

RULES FOR THE SOFHT AWARDS 2025

SOFHT Awards Categories

- The type of awards will be decided annually by SOFHT Council.
- A brief will be set for each category.

Advice to entrants

- Each year the number of entries in each category increases, therefore, to stand the best chance of being nominated as a finalist or of winning you need to make your entry stand out from the crowd and grab the judge's attention.
- The online entry form allows 100 words to précis the nomination. Previous winners have supported their entries with a relevant supporting information pack.
- If your entry is a product endorsement(s), test results and external verification will enhance your entry.
- The attention to detail in the best entries received in the past has been excellent, presenting the information in a clear, interesting and compelling manner and avoiding the temptation to provide too much information.

Nominations

- Nominees or entrants **must be** based in the UK or internationally.
- Nominations for awards must be submitted online for the current year.
- Entrants can nominate themselves or be nominated by a person or company.
- Nominators must seek permission/approval from the person they wish to nominate.
- The nominator/entrant must obtain and submit all references.
- Employees of a business sponsoring an award **will not** be permitted to apply for the award they sponsor but will be eligible for nomination for any other awards.
- Awards shall be submitted with a 100-word description with additional supporting material as appropriate.
- Supporting information must be sent to admin@sofht.co.uk by the closing date for consideration by the judging panel.
- All nominees will receive acknowledgement within one week of receipt.

Supporting Information

i. **Best Apprentice**

Nominations must include details of:

- exceptional work performance, including quality of work, productivity, and efficiency
- commitment to learning and development
- good communication skills and problem-solving skills in their work.

- ii. Best Auditor Award**
Nominations must include details of the number of sites audited and against which standards.
- iii. Best Company Award**
Nominations must include one or more of the following:
- measurable and consistent improvement in standards over the year
 - a successful launch of an exciting and/or novel range of new products or new service (food, service equipment etc).
- iv. Best Food Scientist/Technologist Award**
Nominations must include details of improvements made to protect or develop safer food products in any part of the food supply chain.
- v. Best Hygiene Manager**
Nominations must include one or more of the following:
- details of improvements in hygiene standards or systems on site
 - evidence of significant savings in water, chemical, labour or energy over past 12 months
 - details of communication systems implemented within the hygiene team.
- vi. Best New Product / Service Award**
Nominations must include:
- safety approvals; explain why it is different/better; explain features and benefits; whether it is a new product or new to UK market; provide example of the product if portable; and independent evaluation of products.
 - test results and external verification if relevant.
 - confirmation in writing that there are no legal disputes pending in relation to patent protection and/or intellectual property.
- vii. Best Technical Team**
Nominations must include one or more of the following:
- exceptional collaboration, innovation, and effectiveness in ensuring food safety
 - implemented new systems
 - achieved outstanding results in maintaining high food safety and hygiene standards.
- viii. Trainer and Training Company Award**
Nominations must include details of:
- courses undertaken in the past 12 months i.e. level of course and the number of candidate pass rates
 - a 5 minute YouTube video clip or online recording demonstrating an example of the training being undertaken.

ix. The Rising Star

Nominations must include an endorsement from the employer with supporting evidence.

The Dorothy Cullinane Award

This is a special award selected and presented exclusively by SOFHT Council and is for a company or person that has made an outstanding contribution to the food industry, with particular emphasis on food safety and/or food hygiene and/or food technology.

Judging Awards

- All SOFHT Awards will be assessed by a judging panel.
- The panel will be made up of a Chair and at least three other people, which will include a member of the SOFHT Council.
- Judges are required to sign a non-disclosure agreement and maintain confidentiality.
- Judges may request a product demonstration.
- The judges should be from SOFHT member companies or be individual members of SOFHT.
- The judges must be impartial and will judge the award on the information supplied on the nomination form and supporting material.
- The judges will be expected to meet on a designated date, approximately four weeks before the award ceremony. Their decision is final.
- The judges will choose up to three finalists for each category which will include a winner for each award.
- The judges have the option to award highly commended for each category.
- The judges retain the option to re-categorise entrants if they feel the entry is more appropriate in another category.
- The judges have the discretion to present two awards for Best Company for a business <10 employees and >10 employees.

Awards Ceremony

- The finalists chosen will be invited to attend the lunch at either the nominator or nominee's expense with the exception of the Dorothy Cullinane Award which will be paid for by the Society.
- The winners of a SOFHT Award will be expected to be involved with the publicity that surrounds the event.

General

- A SOFHT Award does not give endorsement to a product or person.
- The organisers reserve the right to withhold an award in any category if, in the judge's opinion, no nominee meets the criteria.
- The organisers reserve the right to withdraw an award at any time if, in their opinion, the actions of the recipient or winning product threaten the integrity of the SOFHT Awards.
- The Chair will be responsible for the management of the SOFHT Awards.

- All finalists will be allowed to use the SOFHT logo and state “SOFHT Awards 2025 Finalist” for the nomination category on social media, email footers or other documents, once approval has been gained from the Society.
- The winners / highly commended of all categories will be able use the SOFHT logo and state “SOFHT Awards 2025 Winner / Highly Commended” for the nomination category on social media, email footers or other documents, once approval has been gained from the Society.
- Judges reserve the right to follow up any references.