



Director of the Year
Awards 2024

A celebration of leadership talent, success and achievement

4 October | 12pm – 5pm
The Grand Hotel, Birmingham

Headline sponsor



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Kids' Village

#DOTYA2024



Welcome to the 2024 IoD England Director of the Year Awards

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to all attendees of this year's IoD England Director of the Year Awards!

We are delighted to welcome both familiar faces and new guests to The Grand Hotel in Birmingham for this prestigious event, where we celebrate the outstanding finalists and honour a new group of winners. Like every year, this is a moment to highlight our most inspirational directors.

This year's nominees have showcased exemplary governance practices, provided steadfast support for their employees, and represented their local markets and communities through innovative business strategies. These qualities are vital for our nation's growth, and by continuing to recognise these leaders, we collectively enhance England's reputation as a hub for business, work and living.

I'd also like to extend my gratitude to all involved behind the scenes — the astute judging panel, the hardworking executive team and volunteers who have been instrumental in identifying, supporting and championing the nominees throughout this process. Today, we gather to celebrate and acknowledge the contributions of all involved. As highlighted in the programme, the talent we honour today spans various sectors, showcasing the IoD's wide-ranging influence: from business and public service to the dynamic third sector.

At the IoD, we are proud to support not only our members but also our broader communities. For those who haven't yet had the chance to engage with our diverse community, the afternoon provides a wonderful opportunity to connect, build relationships and learn more about our initiatives.

We remain committed to equipping current and future leaders with essential skills through various courses and events held throughout the year. This empowering curriculum covers a range of subjects that foster actionable leadership, encourage effective governance and guide individuals on the path to becoming more proficient leaders. With this in mind, we are pleased to welcome University College Birmingham as our headline sponsor for 2024. University College Birmingham focuses on career-focused education, ensuring its students can follow their passion whilst guaranteeing graduates leave with the necessary skills to enter the ever-evolving employment landscape.

Following the election of the new government, our engagement with official bodies and policy-makers remains strong and proactive. We are committed to advocating for our members' through constructive and ongoing dialogue. This approach not only promotes growth but also addresses essential social and educational programmes that are crucial for a thriving workplace. By fostering these relationships, we ensure that the voices of our members are heard and that their needs are met, contributing to a more dynamic and equitable business environment.

For those joining us today, I hope you have a wonderful occasion filled with networking and new connections. All of us at the IoD look forward to connecting with you in the future, and we deeply appreciate your continued support.

Jonathan Geldart
Director General, IoD

Programme

11am	Welcome reception
12pm	Seated in the Ballroom
12:15pm	Lunch served
2:40pm	Speeches
3:15pm	Awards Ceremony
4:35pm	Closing remarks
5pm	Awards conclude
5pm — 7pm	Celebration networking in Church & Colmore

Menu

Starter

Basil-infused Burrata, heritage tomatoes, toasted brioche, candied hazelnuts (v)

Main

Loch Duart salmon, horseradish crushed potatoes, salsa verde, tenderstem broccoli

Dessert

Blueberry and lime frangipane tart, lime curd, whipped white chocolate

Upcoming IoD events



Business as a Force for Good and Growth – Launch of the Code of Conduct for directors

23 October | 2pm – 5:30pm
116 Pall Mall, London

This keynote event will explore how the business community should go about reconciling the equally important goals of UK economic revitalisation and the regaining of public trust in the wealth-creating sector. It will also mark the launch of the IoD's Code of Conduct for Directors, which has been developed by a Commission under the chairmanship of Lord Iain McNicol of West Kilbride.



Better Director Series – The financial landscape post-election for SME's

13 November | 5pm – 8:45pm
Royal Holloway University of London

In this latest instalment of the Better Director Series, we invite you to join fellow directors, our Chief Economist Anna Leach and the Bank of England's deputy agent for Greater London, Lai Wah Co along with a panel of experts to practically explore this topic that underpins business stability and is one of the key critical success factors supporting business growth, scale and exit.

Hosts

Master of ceremonies



Andy Wilkinson

Andy is chair of the Institute of Directors (IoD) Greater Birmingham branch, since its creation in 2021.

Founding Partner and Managing Director of OWB Creative - founded in 2000 - the Birmingham-based full-service marketing agency sold to global creative communications group DRPG in 2024. Andy has worked in senior client-side positions for brands including TNT Express, Blagden Packaging and Burgess group and marketing agencies across the UK and overseas.

Andy supports charities including; Cure Leukaemia, Acorns and Childhood Cancer Parents Alliance (CCPA) and is a judge for the forthcoming 2024 Innovation Awards. Andy is a member of the Reform Club. He is a former non-executive director for St Giles Hospice group and Business Link West Midlands, where he was also made an ambassador for creative industries. He was awarded 'Director of the Year' in the SME category in the 2018 IoD West Midlands Awards. He won Sales & Marketing Leader at the 2023 BusinessDesk Leadership Awards, and Marketing Leader of the Year at the inaugural 2023 Midlands Marketing Awards.

