

HFMA Awards

Celebrating success in healthcare finance



Award Entry Hints and Tips

Best foot forward. Make your best points first and **back up your claims with evidence**. It's amazing how many entries talk about an organisation's good intentions without actually including any facts.

Create a story. Judges like a clear narrative.

Make it real. Use real life examples to bring the story to life. This is particularly effective if you can demonstrate benefits for patients/service users or evidence-based improvements to a service or practice.

Answer the questions asked. Read the criteria for the award category and make sure you are answering the question that has been asked. Judges will often have a particular focus for an award category in order to separate out the top entries; this will be reflected in the questions. Please also stick as closely as possible to the word counts shown at the end of each question.

Choose supporting material carefully. There is a temptation to include too much additional information as appendices. Choose only the best and most evocative statistics, images and testimonials to support your case and only include it if it really adds value.

Think like a judge. The judges might be reading anywhere from 10-50 submissions for each category. Put yourself in their shoes before submitting a final draft. Make it an easy read with clear objectives.

Write with the benefits and results in mind. It's all well and good to tell the judges what you did, but where winners leave the rest behind is by showing the true value of the work. What were the benefits to the organisation? To the patients? How were outcomes improved? What were the savings made? How were services improved?

Shared learning. If possible, show how results can be duplicated across the organisation, wider health economy or nationally.

Be clever with formatting. The judges get the final entries as PDFs so make sure any supplemental information supplied will look good when converted to PDF.

Do yourself/your entry justice. The judges can only make a decision based on what is in front of them so make sure all key facts, benefits and positives are included within the entry. For personal awards e.g. FD of the year, the focus should be on the achievements of the individual rather than the organisation. Also, it is accepted that FDs and Deputies work hard, put in long hours, maintain good relationships with clinicians etc. as part of their normal role. The winner will be someone who shows characteristics over and above the normal requirements of the job.

Accuracy. Poor grammar and spelling does not go down well with the judges and can suggest a lack of care has gone into the entry.

Team work. Colleagues may have a different view to yours so don't be afraid of making it a team effort.

Shout loud about achievements. If you can put across passion and pride in your award entry, this will go down well with the judges.

Avoid jargon. Not all of the judging panel will necessarily be from a health service finance background so entries need to be clear and understandable.

Persistence. Don't be put off if you entered before and didn't win. There is always scope for refining previous entries (or putting forward new ones) and the competition is also likely to be different each year.