframe and evidence that the bank is working to serve its clients.

Strong submissions should include examples of new or improved transaction banking services, products and technologies.

Categories:

Transaction bank of the year for Africa
Transaction bank of the year for Asia-Pacific
Transaction bank of the year for North America
Transaction bank of the year for Latin America
Transaction bank of the year for Europe
Transaction bank of the year for the Middle East

4. Financial Inclusion and Banking in the Community

The Financial Inclusion Award recognises banks that expand the access and use of safe, convenient and affordable financial services, balancing social responsibility with long-term business growth.

The Banking in the Community Award aims to recognise the most impactful initiatives undertaken by financial institutions that enrich and improve the societies in which they operate.

All types of banks are eligible to enter and one award will be given for each category.

Participants are invited to submit case studies of around 1000 words each detailing their Financial Inclusion and Banking in the Community initiatives.

Up to three case studies per category are allowed.

Strong case studies should describe the challenges the initiative had to overcome and the positive impact on its beneficiaries.

The judges will also be looking for evidence in the form of metrics on how the initiative is performing and whether it has potential to be scaled up or replicated in other markets.

Categories:

Bank of the Year for Financial Inclusion
Bank of the Year for Banking in the Community

How to enter:

Completed submissions can be uploaded to bankoftheyearawards.awardsplatform.com

Alternatively, submissions can be emailed to BankoftheYear@ft.com

The deadline for submissions is June 16, 2025.

Contacts:

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