Awards host



Nicola Beckford

Nicola Beckford is an award-winning BBC Journalist. She presents the regional television news programme, 'Midlands Today' on BBC One during BBC Breakfast and at lunch time.

Her career includes presenting Woman's Hour, You & Yours and Pick of the Week on BBC Radio 4. She has also presented the Midlands Today's evening news programme and BBC television news bulletins in Bristol and Cambridge. Prior to her presenting career, Nicola reported for the BBC's One and Six o'clock news, Radio 4's Today Programme and Radio 5 Live. Nicola was one of the first BBC journalists in the UK to discover the power of the Freedom of Information Act to uncover stories. Her commitment to journalism has influenced the Government to make changes in UK law. In 2012 Nicola revealed on BBC Radio 4's The World at One, how hundreds of children were being detained in police cells because of a shortage of mental health hospital beds. This story led to a change to the Mental Health Act.

Reporting for the BBC Six o'clock news, Nicola also uncovered how hundreds of hospital patients in England were victims of life changing "never events", preventable errors considered so serious the NHS says they should never happen. As a result, she was invited to speak at conferences in the UK and internationally including at the Health and Safety Executive, the Foreign Office and at the Scottish Parliament. Nicola is also an accomplished conference and awards host and excellent communicator, as a result of her working for more than twenty years in broadcasting. Her highlights include hosting the Interchange Conference and interviewing retail expert Mary Portas on her "Work Like a Woman" book tour. Prior to embarking on her broadcast career, Nicola worked as a secondary school teacher in inner city schools in her home city of Birmingham, where she was determined to encourage her students to fulfil their potential.

Judging panel



Ian Dormer CBE CDir
Head Judge



Jo Barnes



Claire-Marie Boggiano



Sarbani Bose



Alk Brand CDir



Professor Paul Cadman



Sarah Clarke CDir



Chris Cliffe



William English CBE
CDir FloD



Argentina Hung FloD



Tokunboh Ishmael CFA



Professor Keith Jackson CDir FloD



Joanne Kennedy-Reardon CDir



Andy Leask BSc CDir FloD



Lilly Miller



Jules Quested-Williams FloD



Dr Richard Smith CDir



Lewis Stringer



Simon Walton

Family Business finalists



Lara Fox | Objective Computing Ltd

Lara Fox is the director of Objective, an innovative software development and data analytics company in Chelmsford. She and the company pride themselves on being friendly, flexible, and forward-thinking. Lara joined the family business in 2012, gaining experience throughout and then undertaking an MBA. Since becoming director in 2017, Lara has represented SMEs and the technology industry on the Local Economic Partnership Board and served on the IOD Essex Committee until she had her two sons, who are now toddlers. Lara is committed to giving back to the local community, the business gives grants to local charities each year.



Jonathan Guy | Aqueous Digital

Jonathan Guy is founder and Managing Director of Cheshire-based award-winning digital marketing agency, Aqueous Digital. In 2023, he published his book 'Search Never Sleeps', which became a number one bestseller, positioning him as an indisputable authority on SEO, online reputation management and digital marketing.

Jonathan is a Chartered Marketer with an MBA from Henley Management School and has decades of experience in sales, advertising, and marketing. He is also a notable public speaker within the marketing industry, delivering easy-to-understand and refreshing lectures on all aspects of digital marketing.



Damian Nunn | Pitkin & Ruddock Ltd

Damian Nunn is an accomplished professional with a remarkable 33-year career in the electrical, refrigeration, and air conditioning industry. Damian's dedication, expertise, and leadership have propelled him through the ranks to his current role as Managing Director of Pitkin & Ruddock. His extensive experience and comprehensive industry knowledge have been instrumental in driving innovation. He has successfully led teams, driven sales, and managed large-scale projects. Damian has recently completed the IoD Certificate in Company Direction. His journey from apprentice to Managing Director serves as an inspiring example of what can be achieved through dedication, skill, and a relentless pursuit of excellence.



Paul Miller | Cornish Accounting Solutions Ltd

Paul Miller is a Chartered Accountant and the Managing Director of Cornish Accounting Solutions Ltd which he founded in 1994. He believed that there was a better way to serve the Westcountry business community by building stronger relationships and providing services that would enable businesses to flourish and grow. Paul has successfully led his growing team through a variety of successful and innovative developments and he was a pioneer and is a passionate advocate of cloud accounting. He has recently authored a book on building family businesses in which he shares his experiences and crucially his mistakes to help and empower others on their business journey.



Steve Miller | The Workplace Depot

Steve Miller is a British entrepreneur based in Nottingham. He is the Founder and CEO of The Workplace Depot, an ecommerce industrial products company. He graduated from the University of Nottingham in 2010 and continues to support the University through a number of scholarships for students from the local area.

