



Northern  
**Finance Director Awards**

# **Shortlist 2021**

## **Celebrating Exceptional Talent**

July 2021

#NFD Awards21  
[northernfdawards.co.uk](http://northernfdawards.co.uk)



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# Introduction

The Northern Finance Director Awards recognise and celebrate the exceptional talent of finance directors and their teams across the North of England.

## Our Supporters

As partners and ambassadors for this recognition of the finance community, and their essential role in the commercial success of the region, Grant Thornton, Michael Page and Squire Patton Boggs are proud sponsors of the Northern Finance Director Awards.



Michael Page

Page  
Executive

SQUIRE  
PATTON BOGGS

## Overview

The Northern Finance Director Awards embrace all that is brilliant about finance directors, who are often the unsung heroes of any business. Traditionally responsible for sustaining business continuity and managing cash flow, the modern finance director now exhibits creative thinking and strategic influence, as well as demonstrating leadership.

Grant Thornton, Michael Page and Squire Patton Boggs work with finance directors on an array of matters each day, and are frequently blown away by the talent, and felt compelled to promote their successes.

The significance of the finance director should not be underestimated. The Northern Powerhouse economy is estimated at £412 billion – greater than the economy of some countries in Europe, the Northern Powerhouse constitutes 19.25% of the overall UK GVA and still has huge potential for growth. The finance directors included in our shortlist are just a selection of the talent behind the Northern Powerhouse economy, working tirelessly to grow their businesses and the success of the region.

The tumultuous nature of the past year makes these awards more significant, with many finance directors managing furlough, strained investor relationships and restricting cash flow. To have an operational business post-COVID-19 is an achievement in itself, but many of the finance directors celebrated here have gone above and beyond to pivot their business and innovate, as well as made sacrifices to protect their workforce.

Our shortlist comprises an eclectic mix of finance directors from across our northern cities and the sectors that fuel the northern economy. This year's categories include:

### Company Size and Structure Awards

- Best Northern Finance Director of a Limited Company up to £25 Million
- Best Northern Finance Director of a Limited Company £25 Million – £100 Million
- Best Northern Finance Director of a Limited Company Over £100 Million
- Best Northern Finance Director of a Listed Company
- Best Northern Finance Director of a Private Equity-backed Company
- Best Northern Finance Director of a Global Company (HQ in the North (Subsid))

### Outstanding Achievement Awards

- Northern Finance Director of the Year 2021 – Growth/Scale Up
- Northern Finance Director of the Year 2021 – Innovation
- Northern Finance Director of the Year 2021 – Leadership
- Northern Finance Director of the Year 2021 – One to Watch
- Northern Finance Director of the Year 2021 – Turnaround
- Northern Finance Director of the Year 2021 – Deal of the Year

This year, we are delighted to announce two celebrating excellence awards, which will be awarded for **Pandemic Response** excellence and **Diversity and Inclusion** excellence.



# Message of Support

## From the Rt. Hon. Jake Berry MP



We can truly say we live in exceptional times. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the North of England. Here, COVID-19 has arguably had a greater impact than in any other area of the UK, with repeated national and local lockdowns. Only great management has helped our businesses to survive.

Despite these challenges, the Northern economy has shown itself to be remarkably resilient and a picture is emerging of Northern companies not just enduring, but also growing and succeeding through adversity.

In the last year, we have seen some notable IPOs emerging in the North. Add to this progress in new technologies in the North. Take hydrogen – with the government's focus on the Green Industrial Revolution ahead of COP26, 2021 may be shaping up to be a year of huge opportunity for Northern business.

As we all learn to live with the new normal, including flexible home working, it is a time for agile and entrepreneurial management of our businesses. Levelling up the North starts at board level, as it is ultimately the companies of the North that will drive our recovery.

This is why I am so pleased to have the opportunity to support this year's Northern Finance Director Awards. It is time to celebrate all that is best in our Northern boardrooms and I wish everyone the best of luck.





