



AWARDS SUMMARY

On August 19, ITR will present its annual ITR Asia-Pacific Tax Awards 2021, celebrating the leading tax and transfer pricing firms and lawyers across the Asia-Pacific region.

There are four broad set of awards: national firm of the year, regional firm of the year, in-house team of the year, and individual practice leader of the year. ITR will also announce the winning impact deals and cases.

Review period: The 2021 awards will review all the work and achievements that had key milestones or closed during the research period – February 1 2020 to January 31 2021. For impact deal and case awards, deals/cases must have closed between February 1 2020 and January 31 2021.

Research overview

A single, multi-use submission form will provide the basis for the both the awards research. To have your work and achievements reviewed for the awards, please submit the [Submission Form](#) through the [Online Submission Portal](#).

The submission deadline is March 31 2021.

As well as reviewing the written submissions, which form a vital part of the awards research, the awards team will also be speaking with leading practitioners and in-house counsel across the market.

For any queries about the research, please contact: james.wilson@legalmediagroup.com

You may include confidential matters on the submission form, but please mark all confidential information clearly in **RED** on the form. All information will be used *strictly* for research purposes only. We are also happy to accept submissions in alternative document format, but please take care to note the information that the form asks for.

The ITR Asia-Pacific Tax Awards will recognise:

- **National /Jurisdiction Tax Firm of the Year**
- **Regional Tax Firm of the Year**
- **Impact Deal and Case Awards**
- **Practice Leaders of the Year**
- **In-house Team / Individuals of the Year**

CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA

Judging process

The awards will be based primarily on deals/cases/matters, judged according to four metrics:

- **Size:** not conclusive, though it does indicate what a tax team is capable of handling
- **Innovation:** did a firm's advice show something more than the straightforward answer that is commonly used? Did the matter address tax issues that were novel or untested? What ingenuity did the firm show? Has the work set any precedents?
- **Complexity:** did the matter have complexities that were out of the ordinary? What specialist attributes did a firm draw from to solve them?
- **Impact:** what effect did the matter have on the client's business? Was it transformative? What has the conclusion of the matter enabled the client to achieve? Did the work have a wider impact than just for the client?

All award decisions are made by an internal panel consisting of awards researchers and the ITR editors. All decisions are made independently. Throughout the research, the team will review all written submissions and speak with leading practitioners and in-house counsel.

National / Jurisdiction Tax Firm of the Year

National firm of the year awards will be divided into:

- **Tax Firm of the Year:** for the firm that demonstrates exceptional performance and impact in advising clients on direct and indirect tax matters in its jurisdiction, as part of cross-border matters or as domestic deals, cases or projects.
- **Transfer Pricing Firm of the Year:** for the firm that demonstrates exceptional performance and impact in advising clients on transfer pricing matters.
- **Tax Disputes Firm of the Year:** for the firm that has displayed outstanding achievement in advising clients on tax litigation and dispute resolution.

These awards will be given for the following jurisdictions:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| • Australia | • New Zealand |
| • Cambodia* | • Pakistan* |
| • China | • Philippines |
| • Hong Kong SAR | • Singapore |
| • India | • South Korea |
| • Indonesia | • Sri Lanka* |
| • Japan | • Taiwan |
| • Malaysia | • Thailand |
| • Myanmar* | • Vietnam |

*In these jurisdictions there will only be a single, overall Tax Firm of the Year award.

A key basis for the awards will be Section 2 "Deal/case highlights" of the submission form. The team will also conduct broader market research.

Regional Tax Firm of the Year

The regional awards will go to firms that displayed outstanding strength and depth in the relevant Asia-Pacific-wide category. The awards will be based on the work handled by firms that closed or had key milestones during the February 1 2020 – January 31 2021 period.

Section 2 “Deal/case highlights” of the submission form will provide a vital basis for judging all these award categories, as well as the further research conducted by the team. As noted below, for some categories, the submission form has a dedicated Section 3 “Special award categories” area.

The award categories are:

- Asia-Pacific Diversity & Inclusion Firm of the Year*
- Best Newcomer Firm of the Year in Asia-Pacific
- US Corporate Tax Team of the Year in Asia-Pacific *
- Asia-Pacific Regional Tax Law Firm of the Year
- International Tax Law Firm of the Year in Asia-Pacific
- Asia-Pacific Global Executive Mobility Tax Firm of the Year*
- Asia-Pacific Withholding Tax Firm of the Year*
- Asia-Pacific Tax Innovator of the Year*
- Asia-Pacific Tax Technology Firm of the Year*
- Asia-Pacific Tax Compliance and Reporting Firm of the Year*
- Asia-Pacific Tax Policy Firm of the Year*
- Asia-Pacific Tax Transactions Firm of the Year
- Asia-Pacific Tax Litigation and Disputes Firm of the Year
- Asia-Pacific Indirect Tax Firm of the Year
- Asia-Pacific Transfer Pricing Firm of the Year
- Asia-Pacific Tax Firm of the Year

*These awards have a dedicated Section 3 “Special award categories” on the submission form.

The specific criteria for the above awards are:

- **Asia-Pacific diversity & inclusion award:** for the top tax team across the region that has used a diverse range of people across its tax team to complete goals to further diversity through tax matters. The evaluation will consider how a firm has embraced diversity and inclusion in the workplace, looking at balance and policies across gender, culture, LGBT, disabilities and social class. Where possible, please include examples of programs and statistics. (Submission form, Section 3)
- **Asia-Pacific best newcomer award:** for any international tax practice that has been set up in any jurisdiction across the Asia-Pacific region in the past five years (incorporation no earlier than 2016).
- **US corporate tax team in Asia-Pacific award:** for the tax team in a US firm that demonstrates an exceptional ability to deliver complex, innovative tax advice in cross-border corporate tax matters during the review period. (Submission form, Section 3)
- **Asia-Pacific regional tax firm award:** for the firm that demonstrate an exceptional ability to deliver complex, innovative tax advice in cross-border or domestic tax, indirect tax and TP

work during the review period. The firm must be an independent national firm headquartered in the region.

