

WM People announces winners of its 2024 Top Employer Awards

Submitted by: WM People Ltd

Wednesday, 7 February 2024

WM People has announced the winners of the 2024 Top Employer Awards (<https://www.wmpeople.co.uk/events/top-employer-awards/>), which celebrate the very best companies for diversity and inclusion, flexible working, career progression for women, mental health and family support.

This year's awards, the 14th annual awards, were presented at a ceremony in London's Soho Hotel on 6th February and were preceded by a keynote speech by leading coach and leadership development consultant Jenny Garrett OBE, whose latest book *Equality vs Equity* tackles issues of race in the workplace. The Awards were followed by a Q&A with the judges on best practice trends and challenges.

Categories at the 2024 Top Employer Awards included a new award for innovation in recognition of one-off, stand-out initiatives and new awards for learning and development and talent attraction and outreach. The other categories are: Best for Diversity and Inclusion, Best for Older Workers, Best for Mental Health, Best for Returners, Best for Flexible Working, Best for Family Support and Best for SMEs. The winners are:

Overall Top Employer Award: ServiceNow

The winner of the Overall Top Employer Award is based on the winners of all the other categories. The judges felt ServiceNow had shown a breadth of support and commitment to diversity, inclusion, family support and flexible working through its inclusive culture. It was a rounded offering and they were impressed by how ServiceNow had continued to improve and progress since last year.

Best for Mental Health: 4PS Construction Solutions Ltd

The Best for Mental Health Award was sponsored by Vistry Group.

This award celebrates employers who have been exemplary in the way they have sought to protect their employees' mental health.

The judges highlighted 4PS' focus on addressing the work-based causes of mental health problems through tailored work plans to address workload, regular check-ins by managers, mental health workshops that are open to all, all supported by senior leadership. The company offered a range of ways of boosting wellbeing, for instance, through its allotment and bring and share lunches.

Best for Diversity and Inclusion: ServiceNow

The Best for Diversity and Inclusion Award was sponsored by FSCS.

This award is for organisations who demonstrate actions taken to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

The judges were impressed by how ServiceNow continued to evolve its D&I work through listening and acting

on feedback. It was also praised for its embrace of a wide range of diversity, including interfaith issues, its internal and external focus and its focus on intersectionality.

Highly commended was AMS for its enthusiasm and energy in the D&I space and its wide-ranging, outward-looking focus.

Best for Flexible Working: AtkinsRealis

This award was sponsored by Lloyds Banking Group.

This award is for employers who show how they promote and manage flexible working and encourage a flexible culture in their organisation.

The judges felt AtkinsRealis had taken a dynamic and tailored approach to flexible working which crossed over with D&I issues and praised its day one right to flexible working, its collaborative approach and how it proactively educated employees about their rights and normalised flexible working. They noted that flexible working seemed to be its guiding philosophy.

Best for Family Support: the Financial Services Compensation Scheme

Best for Family Support was sponsored by Harper James.

This award is for employers who demonstrate how their policies and practice support working families and carers.

The judges felt FSCS took a broad approach to family support, including elder care as well as parental support, embedded in a caring culture. It had also demonstrated the business benefits of providing good family support and of helping employees to sustain their careers across different life transitions.

Best for Returners: Lloyds Banking Group

Best for Returners was sponsored by Imperial College London.

This award is for employers who demonstrate stand-out programmes or initiatives aimed at returners – those who have taken a career break and are looking to get back into the workplace.

The judges felt Lloyds had taken a broad-based approach to normalising the hiring of returners, with a big emphasis on diversity and inclusion in tech-based careers, and had reflected on what they had learned over the near decade they had been recruiting returners. They seemed to understand what makes the support they offer successful.

Aviva was highly commended for its targeted, tech-focused returner programme in a niche area where gender diversity is much needed.

Best SME Award: Harper James

This award is for SMEs who demonstrate a real commitment to work life balance practices.

The judges felt Harper James took a dynamic and collaborative approach to flexible working which was embedded in values that clearly resonated with their employees. Their founders had left the corporate world with the aim of doing things differently and had shown that this is possible.

Best for Older Workers: Phoenix Group

This award is for employers who provide details of what they do and how it helps older workers, including through metrics, how they are monitoring success and individual case studies which show impact.

The judges said this was a very strong category and that Phoenix Group had shown not only that they had a wide range of practical support, from midlife MOTs and carers support to tackling longer term unemployment among older people, but that they were committed to wider change outside their organisation.

Special innovation award: Murphy and ServiceNow UK Limited

This new award is for organisations that have a stand-out policy or initiative related to working parents, women's career progression, older workers or flexible working that has/is having a demonstrable impact on its employees or the wider community.

The judges praised Murphy for its Employ Autism initiative which was described as a truly inclusive approach to recruiting neurodiverse people and ServiceNow's NextGen programme which aims to bridge the digital skills gap. Both initiatives were described as stellar.

Best for Talent Attraction and Outreach: Vistry Group

This award is for employers who demonstrate that they are thinking creatively about outreach and recruitment in a difficult labour market.

The judges praised Vistry Group's enthusiasm for giving those coming into the industry confidence and taking a broad range of approaches to outreach. They were willing to invest time in getting out to harder to reach candidate groups and had taken a truly intersectional lens to talent attraction.

Best for Learning and Development: Motel One

The Best for Learning and Development award was sponsored by Murphy

This new award is for employers who have created the right culture and environment for all individuals to learn and grow and to keep learning and upskilling, throughout their working lives.

The judge liked the accessibility and range of learning and development support on offer, from online training and development days through their training academy to coaching and degree programmes. They felt

it was well structured and robust in an industry not known for its career pathway preparation.

The Award judges were Gillian Nissim, founder of WM People Ltd; Andy Lake, director of Flexibility.co.uk; Jennifer Liston-Smith, Head of Thought Leadership for Bright Horizons Work+Family Solutions; Dave Dunbar, Head of Digital Workspace at the Department of Work and Pensions; Clare Kelliher, Professor of Work and Organisation at Cranfield School of Management; Salma Shah, Writer and Founder of Mastering your Power, and Kim Chaplain, Associate Director for Work, Centre for Ageing Better.

Gillian Nissim, Founder of WM People*, said: "The Awards are about celebrating the best employers for working families and older workers. After another difficult year we want to champion those who continue to see the benefits of putting their people front and centre and striving to create the kind of environment in which everyone can thrive."

*WM People (<https://www.wmpeople.co.uk/>) brings together [workingmums.co.uk](https://www.workingmums.co.uk/) (<https://www.workingmums.co.uk/>), [workingdads.co.uk](https://www.workingdads.co.uk/) (<https://www.workingdads.co.uk/>) and [workingwise.co.uk](https://www.workingwise.co.uk/) (<https://www.workingwise.co.uk/>)

A copy of the Best Practice Report based on last year's Top Employer Awards is available here (<https://www.wmpeople.co.uk/best-practice-report-2023-published/>). The next Best Practice Report will be out in May 2024.

*For more information contact Mandy Garner on mandy.garner@workingmums.co.uk.