



Shape the future  
with confidence

2025 LAUNCH BROCHURE



# contents

Introduction	3
What's Involved?	6
CEO Retreat	15
EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year™	17
EY Private	18
Our Team	21
Our Sponsors	22



# Introduction

The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ is a world-class development programme that supports, advises, and connects a community of entrepreneurs, championing entrepreneurship throughout the island of Ireland.

The EOY programme not only ensures national and international recognition for successful finalists and alumni, but also provides an invaluable network and business development opportunity within a strong and supportive EOY Alumni community with over 650 members.

## Shape The Future With Confidence

Shape The Future With Confidence is the theme for the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Ireland 2025 programme, encapsulating the spirit of innovation and resilience that defines the entrepreneurial journey. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and dynamic market shifts, this theme underscores the importance of visionary leadership and strategic foresight.

For entrepreneurs, shaping the future with confidence means embracing change, leveraging cutting-edge technologies, and fostering sustainable growth. It is about having the courage to disrupt the status quo, the agility to adapt to new challenges, and the conviction to turn ambitious ideas into reality. As Ireland continues to position itself as a global hub for innovation and entrepreneurship, this theme reflects this island's commitment to nurturing a vibrant ecosystem where bold ideas can flourish.

By championing this theme, EY aims to inspire and empower entrepreneurs to confidently navigate the complexities of the modern business landscape, driving economic growth and societal progress.

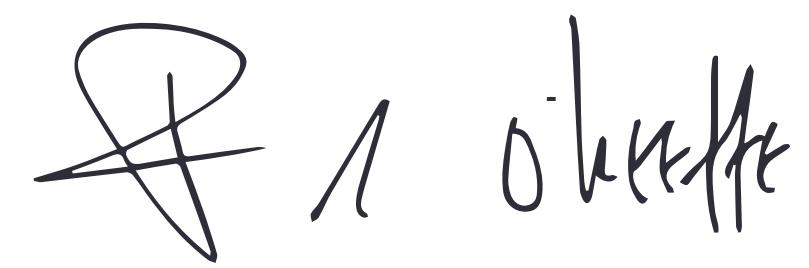
#EOYIreland2025

#ShapeTheFutureWithConfidence

EY Ireland is incredibly proud to support entrepreneurship across the island of Ireland. Through the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme we are honoured to be able to celebrate the incredible world class entrepreneurial talent that exists on our island as we shine a light on their achievements and acclaim their ingenuity, tenacity and talent.

The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme is now in its 28th year and it continues to go from strength to strength each year. The calibre of businesses we see coming through the programme remains nothing short of breath taking and it is with great pride that we welcome a new cohort of world class entrepreneurs into our alumni community each year. Our brilliant alumni community now comprises more than 650 entrepreneurs representing some of the greatest business minds across this Ireland. Collectively they employ more than 250,000 people and generate revenues in excess of €25 billion annually - they really are the life blood of our economy.

This year, the programme celebrates entrepreneurs from across the island of Ireland whose vision and innovation are creating long-term value and helping to shape the future with confidence. These are the fearless innovators who are leading exceptional businesses that are having a positive impact on economies, communities and societies. They consistently push conventional boundaries, think differently and create new solutions that change our collective future for the better.



As Managing Partner of EY Ireland, it is a source of great pride to me that the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme on this island continues to be considered as a stand out in our global network. This is testament to the incredible business leaders who have participated in this programme over the 28 years of its existence and who continue to give so generously of their time and energy to the programme in so many ways. Their courage, curiosity, resilience, and perseverance is nothing short of inspirational to all of us who have the privilege to know and support them on their journey.

I look forward welcoming our 2025 finalists to what promises to be another exciting year for the programme.



**Frank O'Keeffe**  
EY Ireland Managing Partner

in Frank O'Keeffe

66

The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme is exceptional and far exceeded our expectations on every level. Having access to such a dynamic group of successful entrepreneurs coupled with access to the CEO retreat, in person events engagement opportunities provides a unique and extremely beneficial experience. The infectious energy of the finalists and alumni network is unparalleled and is something we feel very privileged to be part of now and in the years to come.

**Sharon Cunningham & Orlaith Ryan**  
Shorla Oncology

2024 Emerging & Overall Winner



# What's Involved

## Initiatives

We passionately believe in promoting entrepreneurship across our island and empowering entrepreneurs to grow their businesses both in Ireland and around the world.