# Foreword From Philip J. Turnbull, Chief Executive Officer at the Association of International Accountants

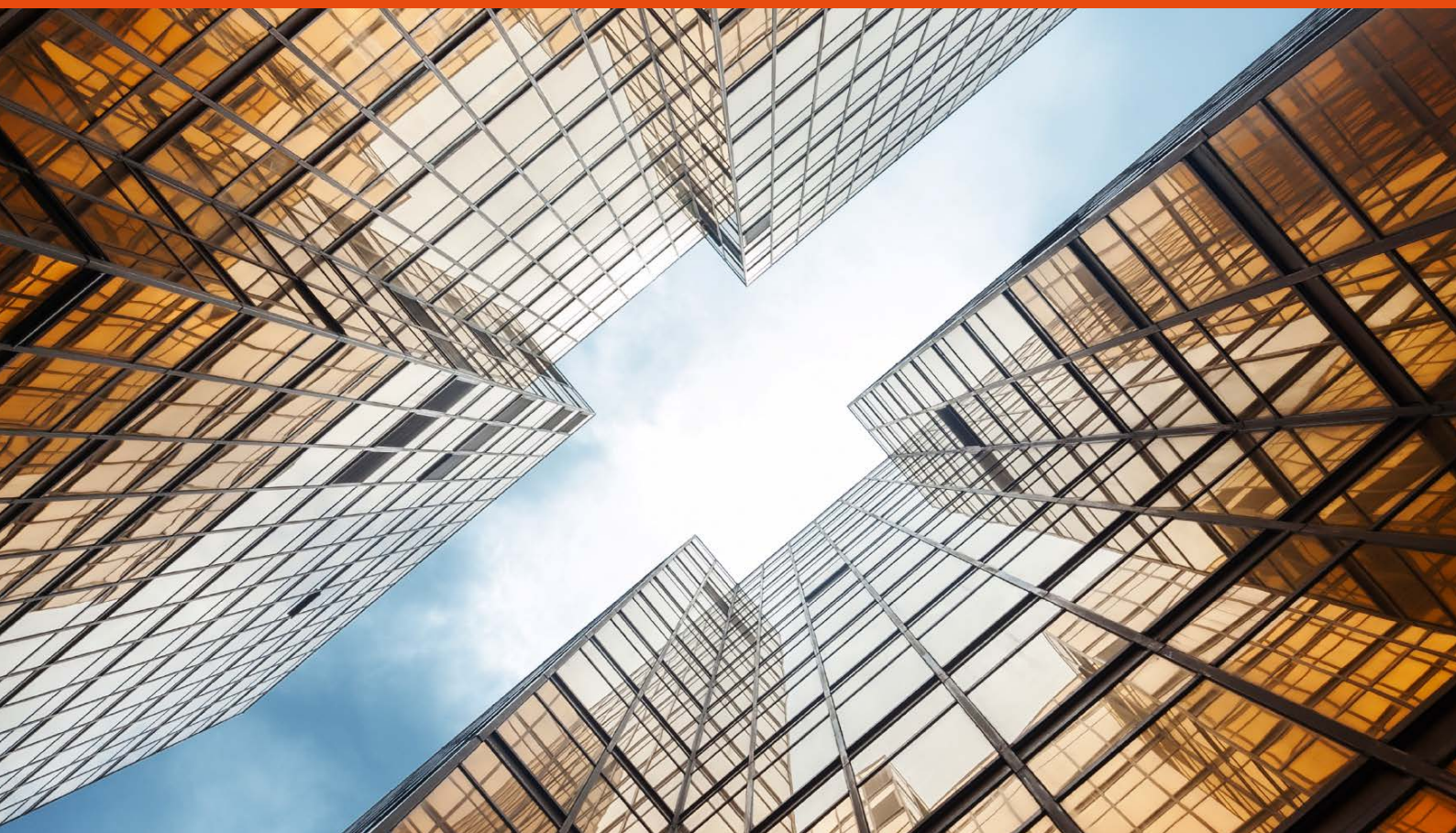


It has been an honour and a privilege to represent the Association of International Accountants (AIA) as a judge for the Northern Finance Director Awards 2021.

As a Northern Powerhouse partner, AIA is passionate about highlighting the business activities, initiatives and opportunities within the region and as part of this, we believe that it is crucial to recognise those outstanding individuals within the finance and accounting industry who play such an integral role in the commercial success for North of England business.

The past 12 to 18 months have been like no other, with unprecedented challenges on a global scale, so it is refreshing that the Northern Finance Director Awards 2021 allows us the opportunity to take a step back, albeit for a short period, and shine a light on the exceptional and inspirational finance leaders who have played, and continue to play, a key role in financially guiding businesses through this ongoing pandemic.

Congratulations not only to the deserving award winners, but also to everyone who has been nominated. You truly do inspire the next generation of finance professionals with your commitment and ongoing pursuit of excellence.








# Best Northern Finance Director of a Company up to £25 Million

This category showcases exceptional finance directors of businesses with revenues of up to £25 million annually.

Sponsored by



	<b>Jonathan Blythe</b> Finance Director Bawtry Carbon Limited
	<b>Martin Elliott</b> Chief Financial Officer Linley & Simpson (The Lomond Group)
	<b>Anders Liljendahl</b> Group Finance Director RAM Tracking
	<b>Gareth Lloyd</b> Chief Financial Officer Moda Furnishings Limited
	<b>David Thornton</b> Finance Director Tracsis plc

## A Message From David Duxbury, Regional Director, The FD Centre, Sponsor of the Best Northern Finance Director of a Limited Company up to £25 Million Award



The FD Centre is very pleased to be a co-sponsor of the Northern Finance Director Awards. Our principals are all experienced finance directors, working in all sizes and types of companies with a common theme of mentoring new talent, particularly nurturing the rising stars of tomorrow.

The Limited Company up to £25 Million category is of particular interest to the FD Centre, as it is where we are most active, it is the engine room of the Northern and British economy, and it gives finance directors the greatest chance to shine and make an impact.







"They are proudest of the way the finance team has grown from the ground up because they believe that they could not do the job without a strong team. They are proud to have a team that respects them, can learn and enjoy their jobs."

"Commercially they are pretty impressive to be honest"



# Best Northern Finance Director of a Company £25 Million – £100 Million

This category showcases exceptional finance directors of businesses with revenues between £25 million and £100 million annually.

	<b>Sadie Alton</b> Finance Director InfinityWorks Consulting Limited		<b>Andrew Lightowler</b> Chief Financial Officer thebigword Group Limited
	<b>Robert Atkin</b> Group Finance Director PFF Packaging Group Limited		<b>David Sadler</b> Finance Director Global Autocare Limited
	<b>Martin Hargreaves</b> Chief Financial Officer Victoria Plum Limited		<b>Clair Scott</b> Finance Director Richard Wellock & Sons Limited

"They will really stand out amongst their peers. They have really shaken things up."

"What are you most proud of? Watching people around me grow – running a business out of a business is great, but it is the growth of the people around me."

