

IFLR

INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL LAW REVIEW

IFLR Asia-Pacific Awards 2020

On March 5 2020, *International Financial Law Review* (IFLR) will host its annual Asia-Pacific Awards in Hong Kong, celebrating the most innovative transactions of 2019 and the teams that worked on them. The winners, runners-up and ceremony will all be presented in IFLR magazine. This awards summary invites you to put forward nominations on behalf of your firm, and explains how this should be done. All the information will also be available at www.iflr.com/awards.

To ensure your firm is aware of this announcement, we may have sent the awards guidelines and forms to more than one person. We would like you to coordinate the responses from your firm. If you are not the appropriate person, please tell us immediately to ensure that your firm is not left out.

Nominations

IFLR's team of journalists will conduct research based on a variety of sources to compile the shortlists. However, direct nominations from law firms and in-house teams are a vital part of this research and the best way of highlighting your work. All decisions will be made by IFLR and are entirely independent.

The awards categories and details of how to submit are detailed below. You are invited to make separate nominations for as many of these categories as you wish.

Contact names supplied as part of submissions will not be used for any purposes other than editorial research. They will be contacted without reference to the firm supplying the details.

Deadlines

Please send your nominations to james.wilson@legalmediagroup.com by **November 19 2020**.

Nominations of deals that close after that date but before year-end must be received by **January 7 2020**. This deadline is strictly for these deals only and cannot be extended. Please let us know in advance if you will be making nominations for this deadline.

If you have any queries, please contact me at: james.wilson@legalmediagroup.com

Please remember:

- IFLR only covers **cross-border deals**.
- IFLR rewards **legal innovation** and nothing else. We are not interested in the size, profile and value of a transaction.
- Team/firm of the year awards are based on a team's/firm's roles in the most innovative transactions.
- If you are going to make nominations in only a handful of categories, you are recommended to **focus on the Deal of the Year categories**, as we will use these to support team and firm awards.
- Please submit **no more than three deals per category** (i.e. three deals for M&A, three for private equity etc). It is unlikely more than three stand a chance of being shortlisted. We will only require a brief explanation of why a deal was legally innovative. It is therefore possible to be very efficient and concise with nominations.
- Key parties involved in a deal and a description of why it is innovative must be publishable, otherwise we cannot include the deal in the shortlists. Clearly mark any confidential information.
- Rather than send lots of forms, you will notice that the **documents attached are multi-purpose**. Please use the attachments as templates for all your nominations.

Yours sincerely,

James Wilson
IFLR

AWARD CATEGORIES

Deal of the Year

All deals must be international/cross-border.

Criteria:

- **Debt and equity-linked:** corporate/sovereign debt and equity-linked capital markets issuances (bonds, hybrid, convertibles), whether onshore or offshore. Includes liability management exercises, tender offers and exchanges. At least 20% of the securities must have been sold to investors outside the home market of the issuer or originator.
- **High-yield:** same as above but limited to high-paying, sub-investment grade bonds. At least 20% of the securities must have been sold to investors outside the home market of the issuer or originator.
- **Equity:** an issuance of equity securities, typically taking the form of IPOs, private placements, PIPEs or rights issues. At least 20% of the securities must have been sold to investors outside the home market of the issuer or originator. IPOs on an exchange located in Asia-Pacific by an issuer from outside the region AND offerings by an APAC-headquartered issuer on a foreign exchange are both considered.
- **Securitisation and structured finance:** asset-backed securities (one notable example would be securities issued by banks with non-performing loans or mortgages being the underlying assets). Covered bonds are an example of debt securities backed by cash flows from mortgages or loans. At least 20% of securities must be sold to investors outside the home market of the issuer or originator.
- **M&A, private equity:** must be cross-border, with buyer and target headquartered in different jurisdictions. They can include joint-ventures. The target must be located in Asia-Pacific. The private equity category is for private equity M&A transactions and not fund-raising rounds.
- **Project finance:** the project must be located in Asia-Pacific and carried out on an international basis. It includes the financing of long-term infrastructure, industrial projects, energy and natural resource projects and public services based on a non-recourse or limited recourse finance structure. It can include PPPs.
- **Restructuring:** includes the restructuring or wind-down of a corporate entity. They must involve creditors outside the country of the company in question, but the restructured entity must be headquartered in Asia-Pacific.

ALL FIRMS **MUST** ALSO NOMINATE ONE DEAL ON WHICH THEY DID NOT ADVISE IN EACH DEAL OF THE YEAR CATEGORY THEY SUBMIT IN.

- Debt and equity-linked
- High-yield
- Equity
- M&A
- Private equity
- Project finance
- Restructuring
- Securitisation and structured finance

Team of the Year

These awards apply to a firm's entire practice group rather than a specific team within it. Firms can nominate themselves in any or all of the 11 categories. Complete one of the Team of the Year forms for each category, using the deals appendix to tell us about the deals your firm has worked on that justify its nomination. If a deal has already been nominated as a deal of the year, please refer to it briefly on the team form.

