

ProShare Awards 2025 – Criteria for Nominations

Award categories	Thresholds
Best New Share Plan	All sizes (other than private companies)
Best New Share Plan in a Private Company	Privately-held companies
Best International Share Plan	All sizes
Most Effective Communication of an Employee Share Plan	In a Private Company
	Up to 500 employees
	501 – 5,000 employees
	5,001 – 50,000 employees
	50,001+ employees
Best Share Plan Outcome Following a Major Corporate Change	All sizes
Best Commitment to Employee Share Ownership in a Private Company	Privately-held companies with any number of employees
Most Effective Use of Technology	All sizes
Best Financial Education Initiative for Employees	All sizes
Best Performance in Fostering Employee Share Ownership	Up to 500 employees
	501 – 5,000 employees
	5,001 – 50,000 employees
	50,001+ employees
Team of the Year	All sizes
One to Watch - Rising Star Award	Individual Award

Please note: ProShare is the UK's voice of employee share plans and share ownership. All submissions - with the exception of Best International Plan - **must** relate to employee plans which have at least a small UK element. If you have any questions about this, please do get in touch – team@proshare.org

Important: Please ensure that you include the name of your share plan administrator as well as any other organisation you would like recognised in your submission – i.e. plan advisers, external comms provider, compliance and tax consultants etc.

ProShare reserves the right to re-allocate submissions to different categories and to merge award categories if seen fit.

Best New Share Plan

This award is open to any company that has launched one or more new employee share plans during the last year, or extended an existing plan to a significant number of employees in countries other than the 'home' country during the last 12 to 18 months.

Judging criteria:

- Plan design which links clearly with business or corporate objectives
- Outline your share plan(s) and how they meet those objectives. Include details of any areas of innovation.
- Effective communication of the plan to encourage participation
- Analysis, pre- and / or post-launch, of eligibility and / or take-up data to identify and ensure inclusion of eligible and under-represented employee groups
- Describe or exhibit communication methods that make the plan attractive to potential participants, especially those that have not previously participated in a scheme.
- Ease of participation for employees
- Describe what employees must do to participate in the plan.
- Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who have participated

Best New Share Plan in a Private Company –

This award is open to any private company that has launched one or more new employee share plans during the last year, or extended an existing plan to a significant number of employees in countries other than the 'home' country during the last 12 to 18 months.

Judging criteria:

- Plan design which links clearly with business or corporate objectives
- Outline your share plan(s) and how they meet those objectives. Include details of any areas of innovation.
- Effective communication of the plan to encourage participation
- Analysis, pre- and / or post-launch, of eligibility and / or take-up data to identify and ensure inclusion of eligible and under-represented employee groups
- Describe or exhibit communication methods that make the plan attractive to potential participants, especially those that have not previously participated in a scheme.
- Ease of participation for employees
- Describe what employees must do to participate in the plan.
- Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who have participated

Best International Share Plan

This category is for companies which operate their share plans internationally. Companies operating an employee share plan on a global basis face many challenges. We introduced this category to recognise those companies that, in spite of the challenges faced, operate their employee share plan(s) internationally. To win this award you will need to offer your share plan(s) in at least **three** countries outside of the UK.

Judging criteria:

- Plan design that links clearly with business or corporate objectives
- Outline your share plan(s) and how they meet those objectives. Also include details of any innovation used in plan design.
- Describe how you addressed the challenges of operating an international share plan
- Describe how you dealt with regulatory requirements and any other challenges that were presented
- Describe how you overcame any challenges that arose due to cultural differences.

- Include information on how you dealt with exchange rate issues.
- Analysis, pre and/or post-launch, of eligibility and/or take-up data to identify and ensure inclusion of eligible and under-represented employee groups
- Effective communication of the plan to encourage participation
- Describe or exhibit communication methods that make the plan attractive to potential participants.
- Ease of participation for employees
- Describe what employees must do to participate in the plan.
- Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who have participated

Most Effective Communication of an Employee Share Plan

In a Private Company -
Up to 500 employees
501 – 5,000 employees
5,001 – 50,000 employees
50,001+ employees

These awards are for the companies that have most effectively communicated their share plans to employees to encourage and increase their understanding of, and engagement with, the plan, and to create a closer identity of interest between employees and shareholders.

