How to win a Bristol Life Award
Categories

- Arts
- Business Services
- Café/Coffee Shop
- Charity
- Cocktail/Bar
- Creative
- Education
- Event
- Food/Drink Producer
- Gastropub
- Hair & Beauty
- Health
- Interiors
- Legal & Financial
- Leisure & Tourism
- New Business
- Property
- Restaurant
- Retailer
- Technology & Innovation
- Platinum Award
Key dates

Noms close – March 3 at noon
Finalists revealed – March 7 at noon
Finalists’ Reception – March 20
Bristol Life Awards – April 27
Winners’ Dinner – May
Take time on your Nomination

- Don’t leave it until the deadline
- Think about what makes 2016 stand out
- Start gathering testimonials
Give measures of success...

- “We’ve had a great year” is not enough!
- Be specific – Judges want indications of success
- Higher sales, more people, new product, new service, award winning..?
Awards are open to all

- Free to enter
- Any company can win
- Check categories & criteria on site
- Consider all categories; if in doubt, check with us
Make sure you qualify

- Need to be in Bristol area (no tape measures though!)
- If near, main business focus needs to be Bristol
- New companies need to have started no earlier than July 1st 2015
- Cited activity needs to be in 2016 itself: previous excellence rarely counts
Avoid empty claims

- Saying “We’re the best in Bristol” lacks content. Say how.
- “Our quality goes without saying” won’t work. Explain why.
- “We’re second to none” – most think that!
Update your website

- After your nomination and possible visits, it’s what judges look at
- Check it’s fully up to date, especially News & About
- Check content tallies with nomination
- Polish it! It’s your shop window (And MediaClash can help btw)
Social media: be active (or absent)

- If you claim close customer engagement, make sure your tweets are frequent and recent
- If you cite social media as a marketing strength, make sure it is
- Doing little, with out of date activity, can be worse than doing nothing

Bristol Life Awards 2017
Gather testimonials

- One thing to say you’re great – another to have others say it
- Don’t just say, “Check out TripAdvisor”. Do the legwork, provide the specifics/highlights
- Make sure testimonials are from 2016
Use Twitter proactively for support

- If you’ll be entering, stick it out there – ask for customers’ support
- Use it to gain testimonials
- Always cc @BristolLifeAwds
Don’t forget your supporting material

- You can submit supporting material along with your nomination.
- Your supporting material can be a maximum of four sides of A4.
Keep April 27\textsuperscript{th} clear!

- Just imagine how great it would feel to win a Bristol Life Award...
- ...and what your team would think
- ...and how you could use it for promotion
Awards process

- Companies self-nominate
- Use nomination form on Awards website
- Shortlist is drawn up, Finalists announced
- Independent judges meet and discuss – at length
- Winners revealed on the night
Independent Judges decide

- Judges are chosen from all sectors of Bristol business and life
- The Judges decide, not *Bristol Life*
- Any conflicts of interest are declared
- No Judge can be involved in a category where they are a Finalist
Judging process

- Judges get a pack of Finalists (it’s massive!)
- This is given out 10 days before Judgement Day
- Judges are encouraged to visit the more visitable (eg, especially retail and hospitality)
- Likewise prompted to look at websites
From a Judge’s perspective

- Think about the different mix of people judging. From accountants to designers
- The bigger picture. It’s not all down to the bottom line
- How have you contributed to life in the city? Charity events, work experience etc.
- How is it best to present your entry?
- It really is impartial!
Judging approach

- Much discussion
- After discussions of all, stronger Finalists remain as possible
- Weaker ones are dropped
- Advocates asked to make case for each
- More discussion. Simple majority usually not enough
- Vote... then revote... then revote... then choice!
Decision process

- Judges usually have their expected Winners, prior to session
- Typically these change sharply, during the discussion
- Judges very respectful of each other
- “Wisdom of crowds” approach: collective choices stronger than individual
What does it mean to Win?

- Being a Winner really does impact on your business
- Increase in awareness of our brand and recognition by clients
- Opportunity to promote to clients and customers (physically, digitally)
- Long-term value: you’ll always be a Winner!
- And opportunity to go to the Winners’ Dinner
And the Winner is...

- Adrenaline rush on night (& speech!)
- Window stickers and digital assets
- Winners’ Dinner in May
- Coverage in *Bristol Life*
Some closing tips

- Imagine what it’s like wading through the pack!
- Keep message succinct – avoid rambling and repetition, we recommend keeping your Nomination between three – eight pages
- Please don’t over-claim – but do put your best case forward

Good luck!