Under his tenure, The Workplace Depot has won or been a finalist of over 45 awards including four awards from the IoD. Currently he splits his time between Turkey and the UK, where he lives with his partner Chrissy and their two children.



Gary Stewart | Lyfeguard Limited

Gary Stewart is the CEO and co-founder of Lyfeguard, a platform simplifying personal finance and estate management. A seasoned entrepreneur, Gary previously led Xceed Group to a successful acquisition. His personal experience navigating the complexities of estate administration following a friend's passing inspired him to create Lyfeguard. Gary's mission is to empower individuals and families to take control of their personal lives, ensuring peace of mind and a lasting legacy.

Innovation finalists

sponsored by:



Michael Doolin | Clover HR

Michael Doolin is the Founder and CEO of Clover HR. With 35+ years of HR leadership experience, he has grown the people-centric SME champion from a one-man startup to a thriving team of 40, achieving 120+ retained HR clients, national expansion, and running numerous successful consultancy projects with his direction over the last seven years. A Fellow member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (FCIPD), Michael is celebrated for his commitment to professional excellence, ethical decision making and strong client relationships. His leadership style, emphasising employee wellbeing and personal integrity, continues to inspire Clover HR's expanding success.



Mo Isap | IN4 Group

Mo Isap, CEO of IN4 Group, one of the UK's largest digital skills and innovation providers, is an experienced technology leader who drives prosperity for businesses and communities. The Group operate HOST, the Home of Skills & Technology, one of the North West's most established innovation hubs in MediaCity. He holds an MBA and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management and the Royal Society of Arts.

Mo has launched and scaled several successful start-ups and university spinouts. He is a founding director of multi-academy trust Star Academies, a trustee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), and a board director of the Career & Enterprise Company. Previously, Mo was co-chair of the Greater Manchester LEP (Local Enterprises Partnership).



Greta McDonald | Sweet Lounge Group Ltd

Greta is a multi-award-winning entrepreneur and the founder of Sweet Lounge, an innovative plant-based confectionery brand. Sweet Lounge is on a mission to create the best-tasting plant-based sweets without any nonsense and without single-use plastic packaging.

Their products can be found in over 500 locations throughout the UK, including Ocado, Selfridges, Daylesford, and Holland & Barrett. Sweet Lounge is also available in over 15 countries around the globe. Since its launch, the company has distributed half a million packs of treats, preventing 500,000 single-use packets from ending up in landfills.



Alex Reip | Oxford nanoSystems Ltd

Dr. Alex Reip is an award-winning leader with over 15 years of experience in nanomaterials development and commercialisation. As the Founder and Chief Technology Officer at Oxford nanoSystems Ltd, he focuses on pioneering coating technologies to enhance energy efficiency and sustainability. In his role as the Royal Society Entrepreneur in Residence at Brunel University London, he advances hydrogen strategy and fosters industry/academia collaborations.

Dr. Reip also provides mentorship and strategic guidance to multiple startups, covering areas from investor readiness to operational excellence. He holds Non-Executive Director positions at the Net Zero Technology Centre and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and serves as a Trustee for the Royal Society of Chemistry.



Rachel Rowley | Encore Environment

With a corporate background, in 2011 Rachel set out to revolutionise how the construction industry manages waste. She is known in the industry as a disruptor and innovator by challenging the conventional routes of waste disposal and developing and implementing award-winning sustainable interventions that are giving construction companies better environmental choices! These result in zero waste to landfill, waste transparency, waste reduction, carbon savings, and also creates a huge amount of social value by helping local organisations in need. She has built a loyal, dedicated and skilled team around her, motivating other women to be leaders in the waste sector and supporting them to do so.



Fatih Tekin | MISTIS Ltd

Fatih Tekin is a visionary leader in the healthcare sector, known for combining medical expertise with strategic business insight, reshaping Aged Care. With an MBA in CEO Entrepreneurship and medical training, he integrates health and business, enriched by Mediterranean hospitality. Fatih played a pivotal role in transforming residential care into exemplary dementia-friendly facilities. He has been at the forefront of developing IT-enabled products to monitor and diagnose patients remotely, ensuring better healthcare delivery across the UK. A father of two, Fatih is also completing his helicopter pilot license training.

Do you know what you need to know?

Whether you're an experienced company director or are embarking on your career journey, IoD provides a variety of career development opportunities to enhance your business acumen and knowledge.

Our professional development courses and wider online courses are tailored by directors for directors, with the aim of guiding you and your senior leaders towards effectively steering your organisation to success and promoting ongoing learning to develop relevant skills and knowledge.



Find out more about
IoD Professional Development



Public and Third Sector finalists



Anna Bokobza | Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT)

Anna is a senior leader in the NHS and has held strategic, commercial and operational roles in London and Essex. She is currently Director of Strategy at Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust. She is driven by the conviction that everyone should be equally able to live a healthy, happy life and that this is not just a function of the healthcare they receive. That is why she works across systems to drive improvements in the social determinants of health. Anna is also a proud Trustee of the North London Hospice, mother to three children and an improving middle distance runner.