Judging criteria:

- Clarity and design of documentation
- Provide examples of booklets, circulars, posters, on-line campaigns, summaries of rules, etc.
- Innovation and variety in communication methods
- Describe or provide examples of intranets, financial modelling tools, telecoms, audio, video, face-to-face briefings, etc. (note that there is also a separate category for most effective use of technology).
- Analysis of eligibility and/or take-up data to identify and ensure inclusion of eligible and under-represented employee groups
- Involvement of employees in the design of the communication programme at the time of offering participation and when dealing with queries and follow-up
- Describe how employees were involved before, during and after the launch and at the time of making subsequent offers under one or more employee share plans.
- Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who have participated in the plan.

Best Employee Share Plan Outcome following a Major Corporate Change

This category has proven to be very popular as an increasing number of corporate transactions are being seen in the market. These transactions range from IPOs and rights issues, to takeovers and schemes of arrangements. They will very often impact on employees who are participating in existing share plans, often at a sensitive time for those employees.

Judging criteria:

- Impact on employee share plans
- Outline the transaction and its impact upon your employee share plans.
- Board commitment to continued employee share ownership
- Describe how you weighed up the different alternatives you could have offered employees and why you chose the route you did. Demonstrate the Board's ongoing support for employee share ownership within your organisation.
- Analysis of participation data to identify and ensure inclusion of eligible and under-represented employee groups

- Effective communication with employees
- Describe or exhibit communication methods used to make the transaction easy for employees to understand.
- Ease of participation for employees
- Demonstrate quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees who participated in the transaction.

Best Commitment to Employee Share Ownership in a Private Company

This category aims to recognise and acknowledge best practice in commitment to employee share ownership, and the particular challenges faced in achieving this, at privately-held companies. The company should demonstrate that its philosophy, attitudes, ambitions, and actions are conducive to fostering employee share ownership and participation, whether listed or privately held.

Judging criteria:

- A clear vision of the positive impact that employee share ownership has had on the culture of the company
- Provide evidence of the board's commitment to employee participation and examples of the employees' positive attitudes and behaviours.
- A clear link between employee share ownership and strategic, business, or corporate objectives
- You could, for example, refer to rules on eligibility, performance, forfeiture, retention, etc.
- Effective communication of the plan(s) to encourage participation
- Liquidity opportunities / private markets provided for employees to allow them to trade their shares, where offered / appropriate.
- Describe or exhibit communication methods that make the plan(s) attractive to potential participants.
- Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who have participated.

Most Effective Use of Technology

This award recognises the increasingly sophisticated technologies being used in connection with the communication, administration, and legal and tax compliance management of employee share plans.

Judging criteria:

- Effective implementation
- Explain why the technology was implemented and issue(s) that it addressed. Highlight any areas of innovation.
- A clear vision of the positive impact that technology can have
- Provide evidence of the impact of technology on share plan participation.
- Analysis of plan data to identify and ensure inclusion of eligible and under-represented employee groups
- Clarity and consistency of corporate branding and share plan design and message
- Show how the use of technology fits in with the company's communications and employee profile.

Best Financial Education Initiative for Employees

This award recognises the role that financial education can play in the workplace in supporting employees in making informed decisions regarding their share plans and other workplace benefits. The timing of provision of financial education is also critical given that employees need to make decisions at key points in their working life e.g. buying their first home, ahead of retirement, when share awards mature or vest etc.