# Best Northern Finance Director of a Company Over £100 Million

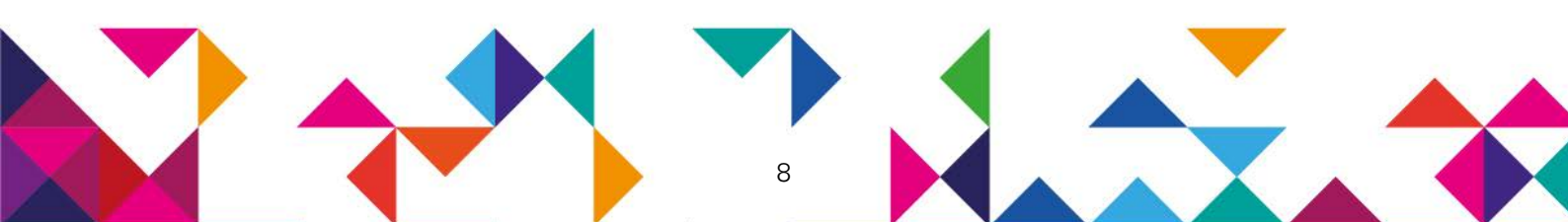
This category showcases exceptional finance directors of businesses revenues over £100 million annually.

	<b>Paul Cogan</b> Group Finance & Resources Director Bettys & Taylors Group		<b>Mark Pownall</b> Chief Financial Officer CF Booth Limited
	<b>Andrew Gale</b> Group Finance Director EVO Business Supplies, Limited		<b>Craig Tomkinson</b> Group Chief Financial Officer 2 Sisters Food Group
	<b>Ross Faith</b> Chief Financial Officer E.H. Booth & Co. Limited		

“Their greatest achievement was to take the business from a near administration to becoming a market leader.”

“Calm, friendly, lovely person. They lead in a strategic direction. They have a huge strategic influence and are effectively running the business- leadership is definitely a strength of theirs.”

“They have a much wider skillset than just finances, they have a commercial outlook and will step out of the box when needed.”





# A Message From Grant Thornton

At Grant Thornton, we are delighted to be co-sponsoring the prestigious Northern Finance Director Awards. Working with finance directors and chief financial officers as we do every day, we feel that it is incredibly important to celebrate their outstanding contribution to the North's economy.

Since the pandemic, across the North, we have been hosting regular virtual CFO forums, which allowed contributors to share learnings, insights and best practice in a supportive and collaborative environment.

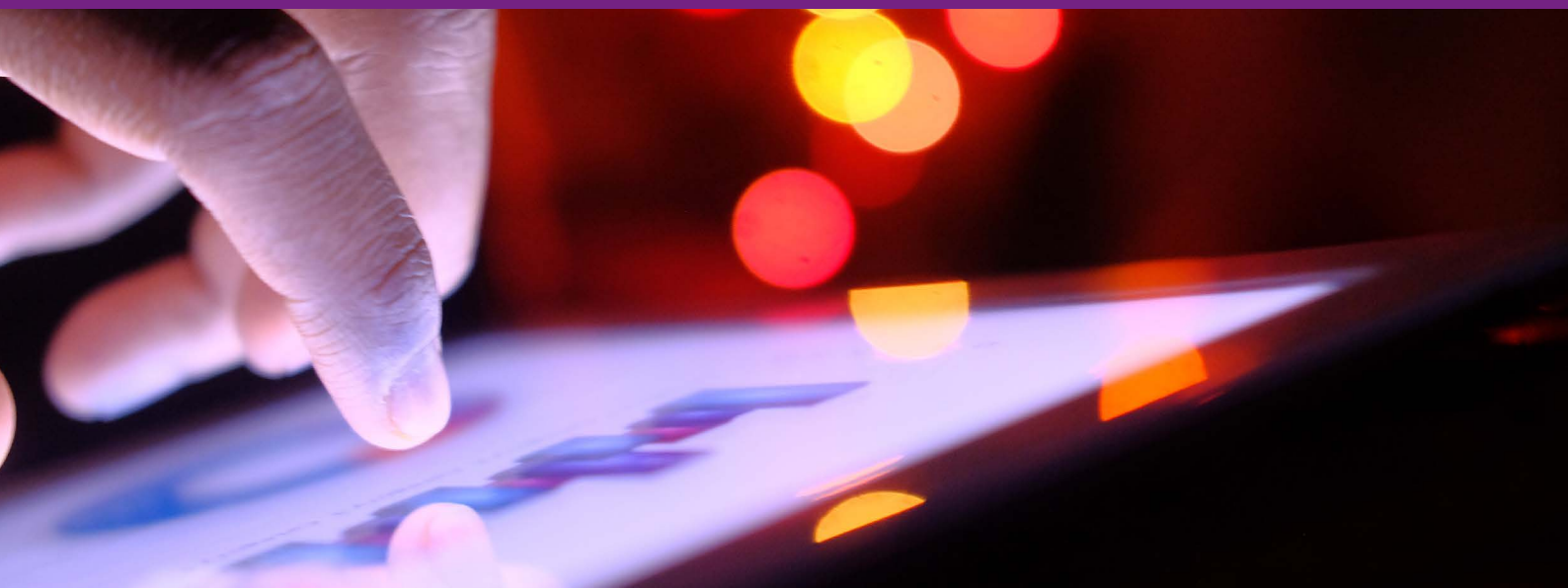
The forums, alongside the judging process, underlined why it is right to acknowledge the tireless and often unheralded work behind the scenes finance directors have undertaken to ensure the success of the businesses and organisations across many varied sectors of the North's economy.

As a leading business adviser, we are increasingly seeing more complex and diverse demands and expectations being placed on finance leaders as companies look to grow with new products and services, pivot their business model, digitise their operations, enter new markets in a post-Brexit landscape, look at strategic acquisitions or take on external investment themselves.

