EASTSIDE AWARDS

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THE 2026 EASTSIDE AWARD FOR BUSINESS GROWTH

Who can enter:

Open to SMEs and social enterprises in East or Greater East Belfast that have demonstrated significant growth in performance and employment since 17 October 2023. This award recognises organisations that have grown with purpose, responded confidently to opportunity, and built a stronger foundation for the future. Entrants should show not only the scale of their progress, but also the sound decisions, innovation, and leadership that made sustainable growth possible. Growth may be demonstrated through turnover, workforce, customers, markets, products, services, premises, or social impact. Judges will also consider how the organisation has managed risk, maintained quality, and ensured that expansion benefits its people, customers, and wider community.

What to include:

Showcase your growth story:

- How your organisation has grown in the past three years.
- Strategies or actions that contributed to growth.
- How you've maintained performance and sustainability.
- The positive impact of your growth on customers, reputation, and community.
- What sets you apart from competitors.
- Any other information to strengthen your entry.

How to enter:

Entering the Eastside Awards is simple. Here's how to get started:

1. **Choose Your Category**
   Visit www.eastsideawards.org and select the award category you'd like to enter or nominate someone for.
2. **Check the Criteria**
   Download the category criteria to see exactly what the judges are looking for.
3. **Decide How to Enter**
   You can submit your entry in **two ways**:
   - **Video Submission:** A great choice if you'd prefer to tell your story on camera.
   - **Written Submission:** Perfect if you'd like to provide a written entry.

Video Submission:

1. Fill out your basic details via the online entry form.
2. Upload your video (max. **120 seconds**) telling us why you or your nominee deserves to win.
3. There's no need for a polished production – just focus on **clearly explaining your story** and **meeting the criteria**.

Written Submission:

1. Complete your entry online or download a form and email it to **info@eastsideawards.org**.
2. Written entries should be **no more than 1,000 words** and clearly show how you meet the category criteria.

Helpful hints

- **Use the criteria as a guide** when writing or filming your entry - ensure that you address each point.
- The judges want **evidence of achievements, impact, and contributions** – include details and examples where possible.
- Judges can **only assess what you provide**, so include everything relevant to your success story.
- Whether you choose a written or video entry, **all entries are judged equally** based on how well you meet the criteria.
- If you have any questions or need help submitting your entry, contact: Jessica Higginson at **jessica.higginson@podiem.com** or call **028 9076 1030**.

Important dates

- **Entries Open:** Friday, **18 September 2026**
- **Entry Deadline:** Friday, **16 October 2026 (5pm)**
- **Judging:** Late November 2026
- **Finalists Announced:** Early December 2026
- **Awards Ceremony:** Friday, **29 January 2027** at **Titanic Belfast**