Sonya Chowdhury | Action for M.E.

Sonya has led significant growth at Action for M.E. and her work contributed to a cross-government delivery plan for ME/CFS. Working collaboratively and systemically at a national and international level, Sonya co-founded the World ME Alliance and co-leads the world's largest ME/CFS research study into the genetics of ME/CFS. Sonya is also a NED for Curo, a social housing and house-building company and an invited Fellow with St George's House Society of Leadership.



Tom Elliott | Medilink North of England Limited

Tom Elliott is a forward-thinking leader and CEO of Medilink, a company committed to advancing healthcare innovation. With years of experience and a passion for driving change, Tom has successfully positioned Medilink as an industry leader. Under Tom's leadership, the company has achieved significant growth and received numerous accolades for its contributions to the healthcare industry. Tom is a strategic thinker, with a strong business acumen and a talent for fostering an innovative and collaborative work culture. Tom's dedication to excellence and vision for the future have made them a respected and influential figure in the field.



Mark Heasman | Provide Community CIC

Mark Heasman is Chief Group Executive at Provide Community. Provide Community is an award-winning, employee-owned social enterprise delivering more than 60 health and social care services in NHS and community settings across England. With a turnover exceeding £100 million, Provide Community includes brands such as Provide Digital, Provide Wellbeing and Provide React. With a mission to 'Transform Lives through Care, Innovation and Compassion' in 2023-24 the organisation donated more than £850,000 to charities and community groups. In 2023 Mark received a UK Healthcare Honour for Expanding Impact in recognition of his management and leadership, uncovering new levels of innovation and efficiency in healthcare.



Susan Robson | Women's Engineering Society

Susan brings over 16 years of expertise in engineering, energy and consulting to the NED role at WES. Known for strategic design and execution, she has set impactful direction in the charity's strategic architecture and operating model. Her leadership has united employee and volunteer teams and created clear value for industry partners. In her most recent professional role, she worked with key actors on Government's Net Zero targets. Susan holds an Executive Diploma from Oxford University, was shortlisted for the Sunday Times NED Awards, and was awarded an MBE in 2024 for services to gender equity in engineering and energy.

Young and Start Up finalists



Bryan Charter | Sustainable Systems Ltd / SuSy House

Bryan began his career managing business units that provided refurbishments and maintenance for social housing properties. Moving to retail maintenance he led the growth of a family-owned business, driving rapid growth while acquiring clients like Sweaty Betty, the white Company and Zara. With a growing passion for strategy and entrepreneurship, Bryan founded Next Level Business in 2018, who subsequently supported growth in hundreds of businesses and delivered government business support contracts during Covid.

In 2022, driven by his desire to help address the climate crisis, he co-founded Susy.House with the ambition of making sustainable homes achievable for all.



Jason Ghous | PHRENeTECH LTD t/a FuneralExperts.com

After 25 years in global finance, Jason became disillusioned with the work in 2020. Driven to create a better society, especially amid COVID-19, he focused on social justice. Disturbed by the CMA investigation into the UK funeral director market, Jason's mission is to provide trust, transparency, and compassion to the bereaved, disrupting an industry mired in controversy for over 40 years. Undeterred by complex sector obstacles, he built Funeral Experts and launched the UK's first 'Compassion in Bereavement City' concept in May 2024 with Liverpool City Council and Liverpool University Hospitals NHS, now rolling out nationwide.



Alfredo Saenger | Electrogenos

Alfredo Saenger is the Director and co-founder of Electrogenos, leading the charge in green hydrogen technology. With an MSc in Finance from ESADE and a background in management consulting at BCG, Saenger combines strategic, operational and financial expertise with a passion for sustainability. His role has been crucial in developing Electrogenos' groundbreaking alkaline electrolyser, achieving a 94% efficiency in hydrogen production—12% higher than competitors. Saenger's strategic vision and skill in securing substantial funding are key to advancing the company's mission to transform the energy sector with innovative, sustainable solutions.



Helen Shaw | VCTC Limited

Helen is a passionate advocate of strategies to make clinical research accessible and less burdensome for participants. Her interest in patient centricity began during her PhD where she developed some of the early considerations for the use of eConsent in clinical research. Helen is a co-founder and Director of VCTC and leads their clinical operations team. VCTC takes clinical research to participants, providing access to trials in a location that suits them, through compassionate and expedited clinical trial site processes. Outside of work Helen is a short track speed skater, currently holding a Masters World Champion in her age group.



Bethan Vincent | Open Velocity

With over 12 years of experience in marketing, Bethan has been responsible for developing and implementing transformational marketing strategies in highly competitive technology and IP-led companies.

Formerly the Marketing Director of a leading software consultancy, Bethan founded Open Velocity in 2022 with the mission to provide start-ups and scale-ups with leading marketing strategy consultancy and senior marketing support. Bethan is a multi-time founder, having founded a DTC brand in 2013 and ethical certification in 2015.