The role of finance directors in value creation is so much more challenging, diverse and rewarding than it has ever been, which is why these awards are so important to acknowledge the enterprise, leadership, resilience, social impact and all-round excellence of the financial directors and chief financial officers in Northern businesses over the past 12 months.





They will also showcase some truly inspirational stories of agility, compassion, innovation and, of course, that most natural quality, Northern grit!

After more than a year of incredible change, challenge and uncertainty, there has surely never been a better time for these awards, which is why we are proud to support this programme and look forward to celebrating with all nominees on 7 October.



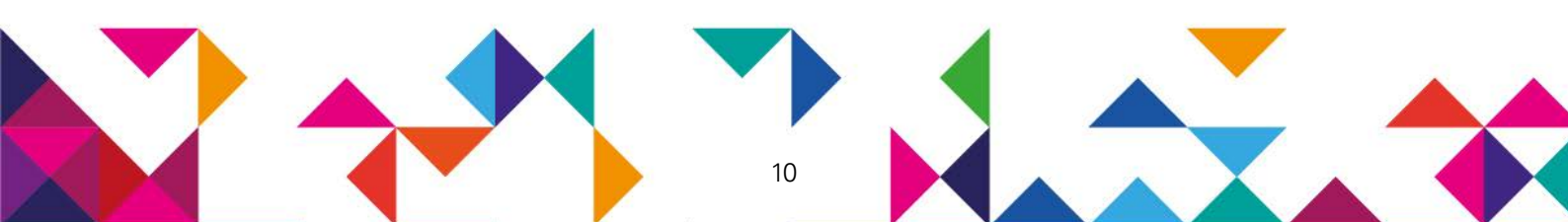
# Best Northern Finance Director of a Listed Company

This category shines a spotlight on the exceptional talent of finance directors in listed companies in the North.

	<b>Jayne Cottam</b> Chief Financial Officer Assura PLC		<b>Mike Iddon</b> Chief Financial Officer Pets at Home
	<b>Claire Dickinson</b> Group Finance Director AES Engineering Limited		<b>Septima Maguire</b> Chief Financial Officer Benchmark Holdings Plc








“They transformed the way they think about business and operate, and have been writing the narrative both externally and internally, and implementing the strategy.”

“I believe that looking back and in all directions is key to a financial director adding value to a business, as it is important to see, sense and pre-empt situations so that the business is ready for everything and anything.”



# Best Northern Finance Director of a Private Equity-backed Company

This category shines a spotlight on the exceptional talent of finance directors in private equity-backed businesses in the North.

	<b>Jonathan Blythe</b> Finance Director Bawtry Carbon Limited		<b>Jocelyn Morgan</b> Finance Director Clubhouse Golf
	<b>Martin Elliott</b> Chief Financial Officer Linley & Simpson (The Lomond Group)		<b>Simon Owers</b> Group Chief Financial Officer International Leisure Group
	<b>Paul Gibson</b> Finance Director Zyro Fisher		<b>Rich Winsland</b> Chief Financial Officer Tactus Group
	<b>Iain Jamieson</b> Chief Financial Officer Fairstone Group Limited		

"I was quite nervous – it was my first experience with a PE, but I found it fulfilling, and enjoyed the structure and governance that PE brought."





"What are you proudest of? Being able to provide 165,000 products to underprivileged children in a tight timescale during lockdown to enable them to take part in remote education."

They are a strong candidate – impressive. They pivoted quickly when [the business] lacked focused investment. Huge ambition. Impressive financial performance. Successes all around innovation – not just tech, but also delivery of the product."



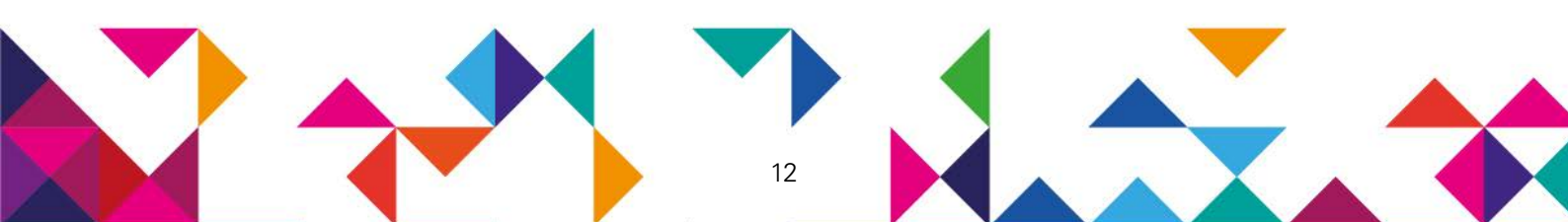
# Best Northern Finance Director of a Global Company

Our shortlist demonstrates the value of a good finance director on a global scale, delivering across countries and continents.

	<b>Claire Dickinson</b> Group Finance Director AES Engineering Limited		<b>Septima Maguire</b> Chief Financial Officer Benchmark Holdings Plc
	<b>Mark Horsey</b> UK Chief Financial Officer TransUnion		<b>Ria Murphy</b> Finance Director Fanatics (International) Limited

“A great role model for pushing diversity within the business and engineering sector.”

“Culture and people are everything – you cannot generate the one team ethos if people are pulling in different directions.”



# A Message From Squire Patton Boggs

We are delighted to once again be a headline sponsor of the esteemed Northern Finance Director Awards, which showcase the incredible talent across the region. Each day, we collaborate with finance directors and chief financial officers across the region to deliver on deals, and each day we feel compelled to recognise and promote their exceptional hard work and achievements.