- Debt and equity-linked
- High-yield
- Equity
- M&A
- Private equity
- Pro bono
- Project finance
- Restructuring
- Securitisation and structured finance
- Offshore
- Financial services regulatory

Most Innovative Domestic Law Firm of the Year

Domestic/national law firm awards will be given to the firm with the best track record over 2019 providing local law advice on the most innovative cross-border corporate finance transactions from the jurisdiction in question. We will consider work from across all of the award categories, including financial services regulatory.

For the 2020 awards, shortlists will be published for these awards.

Complete one Most Innovative Domestic Law Firm of the Year form for each country in which you are nominating your firm. In each case, use the deals appendix to tell us about the deals your firm has worked on that justify its nomination. If a deal has already been nominated as a deal of the year, please refer to it briefly on the national form.

The firm must have an office in the relevant jurisdiction and it must have provided local law advice on any cited transactions.

Law firm of the year for:

- Australia
- Cambodia*
- China**
- Hong Kong SAR
- India
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Macao SAR*
- Malaysia
- Mongolia*
- Myanmar
- New Zealand
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- Singapore
- South Korea
- Sri Lanka*
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Vietnam

* Awarding of the Cambodia, Macao SAR, Mongolia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka firm of the year awards is subject to submissions received.

**** Most innovative law firm of the year: China**

For China we will also award the most innovative firm of the year in **two** sub-categories:

1. Banking and finance firm of the year – includes all manner capital markets instruments and securities, securitisation and structured finance, project finance and financial services regulatory.
2. Corporate firm of the year – includes M&A, private equity and corporate structuring.

China Practice of the Year

There is no submission form for this award. The award goes to an international firm based on its roles on the most innovative mainland Chinese transactions.

Regional Law Firm of the Year

There is no submission form for the Regional Law Firm of the Year Award. This award is based on a firm's role on transactions across the categories and across APAC jurisdictions. Candidate firms must be regionally home-grown law firms, headquartered in the region. The award excludes international law firms.

In-house teams of the year

In-house teams are invited to make submissions for the In-house Debt Team of the Year Award and In-house Equity Team of the Year Award. These will be based primarily on the role teams played on innovative transactions. Other developments in the team and innovative projects that impact a team's capacity for complex cross-border legal work will also be considered.

In-house teams are also invited to nominate candidates for the **In-house Contribution Award** and for the **Rising Star** awards. Candidates can be nominated using the Individual Awards form.

Individual Awards

Rising stars

We will recognise associate/senior associates-level lawyers from international AND local teams as Rising Stars. We will look at suitable lawyers listed on innovative deals nominated on Deal of the Year submission forms as well as direct nominations made on the Individual Awards form, where additional information such as CVs, biographies and deal lists are welcome.

To be eligible, candidates will ideally have less than 10 years post-qualification experience and about 3-5 years of experience or less at senior associate level in the region.

In-house Contribution Award

This award will go to an individual lawyer from an in-house team who has had an exceptionally strong year in terms of their impact on innovative transactions, influence in the market or leadership/development of their in-house team. The award will focus on the debt and equity capital markets practices. The award will also be based on market feedback during the research period.

For both individual awards, no shortlists will be released and winners will be announced on the night.

(See FAQs below...)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do you choose the winners?

The nominations provided by law firms are part of our decision-making process. The editorial committee will use these, in conjunction with interviews with law firms and in-house counsel, to select the most innovative deals of the year. Ultimately the decision is that of IFLR. It is not the result of a poll.

We find this to be the best way to retain integrity and consistency across all our awards in Europe, Asia-Pacific, the Americas and the Middle East. Our journalists apply the same analysis and methodology to each. It is not hard to discover the true legal innovation, and the one that has had the greatest market impact.

We find that using a judging committee or selection of clients to pick the winners makes it impossible to retain consistency and comparability across the geographies and years.

How do you decide what is innovative?

When searching for innovation, IFLR looks for new legal structures, deals that overcome new regulatory hurdles and regional firsts that adapt existing technology to local regulation. The difficulty and intricacy of that innovation is assessed, as well as its likely market impact.

The role of the individual law firm on the deal is also considered in order to decide how much credit the firm should receive towards the team of the year awards and national law firm of the year awards. And advising the underwriters is better than advising the ratings agencies.

Can I talk to/meet a researcher?

If you want to talk to or meet a researcher please email james.wilson@legalmediagroup.com to arrange an interview.

When is the deadline?

Please send us your submission by **November 19 2019**.

Must deals have reached final close by the end of December 2019?

Yes. All deals must have reached financial close between January 1 2019 and December 31 2019.

How many people have you contacted at my firm?

We may have approached more than one person at each law firm. We would like you to coordinate the response from your firm. If you are not the appropriate person or would prefer us to contact other people ourselves, please tell us immediately to ensure that your firm is not omitted.

How do you divide advertising and editorial?

There is no connection between advertising and a deal or firm's success in IFLR's surveys or awards. IFLR's awards are built on editorial objectivity.

What will you do with information about clients?

IFLR speaks to in-house contacts to help assess which deals are the most innovative. Our researchers will call contacts that you provide. The contacts will be used for no other purpose than IFLR editorial research.

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