

# IFLR

## Asia-Pacific Awards 2021

On March 25 2021, IFLR will host its annual Asia-Pacific Awards, celebrating the region's most legally innovative work of 2020 and the teams and individuals behind it. The finalists and winners will be presented on IFLR.com, across IFLR's media channels and using virtual presentations and podcasts.

This Awards Summary invites you to put forward nominations on behalf of your firm/team and explains how this should be done. All the information below will also be available on IFLR.com.

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 decide on finalists and winners. Direct nominations are a vital part of this research and the best way of highlighting your work. All decisions will be made by IFLR internally and are entirely independent.

The awards categories and how to nominate your work 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.**

### Deadlines

All nomination forms must be uploaded here [UPLOAD](#) by **December 3 2020**.

Nominations of deals that close between Dec 3 2020 and year end must be uploaded by **January 14 2020**. This deadline is strictly for these deals only and cannot be extended.

If you have any queries, please contact me at: [james.wilson@legalmediagroup.com](mailto:james.wilson@legalmediagroup.com)

### Please note:

- **IFLR only rewards legal innovation in cross-border deals that closed in the awards period.** We are not interested in size, prestige, or deal value. Ongoing transactions will not be considered.
- Team/firm of the year awards are based on a team's/firm's roles in the most innovative deals. We therefore recommend that you **focus on the Deal of the year categories.**
- Please submit **no more than three deals per category** (i.e. three deals for M&A, three for private equity etc). It is unlikely that 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.
- For confidential information, please use separate rows on the forms marked 'confidential'. We have provided one row, but you can create more.
- Please use the attachments as templates for all your nominations.

Yours sincerely,

James Wilson  
IFLR

## AWARD CATEGORIES

### Climate pledge

While IFLR Awards is not designed to evaluate the ESG (environmental, social, governance) profile of deals in detail, we are committed to supporting the highest ESG standards, as expressed by the [IBA](#), as well as global initiatives such as the [UN's Sustainable Development Goals](#) and [Paris Agreement](#). IFLR will continue to focus exclusively on legal innovation, however we make the following pledges:

- We will strive to find ways to support work that develops ESG approaches and standards and to not showcase work that runs counter to these efforts.
- We will no longer shortlist investments into new hydrocarbon projects in the project finance category. Refinancings and efficiency projects will be carefully considered.

### Deal of the year – [nomination form](#)

All deals must meet the regional and cross-border requirements and must have closed in 2020.

- **Debt and equity-linked:** corporate/sovereign debt and equity-linked capital markets issuances (bonds, hybrid, convertibles), whether onshore or offshore, including liability management exercises, tender offers and exchanges. Offerings must have been structured to include international investors, outside the home market of the issuer or originator. A good guide is that 20% or more of the securities have been sold to international investors.
- **High yield:** same as above but limited to sub-investment issuers.
- **Equity:** 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. Can include 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.
- **Securitisation and structured finance:** asset-backed securities (e.g. 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. The offer must have been structured to include investors outside the home market of the issuer or originator, with about 20% or more of securities sold to international investors.
- **M&A and private equity:** buyer and target must be headquartered in different jurisdictions, and the target must be headquartered in Asia-Pacific. M&A can include joint ventures. The private equity category is for private equity M&A transactions and secondaries deals, but not fund-raising.
- **Project finance:** includes the financing of infrastructure, industrial, energy and natural resource and public service projects (including PPPs). The project must be in Asia-Pacific and carried out on an international basis. The category can include hybrid financing structures, but the primary purpose of the financing must be a specific project. Financings of new hydrocarbon project will not be included.
- **Restructuring:** includes the restructuring or wind-down of a corporate entity. Cases must involve creditors outside the country of the company in question. The restructured entity must be headquartered in Asia-Pacific or Asia-Pacific must be the venue of the restructuring.

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 | • Private equity                        |
| • High yield             | • Project finance                       |
| • Equity                 | • Restructuring                         |
| • M&A                    | • Securitisation and structured finance |

### **Team of the year – [nomination form](#)**

These awards apply to a firm's entire practice group rather than a specific team within it. Firms can nominate themselves in any of or all the categories. Complete one Team of the year form 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
- Equity
- High yield
- M&A
- Private equity
- Project finance
- Restructuring
- Structured finance and securitisation

### **Financial services regulatory ([form](#)) and Pro bono team of the year ([form](#))**

These two awards have their own nomination forms. The work in the financial services regulatory field will be part of firm award deliberations alongside the work in all the other categories.

### **National firm of the year and Offshore law firm ([form](#))**

Domestic/national law firm awards will be given to the firm with the best track record over 2020 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 the award categories, including financial services regulatory. Shortlists will be published for these awards.

Complete one National law firm of the year form for each jurisdiction 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 the cited transactions.

Law firm of the year for:

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

\* These awards will be subject to the quality and quantity of submissions received.

\*\* As well as China firm of the year there will be awards in three sub-categories. The Team of the year forms can be used to make nominations in these categories:

1. Debt firm of the year – includes all debt capital markets work as well as structured finance and securitisation and debt capital markets regulatory work.
2. Equity firm of the year – includes all equity capital markets work.
3. Corporate/M&A firm of the year – includes M&A, private equity, and corporate structuring.

### **China practice of the year**

There is no nomination form for this award. The award goes to an international firm based on its roles on the most innovative Mainland China transactions.

### **India practice of the year**

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

### **Regional law firm of the year**

There is no nomination form for this award. The award goes to an independent, regionally headquartered firm based on its role on transactions across the categories and across APAC jurisdictions. There is a focus on intra-regional deals where more than one jurisdiction is involved.

### **In-house teams of the year ([form](#))**

In-house legal teams are invited to make nominations across all categories. There three specific awards for in-house teams:

- In-house debt team of the year: for in-house legal teams of investment banks
- In-house equity team of the year: for in-house legal teams of investment banks
- In-house corporate team: for in-house legal teams in corporate entities

The awards will be based 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.

### **Rising star lawyers of the year ([form](#))**

This category is for senior associates-level lawyers from international AND local legal teams. Candidates should not have much more than 10 years post-qualification experience. The awards will be based primarily on an individual's role in innovative transactions.

### **In-house contribution award ([form](#))**

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 on market practice or leadership/development of their in-house team. The award will also be based on market feedback during the research period.

### **Market reform award**

There is no nomination form for this award however we will be seeking recommendations during the research. This award will be a result of the conversations during the awards research with leading lawyers and market participants and the panel of IFLR journalists.

No shortlists will be released for any of the above individual awards and winners will be announced on the night.

### **LMG Women in business law award ([form](#))**

This award is separate but supported by IFLR and will be announced later in 2021. More information can be found [here](#).

*(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](mailto:james.wilson@legalmediagroup.com) to arrange an interview.

### When is the deadline?

Please send us your submission by **December 3 2020**.

### Must deals have reached final close by the end of December 2020?

Yes. All deals must have reached financial close between January 1 2020 and December 31 2020.

### 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.

**IFLR**

**27/F**

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