

# 2026 INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS

## Round 2 Guide - Corporate Category

A Judge's Lens Guide for Awards 2026 Candidates —  
Transforming strong projects into award-winning presentations.



# What Judges Are Really Evaluating

Judges are not simply asking whether your project succeeded. They are evaluating the depth of your thinking, the rigour of your execution, and the breadth of your impact. Every submission is measured against eight core dimensions.



Strategic Thinking



Customer Impact



Employee Impact



Business Value



Innovation



Execution Excellence



Sustainability & Scalability



Governance & Leadership

 **The winning question:** "Why does this initiative deserve industry recognition over all others?"

# Recommended Presentation Structure

A disciplined 20-minute structure ensures judges receive the evidence they need, in the order that builds the most compelling narrative. Each section is allocated time proportional to its scoring weight.

**Business Context**  
2 mins — Set the scene

1

**Problem Statement**  
3 mins — Prove it mattered

2

**Strategy & Design**  
4 mins — Show your thinking

3

**Innovation**  
2 mins — Differentiate

4

**Implementation**  
3 mins — Prove execution

5

**Results & Impact**  
4 mins — Highest scoring

6

**Sustainability**  
1 min — Prove longevity

7

**Lessons Learned**  
1 min — The differentiator

8

# Sections 1–2: Context & Problem

## Business Context (2 mins)

Paint the environment so judges immediately grasp the stakes. Cover industry background, market challenges, business objectives, customer expectations, and organisational priorities.

**i** **Instead of:** "We launched a customer experience programme."

**Say:** "Customer complaints rose 18%, NPS dropped 12 points and retention became a strategic risk — this initiative was our response."

## Problem Statement (3 mins)

Make the problem undeniable. Judges must feel: *"This was a real problem worth solving."* Present evidence across all three dimensions:

- **Business pain** — revenue leakage, cost, compliance risk
- **Customer pain** — CSAT, NPS, complaint volumes, wait times
- **Employee pain** — attrition, absenteeism, low engagement

# Section 3: Strategy & Design Approach

This is where many candidates **lose marks**. Do not simply explain *what* you did — explain *why*. Judges want to see structured thinking before execution, not just a list of activities.

## Strategic Alignment

Show how your initiative directly supports corporate strategy, CX strategy, employee strategy, and digital strategy. Judges are looking for deliberate connection — not coincidence.

## Decision-Making Rationale

Explain why this solution was selected over alternatives. What other options were considered? Why was this approach the most appropriate? Evidence of structured decision-making builds credibility.

## Leadership & Governance

Demonstrate executive sponsorship, stakeholder management, governance structure, and how change management was handled. Judges reward candidates who can show they led — not just delivered.

 **Judge's lens:** "Did this team think before they acted — or did they simply react?"

# Section 4: Innovation

Innovation does not exclusively mean artificial intelligence. Judges evaluate novelty relative to your industry context. Present your innovation clearly under one of four recognised dimensions.



## Process Innovation

New workflows, redesigned servicing models, or end-to-end process transformation that fundamentally changed how work is done.



## Customer Innovation

New journey design, novel engagement approaches, or channel strategies that transformed how customers interact with your organisation.



## Technology Innovation

AI, automation, advanced analytics, or omnichannel platforms that enabled capability unavailable before the initiative.



## Operating Model Innovation

Breaking down organisational silos, creating new governance structures, or redesigning how teams collaborate to deliver outcomes.

 **Judges ask:** "What makes this genuinely different from normal business improvement?"

# Section 5: Implementation & Execution

Execution capability separates credible finalists from outstanding winners. Show judges you could deliver at scale, under pressure, with rigour and accountability.

## What to Cover

- Project timeline and key phases
- Team structure and roles
- Governance and decision gates
- Risk identification and mitigation

## Evidence Judges Are Looking For

- **Adoption:** How did you bring people on the journey?
- **Resistance:** How was change managed and objections resolved?
- **Consistency:** How did you ensure quality across the programme?
- **Accountability:** Who owned what, and how was performance tracked?



# Section 6: Results & Impact

This is typically the **highest scoring section** of any corporate category presentation.

Present results across all four outcome dimensions using a clear Before vs. After format wherever possible.

## Customer Outcomes

- NPS, CSAT, CES scores
- Complaint volume reduction
- Response & resolution time

## Employee Outcomes

- Engagement scores
- Retention & attrition rates
- Productivity & training effectiveness

## Operational Outcomes

- SLA achievement
- AHT reduction & FCR improvement
- Automation rates

## Business Outcomes

- Revenue growth & cost reduction
- ROI and risk reduction
- Independent validation

Metric	Before	After	Improvement
Net Promoter Score (NPS)	28	52	+24 points
Average Handle Time (AHT)	8 mins	5 mins	-37%
Monthly Complaints	1,200	700	-42%

# Sections 7–8: Sustainability & Lessons Learned

Many strong finalists miss points here. These final two sections are often what separates a **Gold** from a **Silver** award. Use them to demonstrate long-term vision and industry leadership.

## Sustainability (1 min)

Judges want confidence this is not a one-off project. Explain the structures you have put in place to protect and extend results:

- Ongoing governance and ownership
- Monitoring frameworks and KPIs
- Continuous improvement cycles
- Plans for expansion or replication

## Industry Impact & Lessons (1 min)

Elevate your submission by demonstrating contribution beyond your own organisation:

- **Key lessons:** What did you learn that others can apply?
- **Industry contribution:** How does this advance best practice?
- **Future roadmap:** What is the next phase of ambition?

# Category-Specific Focus Areas

Tailor your evidence emphasis to match the judging priorities of your specific category. Judges assess submissions through the lens of what matters most in each area.



## Best CX Programme

Journey transformation, NPS/CSAT uplift, complaint reduction, and verified customer stories.



## Best EX Programme

Culture change, engagement scores, retention improvements, and authentic employee voice.



## Best Social Media

Reach, engagement, sentiment tracking, customer interaction quality, and conversion impact.



## Best Use of Automation

Automation rates, productivity gains, cost reduction, accuracy improvement, and scalability evidence.



## Best Use of Data Analytics

Insight generation, predictive capability, business decisions influenced, and revenue or cost impact.



## Contact Centre Categories

Service levels, FCR, AHT, CSAT, employee engagement, workforce optimisation, and innovation.

# The Eight(8) Questions Every Slide Should Answer

If every section of your presentation addresses at least one of these questions with clear evidence, you will naturally align to what judges score highest: strategic alignment, innovation, execution, measurable impact, and sustainability.

01

What was the problem?

03

Why was this approach chosen?

05

How was it executed?

07

How will results sustain?

02

Why did it matter?

04

What made it innovative?

06

What measurable value was created?

08

Why does it deserve industry recognition?

✔ Candidates who consistently answer all 8 questions across their presentation will stand out in every corporate category.

THANK YOU