Building on their work at C-Suite level, Bethan's marketing expertise is recognised globally, and they are a regular speaker about marketing and technology at international conferences.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion finalists



Ketan Dattani | Buckingham Futures

Ketan Dattani is a multi-award-winning environmental entrepreneur with 25 years of expertise in environmental talent acquisition. As Founder and CEO of Buckingham Futures, he leads the consultancy in providing bespoke, sustainable solutions while advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. His commitment to reducing carbon footprints and supporting SMEs reflects his dedication to environmental stewardship. Ketan holds a Bachelor's in Environmental Biotechnology and a Master's in Environmental Planning and Management, driving impactful practices in both corporate and community settings.



Danny Major | OpenDialog AI

Danny Major is an executive, board member, and advisor specialising in the hyper-growth of software and software services businesses. With extensive experience leading and scaling enterprise functions, Danny excels in guiding companies from start-up to enterprise, including acquisitions and successful exits. His value-driven methodologies support strategic growth objectives, applying right-size approaches tailored to each business's unique needs. A technologist at heart, Danny integrates technology to achieve strategic business outcomes. A Fellow of the British Computer Society, he has been recognised by the Institute of Directors, Global Sourcing Association, IEEE-SA Standards, and is the founder and chair of a STEM-focused charitable foundation.



Sharon Peake | Shape Talent Ltd

Sharon is a gender diversity expert and experienced diversity and inclusion leader with over 20 years' experience in global businesses. She is a registered psychologist, a certified coach and the Founder and CEO of Shape Talent – the equity, diversity and inclusion experts for complex multinational organisations who are serious about gender equality. Sharon writes extensively on the barriers women face in gender equity in the workplace and is in the top 50 LinkedIn Female Empowerment voices (#30 globally). She was named on the Global Diversity List 2023 for Senior Executives and was an official UN Women UK delegate to CSW 67 and 68.

Non-Executive Director finalists



Greg Lowson | Pertemps Network Group Limited

Greg recently retired after a 41-year legal career which included 32 years as a partner at Pinsent Masons (head of its Birmingham office for the last 21). He has been a NED of the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce for 17 years and its Chair since 2022. He has also been a NED of Pertemps Network Group since 2022. He has been Under Sheriff of the West Midlands since 2014.

Previous positions include Chair of the CBI's West Midlands' Council; trustee and co vice Chair of Midlands Arts Centre; trustee of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre; trustee of Cure Leukaemia and a former member of Wesleyan Assurance's Advisory Board.



Susan Robson | Women's Engineering Society

Susan brings over 16 years of expertise in engineering, energy and consulting to the NED role at WES. Known for strategic design and execution, she has set impactful direction in the charity's strategic architecture and operating model. Her leadership has united employee and volunteer teams and created clear value for industry partners. In her most recent professional role, she worked with key actors on Government's Net Zero targets. Susan holds an Executive Diploma from Oxford University, was shortlisted for the Sunday Times NED Awards, and was awarded an MBE in 2024 for services to gender equity in engineering and energy.



Mark Smith | Royal Life Saving Society UK

IoD Ambassador for Marketing, billed by the BBC as the most significant contributor to community in his university city, Mark has achieved over a decade of board roles with a national charity including Chair; recently appointed Honorary Vice President.

Turnaround of Royal Life Saving Society UK from 'activity prevention' to insight-led 'enjoy water safely', aligning to outdoor swimming growth in communities and organised events.

A strategic passion expressed as Founder of The Brand Strategy, a consultancy creating brand outcomes that truly matter; applying strategic precision to converge insight and inspiration. All driving his doctoral ambitions to close the marketing/boardroom gap.

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Sustainability finalists

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**Ketan Dattani | Buckingham Futures**

Ketan Dattani is a multi-award-winning environmental entrepreneur with 25 years of expertise in environmental talent acquisition. As Founder and CEO of Buckingham Futures, he leads the consultancy in providing bespoke, sustainable solutions while advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. His commitment to reducing carbon footprints and supporting SMEs reflects his dedication to environmental stewardship. Ketan holds a Bachelor's in Environmental Biotechnology and a Master's in Environmental Planning and Management, driving impactful practices in both corporate and community settings.

**Chris Fry | Accelar Limited**

Chris is a Hampshire-based entrepreneurial business leader working across the green economy. In 2019 he co-founded Accelar Limited to accelerate the green transition. Centred in the West Midlands, Accelar has gone on to launch innovative, digitally-enabled services including the net zero business tracker, the Nature Finance Impact Hub, BNGFinder, and acra climate resilience services. Chris advises on deploying green finance at scale, including working with a series of Landscape Recovery projects across the country. He is Chair of Trustees of a well-respected charity (the Ecosystems Knowledge Network), a Chartered Director and Fellow of the IoD.