This has been a distinguished awards ceremony in the Northern finance community for many years now, and we are excited to deliver the awards in this new shortlist format, which allows more finance directors to be rightfully recognised for their successes.

Finance directors have battled through an incredibly difficult and unforeseeable year, demonstrating commendable leadership and stewardship in steering their respective businesses to safety, and in many cases securing unprecedented growth. This year's shortlist endorses finance directors across a diverse array of sectors that are bolstering the Northern economy and contributing to the post-pandemic recovery. Needless to say, there has never been a more appropriate or deserved time to celebrate the finance leaders of the North.

Interviewing this year's nominees has evidenced the varied nature of the finance director role. No longer are finance directors solely responsible for balancing the books and keeping businesses afloat. The modern finance director has a significant impact on business strategy, exercises creative thinking to pivot the business in times of need, is adaptable to market disruption, and champions innovation, inclusion and diversity.







We are in awe of the talented lineup of nominees this year, and there is no doubt that each and every finalist is truly deserving of their place on the Power List. We wish a heartfelt congratulations to all of the winners when we announce them in the Autumn of 2021.

**SQUIRE**   
**PATTON BOGGS**



# Northern Finance Director of the Year Growth/Scale Up

Our Growth/Scale Up shortlist showcases finance directors that have taken affirmative action to grow their businesses and contributed to their company's success story.

	<b>Colin Boyle</b> Group Finance Director 2M Group Limited		<b>Leigh Manton</b> Finance Director SYNETIQ Limited
	<b>Martin Elliott</b> Chief Financial Officer Linley & Simpson (The Lomond Group)		<b>Jocelyn Morgan</b> Finance Director Clubhouse Golf
	<b>David Goulden</b> Chief Financial Officer APS Group		<b>Rich Winsland</b> Chief Financial Officer Tactus Group






"What are you most excited about going forward? Keeping the acquisition trail and going for a float – that will be an amazing experience."

"I am built to improve things and win. I never stand still, and always look for the next thing."



# Northern Finance Director of the Year Innovation

The Innovation category shines a spotlight on those businesses that are embracing technology, finding new efficiencies within their business models, and continuing to evolve with sector trends in order to defend their place in the market.






	<b>Susan Allan</b> Group Finance Director Willerby Group Limited		<b>Gareth Lloyd</b> Chief Financial Officer Moda Furnishings Limited
	<b>Robert Atkin</b> Group Finance Director PFF Packaging Group Limited		<b>Clair Scott</b> Finance Director Richard Wellock & Sons Limited
	<b>Tim Knockton</b> Finance Director Arc Inspirations Limited		

“What are you most proud of? Watching people around me grow – running a business out of a business is great, but it is the growth of the people around me.”



# Northern Finance Director of the Year Leadership

Our shortlist has demonstrated exceptional leadership, driving forward strong business growth and innovation strategies, with people who are prominent role models within their sectors.

	<b>Paul Cogan</b> Group Finance & Resources Director Bettys & Taylors Group		<b>David Goulden</b> Chief Financial Officer APS Group
	<b>Jayne Cottam</b> Chief Financial Officer Assura PLC		<b>Craig Tomkinson</b> Group Chief Financial Officer 2 Sisters Food Group
	<b>Ross Faith</b> Chief Financial Officer E.H. Booth & Co. Limited		

"I think this important in leading, as you need to inspire with vision – inspire others to have a passion for the business."







"Anchoring down and being resilient was key to leadership through lockdown."

"[In relation to COVID-19] what became apparent was the responsibility – leadership in crisis is different than day-to-day leadership."

# Northern Finance Director of the Year

## One to Watch

Our One to Watch category focuses on emerging talent, those finance directors making a real impact within their businesses and sectors, and our next generation of role models.

	<b>Jonathan Blythe</b> Finance Director Bawtry Carbon Limited		<b>Matthew Jowett</b> Chief Financial Officer Sigmat Limited
	<b>Christina Geary</b> Finance Director BJSS		<b>Clair Scott</b> Finance Director Richard Wellock & Sons Limited
	<b>Marc Jones</b> Finance Director Clifton Trade Bathrooms Limited		<b>Tom Shanks</b> Finance Director Blueline Group

“The CEO values them as a co-pilot and business partner – they enjoy working together and tackling problems together.”

“Definitely one to watch in the future – really has something, doesn’t he?”





# A Message From Michael Page & Page Executive

It is the first year we have been involved in the awards and we did not know exactly what to expect – but on behalf of all my colleagues involved from Page Executive and Michael Page Finance, we can wholeheartedly say that it has been a great experience and one we have all enjoyed.

To have had the privilege to hear the experiences and stories of the finance directors across the region has been fascinating and, in reality, confirmed what we already knew – that there is some exceptional finance talent in the North of England helping to deliver some great results and performances for the businesses and people they work with.






Page Group has been recruiting accountants in the region for almost 40 years, so it seems overdue, but also a proud moment for us to be able to play a part in recognising the efforts and achievements of some of the region's finest finance leaders.

**Michael Page**  
**Page Executive**



# Northern Finance Director of the Year Turnaround

Our shortlist comprises finance directors that have implemented meaningful changes to restore their businesses' financial success, often taking affirmative action in implementing new processes and procedures, managing M&A deals, or championing a strategic pivot for business survival.