- **International tax firm in Asia-Pacific award:** for the international law firm headquartered outside Asia-Pacific that has displayed outstanding strength in tax work to clients from offices across Asia-Pacific in the review period.
- **Asia-Pacific global executive mobility tax firm award:** for the team at the firm that has displayed outstanding strength when offering advice on the taxation of employer services and executive mobility in the awards period. (Submission form, Section 3)
- **Asia-Pacific withholding tax firm award:** for the team at the firm that has displayed outstanding strength and depth in its withholding tax work in the awards period.
- **Asia-Pacific innovator award:** for the firm that has used an innovative offline or online approach or solution to deal with a tax matter, or explain the practicalities of tax and increase the understanding of clients. (Submission form, Section 3)
- **Asia-Pacific tax technology award:** for the firm that has used/implemented/integrated new technology-based processes, systems or tools to improve the efficiency of a tax team. (Submission form, Section 3)
- **Asia-Pacific compliance and reporting award:** for the firm that has displayed exceptional strength in tax compliance and reporting matters in the awards period. (Submission form, Section 3)
- **Asia-Pacific policy award:** for the firm that has contributed most to the development of national tax policy in consultations with the government between February 1 2020 - January 31 2021. Results of the contributions should be included in the submission. (Submission form, Section 3)
- **Asia-Pacific transactions award:** for the firm that has demonstrated the ability to deliver complex, innovative tax advice in a cross-border transaction(s) in the awards period.
- **Asia-Pacific litigation & disputes award:** recognising a firm's achievements in resolving / concluding disputes decided by courts in Asia-Pacific. To be considered, the final decision on proceedings, after all appeals, must have been delivered before January 31 2021.
- **Asia-Pacific indirect tax award:** for the firm that has demonstrated an exceptional ability to deliver complex, innovative tax advice in cross-border or domestic indirect tax work during the review period.
- **Asia-Pacific transfer pricing award:** for the firm that has demonstrated an exceptional ability to deliver complex, innovative tax advice in cross-border or domestic TP work during the review period.
- **Asia-Pacific tax firm award:** for the firm that has displayed outstanding strength and depth across all categories. This is a best of the best award across all tax firms.

Impact Deal and Case Awards

ITR will award the most impactful deals and cases that closed between February 1 2020 and January 31 2021. The deal and case highlights from the submissions will form the basis of this research. The ITR team will also review other sources and consult leading practitioners and in-house counsel.

The four key metrics for judging deals/cases are:

- **Size:** not conclusive, though it does indicate what a tax team is capable of handling
- **Innovation:** did a firm's advice show something more than the straightforward answer that is commonly used? Did the matter address tax issues that were novel or untested? What ingenuity did the firm show? Has the work set any precedents?
- **Complexity:** did the matter have complexities that were out of the ordinary? What specialist attributes did a firm draw from to solve them?
- **Impact:** what effect did the matter have on the client's business? Was it transformative? What has the conclusion of the matter enabled the client to achieve? Did the work have a wider impact than just for the client?

Practice Leader of the Year (individual)

These awards will be given to the private practitioner that can demonstrate an outstanding record of achievement in leading their team in complex and innovative work for clients in the relevant areas: tax, transfer pricing, indirect tax, and litigation and disputes. The awards will also reflect the development of their team's practice in the relevant area.

To increase the competitive edge of the award, the winner from the previous year will be excluded from the following year's shortlist.

The awards will prioritise work example and developments that closed or had key milestones between February 1 2020 – January 31 2021. The research team will consider lawyers that led on case/deal highlights and written nominations in Section 3 "Special award categories" of the submission form.

The award categories for practice leaders will be:

- Asia-Pacific Tax Practice Leader of the Year
- Asia-Pacific Transfer Pricing Practice Leader of the Year
- Asia-Pacific Tax Litigation and Disputes Practice Leader of the Year
- Asia-Pacific Indirect Tax Practice Leader of the Year

In-house Team / Individual of the Year

There is a dedicated submission form for all in-house team awards. Awards will be based on the work handled by a team / individual between February 1 2020 and January 31 2021. The awards will recognise exceptional work on direct tax, transfer pricing, indirect tax and tax technology matters.

The tax teams must be based in Asia-Pacific. Teams may be part of a wider tax team, or work across several tax areas, but the examples presented must focus on the specific award category.

There will be in-house awards recognising the achievements of both in-house tax teams and individual in-house counsel. The in-house team awards will include the following categories:

- In-house Tax Team of the Year
- In-house Transfer Pricing Team of the Year
- In-house Indirect Tax Team of the Year
- In-house Diversity & Inclusion Team of the Year
- In-house Compliance and Reporting Team of the Year

Individual awards will be based on an in-house tax director's work. Eligible candidates will demonstrate an outstanding record of achievement in leading their team in work that made a material difference to their company; and/or in the development of tax through their representation in industry associations or participation in government consultations. Individual in-house awards will cover the following categories:

- In-house Tax Director of the Year
- In-house Transfer Pricing Director of the Year
- In-house Indirect Tax Director of the Year
- Tax Official of the Year