**Richard Hagan | Crystal Doors**

Richard Hagan is a trailblazer in sustainable business, leading Crystal Doors to earn the Queen's Award for Sustainable Enterprise (2021) and a top 5% B Corp certification (2023). He transitioned the company to an Employee-Owned Trust and garnered over a dozen awards. Hagan's influence extends through his roles with the Institute of Directors' Sustainable Task Force and Special Interest Group, and his contributions to various media platforms. Currently, he is developing a patent-pending universal furniture kit for a circular economy, underscoring his commitment to innovation and sustainability in the business world.

**Shameem Kazmi | Britvic PLC**

Shameem is a visionary sustainability leader whose work has redefined the future of environmental stewardship and corporate responsibility. With over 25 years of experience in sustainability, with the last ten years at Britvic plc as their Group Research & Development Director, he has pushed the boundaries, and his pioneering efforts have led to the development of innovative strategies that integrate environmental, social, and economic sustainability into the core operations of Britvic plc and major organisations. Beyond his corporate achievements, Shameem serves on the board of The Football Association and leads areas of sustainability and culture.

**Holly Kragiopoulos | North Star Coffee Roasters**

Holly is the co-founder of North Star Coffee, a B Corp certified roastery supplying businesses nationally along with 2 of its own retail sites in Leeds. The business was established in 2013 and over the last 11 years, Holly has worked tirelessly to establish innovative sourcing practices to directly answer some of the coffee industry's biggest challenges whilst growing the team to 30+ employees. As CEO, Holly now dedicates much of her time and energy into ensuring the business growth strategy is perfectly aligned with its vision for impact, integrating purpose into the day to day for every team member.

**Greta McDonald | Sweet Lounge Group Ltd**

Greta is a multi-award-winning entrepreneur and the founder of Sweet Lounge, an innovative plant-based confectionery brand. Sweet Lounge is on a mission to create the best-tasting plant-based sweets without any nonsense and without single-use plastic packaging.

Their products can be found in over 500 locations throughout the UK, including Ocado, Selfridges, Daylesford, and Holland & Barrett. Sweet Lounge is also available in over 15 countries around the globe. Since its launch, the company has distributed half a million packs of treats, preventing 500,000 single-use packets from ending up in landfills.

**Owen Thompson | Cambridge Future Tech Ltd**

Owen is CEO and Co-Founder of Cambridge Future Tech, a technology-first venture builder working with top-tier UK universities to spin-out the most promising deep technologies into commercial ventures with global impact.

Prior to his role at CFT, Owen was a fighter pilot in the Royal Air Force for over a decade, then subsequently General Manager for Advanced Technologies at BAE Systems, which included running multiple R&D sites with technology focus areas such as microwave materials, micro-electromechanical systems (MEMS), printed electronics, and additive manufacturing.

Owen plans to expand CFT's venture-building activities, co-founding over 40 DeepTech companies in the next five years.

IoD Mentor Connect

Peer-to-peer mentoring for business leaders

The IoD Mentor Connect platform is designed to connect members looking for support and guidance on their leadership journey with those that want to share the benefit of their experience.

Whether you are an aspiring or experienced director, or anything in between, our platform makes it easy to find and build your support network, share your experiences and learn from others.

Access to the platform is **free to all members**.



Find out more about
IoD Mentor Connect



International finalists



Tom Elliott | Medilink North of England Limited

Tom Elliott is a forward-thinking leader and CEO of Medilink, a company committed to advancing healthcare innovation. With years of experience and a passion for driving change, Tom has successfully positioned Medilink as an industry leader. Under Tom's leadership, the company has achieved significant growth and received numerous accolades for its contributions to the healthcare industry. Tom is a strategic thinker, with a strong business acumen and a talent for fostering an innovative and collaborative work culture. Tom's dedication to excellence and vision for the future have made them a respected and influential figure in the field.



Matthew Jordan | NMS INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED

Matt Jordan held senior management positions within a number of leading UK Engineering Consultancies delivering a wide range of multi-disciplinary projects across the UK and Overseas, before joining NMSI in 2015. Matt joined the Board of NMSI in 2019 before taking on leadership of the business as Managing Director in 2021. Matt has been responsible for NMSI's strategic growth and delivery of primary infrastructure project programmes across the African Continent.

Matt Jordan is a Chartered Professional, who holds a BSc in Geo-environmental Engineering and an MA in Environmental Law, with over 25 years' experience working in the infrastructure and environmental field.



Steven Marcelino | Equatorise Advisory

Steven leads a fast-growing London headquartered Indonesia market specialist in the EMEA region. He supports Indonesian UHNWIs and conglomerates to invest and do business in the UK and Europe. He also supports British and European companies to enter Indonesia market. Most recently, he co-hosted an exclusive CEO luncheon with Mr President Elect of Indonesia during the Paris Olympics. As a leader at the Indonesia Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Steven was the business sherpa for the CEO delegation to COP26-COP28; WEF; APEC; B20 and other key global events. He also chaired a non-profit diaspora global alliance, called GIPA from 2019.