	<b>Jonathan Blythe</b> Finance Director Bawtry Carbon Limited		<b>Septima Maguire</b> Chief Financial Officer Benchmark Holdings Plc
	<b>James Downey</b> Finance Director LNER (London North Eastern Railway Limited)		<b>Ben Mitchell</b> Chief Financial Officer Yodel
	<b>Martin Hargreaves</b> Chief Financial Officer Victoria Plum Limited		









"What is your biggest achievement? Moving the business from a hand-to-mouth organisation (no money to pay the bills) into a business that is more financially resilient. This is demonstrated through funding secured for capital projects, and over a million pounds worth of funding secured to get the business through the pandemic and make them more resilient."

"They stopped the business going into administration through the re-financing. They did the financing without advisors, which could have been foolish – but it was successful."

# Northern Finance Director of the Year

## Deal of the Year

This category shines a spotlight on the finance directors involved in noteworthy deals over the past year, for the impact these deals have on their business' success.

	<b>Joanne Cowl</b> Chief Financial Officer ABI (UK) Limited		<b>Anders Liljendahl</b> Group Finance Director RAM Tracking
	<b>Martin Elliott</b> Chief Financial Officer Linley & Simpson (The Lomond Group)		<b>Jocelyn Morgan</b> Finance Director Clubhouse Golf
	<b>Iain Jamieson</b> Chief Financial Officer Fairstone Group Limited		<b>David Sadler</b> Finance Director Global Autocare Limited
	<b>Zoe Kirby</b> Global Chief Financial Officer InXpress Global Limited		<b>Darren Woods</b> Chief Financial Officer Freedom Fibre Limited

"The front-guy for anything M&A."

"Proudest moment? The night we signed the deal."



# Celebrating Excellence

## 2021 Special Awards

The winners of our celebrating excellence awards, Pandemic Response Excellence and Diversity & Inclusion Excellence, will be announced at our finalist dinner on October 7 2021.

"The fact that the business had been around for years did not mean it was entitled to survive and it needed to work with its biggest asset – its people."

"What is your proudest moment? Opening the doors after COVID-19 – seeing real-life visitors enjoy the safe environment."

"How would your CEO describe you? Tenacious, determined and passionate."





# Meet Our Judging Panel



## **Victoria Clarke Brown**

CFO, Custom Solar

Victoria Clarke Brown is a qualified accountant and chartered director with more than 20 years' experience in various global manufacturing organisations, with key skills including corporate governance, risk management, stakeholder engagement, positive culture development, cost control, cash generation and development of long-term strategy.

Victoria is CFO of Custom Solar Limited, a member of the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire, chair of the South Yorkshire Committee of the Institute of Directors, NED for the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and was recently appointed as independent chairman of the HLM & LD Employee Ownership Trust.



## **Giles Cheshier**

Corporate Partner, Squire Patton Boggs

Giles Cheshier is a partner in the Global Corporate Practice. He is based in the Manchester office, where he heads up the Manchester Corporate team. Giles' particular expertise covers mergers and acquisitions, IPOs and private equity. He has worked on a number of high-profile private equity and M&A transactions in the local, national and international markets, acting for a wide variety of corporate and institutional clients. Giles also acts as a trusted business adviser to corporate clients on structural, organisational and strategic legal matters, assisting with dynamic growth strategies, defensive cost-cutting measures and everything in between.



## **David Duxbury**

Regional Director, The FD Centre

David Duxbury has been a qualified accountant for 30 years, 10 of which were as a finance director, working predominantly for SMEs within the private, public and charity sectors in the Midlands and the North. His exposure to a wide range of sectors and businesses gave him the breadth and depth of experience needed to launch a successful career as an interim to SMEs and some nationally and internationally recognised businesses. As you would expect with SME experience, David has been involved in all areas of the business, including mergers and acquisitions, restructuring, strategy formulation and execution, system implementation, HR and IT, as well as growing, mentoring and nurturing his finance teams into a first-port-of-call business partner. David has been with the FD Centre for more than five years now, supporting regional SME businesses.



## **John Halton**

Associate Partner – CFO Practice, Page Executive

John Halton is associate partner with Page Executive, and over his 13 years with the group, he has successfully supported a broad range of companies, across all industries, in their search for senior finance professionals.

Originally planning to pursue a career in academia, gaining his Master's degree from Leeds University, John changed direction and after a successful career in sales and account management with an owner managed business, started his career with Page in the Sheffield office in 2008, successfully leading that business through the economic downturn.

Since then, he has managed Michael Page operations across the North West and Midlands, with his current remit being entirely dedicated to executive finance recruitment in the North of England.

**Paul Humphreys**

Various Non-Executive Roles

Paul Humphreys has spent 30 years working at Main Board level, 20 years in listed companies and 10 years in private equity-backed companies. Almost all of this time has been as a group finance director/ chief financial officer, with two to three years as a divisional MD with responsibility for almost every functional portfolio throughout. Paul has experience contributing to fast-growth environments and building shareholder value, through both organic and inorganic routes, with valuable transformational and change experience also involved. Paul has also gained substantial transaction and funding experience, having been involved in almost every type of corporate transaction, on both sides, and multiple funding events (including pure corporate funding, leveraged loans, High Yield Bonds and shareholder transactions).

**Sharon Jandu**

Project Director, Northern Asian Power, Founder of Yorkshire Business Association and Regional Board Member, CBI, IoD, FSB

Sharon Jandu founded the Yorkshire Asian Business Association (YABA), to provide a voice for the Yorkshire business community, and facilitate inward investment and joint trade opportunities between businesses in the North of England and the Indian sub-continent.

Sharon is also project director at the Northern Asian Power-network (NAP), which was established to profile the top 100 Asian business and professional influencers across the North of England. The organisation showcases the Asian wealth and influence across the UK's Northern Powerhouse and indicates the economic achievements of the Asian community.