Judging criteria:

- Effective implementation with delivery utilising a range of employee-centred channels

- Clear explanation of the reason for the initiative
- Clarity on rationale for choice of third-party provider (where relevant)
- Analysis of plan data to identify and ensure inclusion of eligible and under-represented employee groups
- Feedback from participants
- Data supporting decisions made and/or behaviours changed by participants immediately afterwards or as a direct result of their participation in the initiative.

Best Overall Performance in Fostering Employee Share Ownership

Up to 500 employees

501 – 5,000 employees

5,001 – 50,000 employees

50,001+ employees

These are the top awards for companies committed to employee share ownership and recognise outstanding achievement. Companies that enter this category are likely to have been operating employee share plans for some years. However, a company that has only recently introduced its first share plan could be in contention for one of these awards if it can demonstrate that its philosophy, attitudes, ambitions, and actions are conducive to fostering employee share ownership in the longer term.

Judging criteria:

- A clear vision of the positive impact that employee share ownership has had on the culture of the company
- Provide evidence of the Board's commitment to employee participation and examples of the employees' positive attitudes and behaviours.
- Innovative design of the share plan(s) to support the vision
- Describe the features of the plan that might be held to be innovative and supportive of a long-term fostering of employee share ownership.
- Plans that link clearly with business or corporate objectives
- Analysis of eligibility and/or take-up data to identify and ensure inclusion of eligible and under-represented employee groups
- You may refer to rules on eligibility, performance, forfeiture, retention, etc.
- Effective communication of the plan(s) to encourage participation
- Describe or exhibit communication methods that make the plan(s) attractive to potential participants.
- Ease of participation for employees - describe what employees have to do to participate.
- Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who participate in the plan(s) and the number of employees who are shareholders
- Provide the number of participants in each plan and the number of employees who have retained some shares to become direct shareholders in the company.

Team of the Year -

The most effective teams happen when individual contributors come together to pool their talents and work toward a common goal. They are the product of hard work, commitment – and sometimes a fair amount of struggle.

This award recognises teams of all sizes working in employee share plans, whether at a plan issuer, a provider or administrator, or as advisers or consultants. Teams who have demonstrated excellent collaboration, who have brought out the best from team members and developed effective, innovative ways of working. They will have a strong sense of team identity, an understanding of their common purpose, good internal communications, and clear and complementary skills and roles. Above all, they will share a clear focus on the delivery of organisational and team goals. They might have provided an outstanding service, introduced new technologies and processes, or simply gone above and beyond. The submission might be for an extended team, working in collaboration with external associates as trusted partners.

The judges are looking in particular for teams who can evidence they are delivering outstanding performance.

Include the following in your submission:

- A description of the team / department, its structure and personality – any diversity considerations such as multi-generational, and what makes the team special?
- Evidence of how the team has pushed for and implemented best practice.
- How teamwork was effectively employed to deliver business impact.
- How team members have been developed in their roles, such as appropriate courses and certifications, and team building with or without external partners.

One to Watch – The Rising Star Award -

For any organisation, success starts with your people – how you develop them, how you value and support them, and how you bring out their full potential.

This award recognises the rising stars of the share plans and incentives sector. These are the people who, even with just a few years' service behind them, are making a substantial contribution. They are the ones who are proactive in embracing new challenges, who show imagination and energy, and who are resilient in the face of adversity. The ones who help and support colleagues and who learn from their mistakes.

The judges are looking for nominees who demonstrate these qualities and more, who make a significant and positive impact in their organisations. They are looking for evidence of why nominees are destined to get to the top, and why in particular this is the year they should win an award.

Include the following in your submission:

- Please outline key achievements that will help them stand out against their peers. The judges will want to know how they have gone about their achievements.
- What do they want to achieve in the future? Personal or career goals?
- Why do they deserve this award?
- You can include endorsements from colleagues or clients.

We cannot accept self-nominations for this award.

Very best of luck to all organisations who submit for a prestigious ProShare award. We hope to see you at the InterContinental, London Park Lane on **Wednesday 26th November 2025!**