Chris Saul | Hitachi Europe

Chris is a results-driven, strategically focused executive leader with 25 years of experience transforming SME and Fortune-500 companies.

Bringing entrepreneurial and innovative energy as an Executive Director, Board Advisor and Chartered Director, results include an AIM listing, four trade-sales, and appointment as an Earthshot Prize Finalist Advisor and Expert Panellist.

After eight years building global Digital, Consulting, and Advisory practices at Hitachi's Digital businesses and incubating new Green-Digital ventures, Chris moved to Hitachi Europe as Chief Strategy Officer and ExCo Member. He now leads Regional Strategy and Transformation, integrating Hitachi's Green, Digital, Energy, and Transportation capabilities to advance Hitachi's role as a Climate Change Innovator.

Small-Medium Enterprise finalists



Emma Armstrong | Empro Business Group

Emma Armstrong is the Founder and Managing Director of Empro Business Group, a consultancy who offer a full turnkey solution to their built environment clients. Emma's expertise spans facilities management, operations, technology change, talent acquisition, and project management. Her commitment to excellence and strategic insight have earned her a reputation as a trusted advisor among some of the world's largest brands. Outside of work, she is passionate about mentoring young professionals, supporting good causes and advocating for sustainable business practices.



Dean Bennett | China Fleet Country Club

Dean Bennett is the Managing Director of China Fleet Country Club, a premier leisure and golf destination in Cornwall. With extensive experience in hospitality and club management, Dean has been pivotal in enhancing the club's facilities and services. His leadership has driven significant growth and customer satisfaction, making China Fleet Country Club a top choice for both locals and visitors. Dean's commitment to excellence and innovation ensures a memorable experience for all members and guests.



Ketan Dattani | Buckingham Futures

Ketan Dattani is a multi-award-winning environmental entrepreneur with 25 years of expertise in environmental talent acquisition. As Founder and CEO of Buckingham Futures, he leads the consultancy in providing bespoke, sustainable solutions while advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. His commitment to reducing carbon footprints and supporting SMEs reflects his dedication to environmental stewardship. Ketan holds a Bachelor's in Environmental Biotechnology and a Master's in Environmental Planning and Management, driving impactful practices in both corporate and community settings.



Tom Elliott | Medilink North of England Limited

Tom Elliott is a forward-thinking leader and CEO of Medilink, a company committed to advancing healthcare innovation. With years of experience and a passion for driving change, Tom has successfully positioned Medilink as an industry leader. Under Tom's leadership, the company has achieved significant growth and received numerous accolades for its contributions to the healthcare industry. Tom is a strategic thinker, with a strong business acumen and a talent for fostering an innovative and collaborative work culture. Tom's dedication to excellence and vision for the future have made them a respected and influential figure in the field.



Luke Fay | Treework Environmental Practice

Luke has been Managing Director of Treework Environmental Practice, since 2005. He has been driven to develop Treework as a centre of excellence and innovation by attracting expert professionals and fostering an environment where they flourish. Treework has grown as the industry leading tree consultancy practice.

He works with professional bodies, educational establishments and other professionals to achieve environmental sector goals, including improving equity and diversity, addressing industry succession, developing routes for professional progression such as apprenticeships and the Treework Academy. Luke is dedicated to forging creative relationships across disciplines that contribute to a vibrant society and flourishing environment.


Rachel Garrett | CMG Technologies

Rachel Garrett has spearheaded a period of continued growth for metal induction moulding (MIM) specialists CMG Technologies.

Completing a management buyout in 2013, she has been instrumental in building a strong company culture – acting as an early ambassador for the four-day working week, while also bringing in experienced talent to the business to introduce new and highly successful services such as 3D printing.

Under her leadership the business continues to go from strength to strength, positioning itself as the UK's only MIM specialist and flying the flag globally for British engineering through its steadfast dedication to quality.


James Groves | Indigo Swan

James Groves is Managing Director and majority owner of Indigo Swan, an award-winning Energy Consultancy. Indigo Swan helps businesses with their energy contracts and management and helps them towards their Net Zero goals. James joined Indigo Swan in 2010 as an Account Manager. Since then, he has been fundamental in helping the company grow from what was then 5 employees to the current 30 and leading an MBO in 2022. Outside of the nest, James is passionate about leadership and helping young professionals. James chairs Co.Next part of the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, alongside running a leadership training programme MyBigSky.


Mo Isap | IN4 Group

Mo Isap, CEO of IN4 Group, the UK's leading digital skills and innovation provider, is an experienced leader who drives prosperity for businesses and communities. The Group operates HOST, one of the North West's most established tech hubs. He holds an MBA and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management and the Royal Society of Arts.

Mo has launched and scaled several successful start-ups and spinouts. He is founding director of Star Academies, trustee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and board director of the Career & Enterprise Company. Previously, Mo was co-chair of the Greater Manchester LEP.