Sharon also holds a number of board positions with the Confederation of British Industry, Institute of Directors and the Federation of Small Businesses.

**Hannah Kendrick**

Corporate Partner, Squire Patton Boggs

Hannah Kendrick leads the Corporate Practice in Leeds and has a wide range of experience advising both public and private companies on mergers and acquisitions, fundraisings, takeovers, restructurings and reorganisations. She also leads the food and drink sector group for EMEA. Her work varies between UK and cross-border, and she works closely with executives, in-house legal teams and general counsel both in the UK and globally. Hannah also leads the team focusing on the "G" of ESG and is a member of the Regional Advisory Group of the London Stock Exchange plc for the North East.

**Lynn Krige**

CFO, Well Pharmacy

Lynn Krige qualified with Deloitte in South Africa and moved into the construction industry. 1999 brought a move to the UK to work for John Laing for 12 years, progressing through to chief financial officer for the last four years, during which time the group was taken private and transformed to become the PFI specialist. Lynn joined the Speedy Hire plc as CFO, her first listed role, and in 2017, became chief financial officer of the Well Pharmacy Group. Lynn is a trustee on the John Laing Charitable Trust and is a NED and audit chair of U&I plc, an urban regeneration developer.

**Christopher L'Amie**

Head of CFO Practice Northern England and Scotland, Page Executive

Chris L'Amie, MREC CertRP is a qualified executive recruiter with more than 20 years' expertise in senior appointments.

Chris specialises in senior financial leadership appointments for organisations based in the North West of England and Scotland. This has been his area of focus for both retained and senior contingent assignments for 16 of his 20 years' experience (Chris managed executive level appointments across the Middle East and Africa for four years between 2013 and 2017).

Chris has successfully supported more than 500 different organisations over the past 20 years, from board level appointments in Fortune 500 organisations, through to SMEs in the regional North West market. Chris combines a thorough executive search methodology to each role, while utilising his extensive North West network, where he continually meets the best finance leaders across the North of England (and interviews internationally, where appropriate).

**Gary Speakman**

Non-Executive Chairman, Caledonian Leisure Limited

Gary Speakman has enjoyed a long career working as a chief financial officer, chief operating officer and chief executive officer for some of the UK's most well-known brands. In more recent years, he has utilised his wide-ranging experiences across PE-backed, privately owned and full FTSE-listed businesses, to transition to a portfolio of NED, trustee and investor roles, including chairman of Caledonian Leisure Limited

**Neil Thompson**

Group CFO, Manchester Airport Group

Neil Thompson has spent the last 10 years as CFO of the Manchester Airports Group (MAG), as part of the exec team that successfully trebled MAG earnings and expanded into new digital, international and airport city property divisions, together with developing an award-winning CSR programme and investing in vital infrastructure to enable sustainable long-term growth.

Prior to MAG, Neil worked in international listed businesses ALSTOM and the MAN Group, with responsibility for operations across the globe. Neil trained as a chartered accountant in Manchester and spent seven years primarily working on M&A transactions, latterly for PwC. Over his career to date, he has successfully raised more than £3 billion in bank and listed bond financing and £1.5 billion in equity funding over multiple transactions, together with leading on numerous M&A acquisitions.

Neil has supported the region in various non-executive roles throughout his career to date, including on the North West Development Agency, NHS Manchester and, most recently, Manchester Met University.

Neil is a prior winner at the awards, taking the Outstanding Achievement award in 2013, following the successful completion of a transformational M&A deal for MAG.

**Philip Turnbull**

FAIA FCCA FCPA, CEO, Association of International Accountants

Philip Turnbull is a qualified accountant and experienced accounting professional. He was appointed AIA chief executive officer in 1999, and held the position of member of the AIA's council from 1995 to 2015. Prior to becoming chief executive officer, Philip held the role of AIA director of development and training for a number of years.

During his tenure, Philip has overseen the amalgamation of the AIA and the Institute of Company Accountants, a move that has resulted in many benefits for members and students of both bodies.

# Comprehensive Shortlist

Full Name	Title	Organisation	Categories
<b>Craig Tomkinson</b>	Group Chief Financial Officer	2 Sisters Food Group	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company Over £100 Million Northern Finance Director of the Year – Leadership
<b>Colin Boyle</b>	Group Finance Director	2M Group Limited	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Growth/Scale Up
<b>Joanne Cowl</b>	Chief Financial Officer	ABI (UK) Limited	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Deal of the Year
<b>Claire Dickinson</b>	Group Finance Director	AES Engineering Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Listed Company Best Northern Finance Director of a Global Company
<b>David Goulden</b>	Chief Financial Officer	APS Group	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Growth/Scale Up Northern Finance Director of the Year – Leadership
<b>Tim Knockton</b>	Finance Director	Arc Inspirations Limited	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Innovation Northern Finance Director of the Year – Pandemic Response Excellence
<b>Jayne Cottam</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Assura PLC	Best Northern Finance Director of a Listed Company Northern Finance Director of the Year – Leadership
<b>Jonathan Blythe</b>	Finance Director	Bawtry Carbon Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company up to £25 Million Best Northern Finance Director of a Private Equity-backed Company Northern Finance Director of the Year – One to Watch Northern Finance Director of the Year – Turnaround



Full Name	Title	Organisation	Categories
<b>Septima Maguire</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Benchmark Holdings Plc	Best Northern Finance Director of a Listed Company Best Northern Finance Director of a Global Company Northern Finance Director of the Year – Turnaround
<b>Paul Cogan</b>	Group Finance & Resources Director	Bettys & Taylors Group	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company Over £100 Million Northern Finance Director of the Year – Leadership Northern Finance Director of the Year – Pandemic Response Excellence
<b>Christina Geary</b>	Finance Director	BJSS	Northern Finance Director of the Year – One to Watch
<b>Tom Shanks</b>	Finance Director	Blueline Group	Northern Finance Director of the Year – One to Watch
<b>Mark Pownall</b>	Chief Financial Officer	CF Booth Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company Over £100 Million
<b>Marc Jones</b>	Finance Director	Clifton Trade Bathrooms Limited	Northern Finance Director of the Year – One to Watch
<b>Jocelyn Morgan</b>	Finance Director	Clubhouse Golf	Best Northern Finance Director of a Private Equity-backed Company Northern Finance Director of the Year – Growth/Scale Up Northern Finance Director of the Year – Deal of the Year
<b>Ross Faith</b>	Chief Financial Officer	E.H. Booth & Co. Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company Over £100 Million Northern Finance Director of the Year – Leadership
<b>Andrew Gale</b>	Group Finance Director	EVO Business Supplies, Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company Over £100 Million
<b>Iain Jamieson</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Fairstone Group Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Private Equity-backed Company Northern Finance Director of the Year – Deal of the Year

Full Name	Title	Organisation	Categories
<b>Ria Murphy</b>	Finance Director	Fanatics (International) Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Global Company  Northern Finance Director of the Year – Diversity & Inclusion Excellence
<b>Darren Woods</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Freedom Fibre Limited	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Deal of the Year
<b>David Sadler</b>	Finance Director	Global Autocare Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company £25 Million – £100 Million  Northern Finance Director of the Year – Deal of the Year
<b>Sadie Alton</b>	Finance Director	Infinity Works Consulting Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company £25 Million – £100 Million
<b>Simon Owers</b>	Group Chief Financial Officer	International Leisure Group	Best Northern Finance Director of a Private Equity-backed Company
<b>Zoe Kirby</b>	Global Chief Financial Officer	InXpress Global Limited	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Deal of the Year
<b>Martin Elliott</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Linley & Simpson (The Lomond Group)	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company up to £25 Million  Best Northern Finance Director of a Private Equity-backed Company  Northern Finance Director of the Year – Growth/Scale Up  Northern Finance Director of the Year – Deal of the Year
<b>Gareth Lloyd</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Moda Furnishings Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company up to £25 Million  Northern Finance Director of the Year – Innovation
<b>Mike Iddon</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Pets at Home	Best Northern Finance Director of a Listed Company
<b>Robert Atkin</b>	Group Finance Director	PFF Packaging Group Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company £25 Million – £100 Million  Northern Finance Director of the Year – Innovation
<b>Anders Liljendahl</b>	Group Finance Director	RAM Tracking	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company up to £25 Million  Northern Finance Director of the Year – Deal of the Year

Full Name	Title	Organisation	Categories
<b>Clair Scott</b>	Finance Director	Richard Wellock & Sons Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company £25 Million – £100 Million Northern Finance Director of the Year – Innovation Northern Finance Director of the Year – One to Watch
<b>Matthew Jowett</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Sigmat Limited	Northern Finance Director of the Year – One to Watch
<b>Leigh Manton</b>	Finance Director	SYNETIQ Limited	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Growth/ Scale Up
<b>Rich Winsland</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Tactus	Best Northern Finance Director of a Private Equity-backed Company Northern Finance Director of the Year – Growth/Scale Up Northern Finance Director of the Year – Pandemic Response Excellence
<b>Rachel Emmott</b>	Finance Director and Chief Operating Officer	Thackray Museum of Medicine	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Pandemic Response Excellence
<b>Andrew Lightowler</b>	Chief Financial Officer	thebigword Group Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company £25 Million – £100 Million
<b>David Thornton</b>	Finance Director	Tracsis plc	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company up to £25 Million
<b>Mark Horsey</b>	UK Chief Financial Officer	TransUnion	Best Northern Finance Director of a Global Company
<b>Martin Hargreaves</b>	Chief Financial Officer	Victoria Plum Limited	Best Northern Finance Director of a Company £25 Million – £100 Million Northern Finance Director of the Year – Turnaround
<b>Susan Allan</b>	Group Finance Director	Willerby Group Limited	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Innovation
<b>Ben Mitchell</b>	Chief Financial Officer (special mention)	Yodel	Northern Finance Director of the Year – Turnaround
<b>Paul Gibson</b>	Finance Director	Zyro Fisher	Best Northern Finance Director of a Private Equity-backed Company

## Further Information

For more information on the Northern Finance Director Awards, please visit our website:  
[www.northernfdawards.co.uk](http://www.northernfdawards.co.uk).

Get in touch with our sponsorship team:

 <b>Grant Thornton</b>	<b>Alicia Gardner</b> Regions Growth Assistant Manager, Marketing and Business Development D +44 113 200 2627 T +44 113 245 5514 E <a href="mailto:Alicia.J.Gardner@uk.gt.com">Alicia.J.Gardner@uk.gt.com</a>
<b>Michael Page</b> Page Executive	<b>John Halton</b> Associate Partner T +44 161 829 0491 M +44 791 764 5355 E <a href="mailto:JohnHalton@pageexecutive.com">JohnHalton@pageexecutive.com</a>
<b>SQUIRE</b>  <b>PATTON BOGGS</b>	<b>Daniela Douse</b> Business Development Manager T +44 113 284 7042 O +44 113 284 7000 E <a href="mailto:daniela.douse@squirepb.com">daniela.douse@squirepb.com</a>

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