Greta McDonald | Sweet Lounge Group Ltd

Greta is a multi-award-winning entrepreneur and the founder of Sweet Lounge, an innovative plant-based confectionery brand. Sweet Lounge is on a mission to create the best-tasting plant-based sweets without any nonsense and without single-use plastic packaging.

Their products can be found in over 500 locations throughout the UK, including Ocado, Selfridges, Daylesford, and Holland & Barrett. Sweet Lounge is also available in over 15 countries around the globe. Since its launch, the company has distributed half a million packs of treats, preventing 500,000 single-use packets from ending up in landfills.


Steve Miller | The Workplace Depot

Steve Miller is a British entrepreneur based in Nottingham. He is the Founder and CEO of The Workplace Depot, an ecommerce industrial products company.

He graduated from the University of Nottingham in 2010 and continues to support the University through a number of scholarships for students from the local area.

Under his tenure, The Workplace Depot has won or been a finalist of over 45 awards including four awards from the IoD. Currently he splits his time between Turkey and the UK, where he lives with his partner Chrissy and their two children.


Owen Thompson | Cambridge Future Tech Ltd

Owen is CEO and Co-Founder of Cambridge Future Tech, a technology-first venture builder working with top-tier UK universities to spin-out the most promising deep technologies into commercial ventures with global impact.

Prior to his role at CFT, Owen was a fighter pilot in the Royal Air Force for over a decade, then subsequently General Manager for Advanced Technologies at BAE Systems, which included running multiple R&D sites with technology focus areas such as microwave materials, micro-electromechanical systems (MEMS), printed electronics, and additive manufacturing.

Owen plans to expand CFT's venture-building activities, co-founding over 40 DeepTech companies in the next five years.

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Sarah Clarke | THINK Organisation

Sarah is a seasoned Business Psychologist and Chartered Director with over 20 years of leadership experience. A co-founder of Think Organisation, Sarah is a highly sought-after culture consultant. A Trustee, NED and IOD Ambassador, Sarah's unique blend of scientific rigor and practical leadership empowers cultural transformations. Renowned for her collaborative and compassionate approach, she drives high performance and delivers significant ROI. With numerous industry accolades, Sarah's expertise extends across diverse industries. As an inspiring keynote speaker, she shares insights on platforms like BBC and ITV, engaging a broad audience. Her tailored culture transformation solutions cater to founders, large international organizations, the NHS, and high-growth SMEs, solidifying her reputation as a versatile culture consultant.



Paul Dixon | Osler Diagnostics

Paul is the CFO of Osler Diagnostics - a high-growth spin out from the University of Oxford that is preparing to transform global healthcare. With a career working internationally for KPMG, acting as the Director of M&A for a FTSE250 group, and successfully growing a VC-backed technology business, Paul thrives as a high-performing strategist and operations specialist. He is an authentic and action-oriented leader, with a strong code of accountability, integrity and excellence, who guides his companies, and his teams, to achieve their very best.



Guy Shepherd | Software Alliance Limited

Guy has more than 30 years of experience developing and implementing insurance technology solutions. Guy's career started at Prudential where he held numerous roles including Head of Actuarial Systems and Head of Business Intelligence.

Prior to joining Software Alliance, Guy worked as a consultant, first as leader of the Life Modelling Practice at PwC, and then as a Director at Quintant Partners, a consulting firm focused on the design and implementation of finance and risk systems strategy.

Since joining Software Alliance, Guy has been instrumental in developing a range of client-centric products and services, which has delivered significant business growth.



Sarah Walker-Smith | Ampa LLP

Sarah Walker-Smith is CEO of professional services group Ampa, having 20 years leadership experience in the legal sector. Ampa is the largest professional services B-Corp in the world. Sarah was the first female non-lawyer CEO in the legal top 50 and was recently named as the UK's most influential legal leader on social media and a Chartered Accountant, Chartered Director and an MBA.

Sarah is the independent Chair of the Eden Morecambe partnership, a founding associate of VocL, board advisor to Anthropy and a member of the Society of Leadership Fellows at St George's House.

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Kids' Village

Kids' Village is aiming to build the UK's first holiday village offering respite breaks for children with critical illnesses and their families here in the West Midlands.

Based at our 30 acre site just outside of Lichfield, breaks in the beautiful countryside will be specially designed for children with childlike imagination and 'magic' at the very heart. There will be unique experiences at the Village during the family's stay, as well as opportunities to experience all the West Midlands has to offer in partnership with regional visitor attractions.

Kids' Village is currently on a capital appeal to raise £5 million to build this much needed facility for children and appreciates your support.





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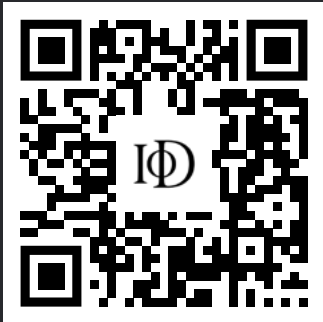
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