- ▶ As a finalist your prize includes, but is not limited to:
- ▶ Access to peer mentoring and network
- ▶ Media profiling across national & local newspaper and broadcast media
- ▶ Alumni-specific events such as conference days and dinners
- ▶ Finalist specific digital content creation and profiling to a global audience
- ▶ An invitation to join our annual CEO Retreat
- ▶ Bespoke EY Enterprise Evolution Sessions with EY Partners
- ▶ In-depth profiling on our [website](#) and on our social media platforms
- ▶ Business development opportunities with our programme sponsors

By becoming a finalist, you will also be automatically inducted into the Alumni community.

This collection of the best entrepreneurial businessmen and women across the island of Ireland grows every year. The Alumni harnesses their wealth of experience to create a unique culture, sharing disruptive ideas and knowledge with their fellow Alumni, as well as acting as a support network to each other. We are immensely proud that over 75% of our Alumni do business with one another. EY support our alumni through private sector and key topic interactions on an ongoing basis bringing the best entrepreneurial, thought leader and EY global content to the group.



“

Being part of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year programme has been hugely positive experience for me both personally and professionally. It enabled me to connect with so many incredible entrepreneurs from so many different industries and forge lasting friendships and connections with them.

**Brendan Mee**  
MTM Engineering

2024 International Finalist



# Nomination Process

Nomination Period: 16th January 2025 - 27th February 2025

## Eligibility Criteria

- ▶ EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ is an all-island programme.
- ▶ Nominees must own a minimum of 5% of the company (publicly listed companies will be assessed on a case-by-case basis).
- ▶ Nominees must be primarily responsible for the recent performance of the company.
- ▶ Nominees must either be Irish or running a company based on the island of Ireland.
- ▶ Turnover in excess of €1 million or £1 million.
- ▶ The nominee's company must be trading for a minimum of two years (companies with a long R&D process pre-commencement of trading, early-stage life sciences and technology companies and companies that have received significant investment are dealt with on a case-by-case basis).
- ▶ If nominees have previously applied and not been shortlisted to the final 24, our judging panel welcomes and encourages them to apply multiple times. Some of our previous finalists and even winners have successfully been invited into the programme after multiple applications.

## Who Can Nominate?

Anyone, including employees, company advisors and financiers, can nominate a successful entrepreneur, with the entrepreneur's consent. Many of the nominations come from the entrepreneurs themselves.

## Three Step Process

### 1.♦ Nomination

Take a few minutes to fill out a nomination form on our website by 27th February 2025. Nomination forms will be subject to an initial screening process by our independent assessment panel, which may include a follow up call.

### 2.♦ Interview

If successful, an interview will be scheduled with senior EY personnel, and a comprehensive and confidential report will be written on your company for submission to the judges.

### 3.♦ Shortlist

After carefully reviewing these reports, our independent judging panel will meet in April to decide who our 24 Finalists will be for 2025.

# Categories



The categories in our EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme apply to a wide range of businesses across all sectors on the island of Ireland.

These range from fast growth entrepreneurial businesses, established international groups to longstanding family enterprises. This wide range of business leaders and entrepreneurs is the backbone of our alumni community and what makes it such a valuable and unique network.

A winner will be selected from each of the Emerging, Established & International Categories, and of these three winners, our overall winner will be selected.

## **The Sustainability Award**

Recognising the critical importance of innovation leadership in meeting our collective sustainability challenges, we introduced our new Sustainability award to the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Ireland programme in 2022. This award is presented to the finalist who is making the biggest contribution towards environmental sustainability through their business. They are striving to protect our future by providing solutions and taking transformative business actions to address some of the world's most pressing environmental issues and concerns.

# Emerging

Nominees in the Emerging category run businesses that have been trading for a minimum of two years. They are ambitious entrepreneurs who have started a business which is growing quickly. They are high-potential, dynamic, resourceful and 'ones-to-watch' for the future.

# Established

Established, longstanding businesses with a pedigree of growth and innovation, contributing significantly as employers on the Island of Ireland. Including some of our greatest family businesses, our Established finalists are market leaders in their sectors and have made a significant contribution to the economy over a considerable period of time.

# International

The International category consists of entrepreneurs who are global players. Their companies operate in multiple markets across the globe and can be headquartered here in Ireland or overseas.

# 2025 Programme Calendar

## January

**16<sup>th</sup> January**  
Nominations Open  
**27<sup>th</sup> January**  
Interviews Start

## February

**27<sup>th</sup> February**  
Nominations Close

## March

Interviews Continue

## April

- ▶ First Round Judging
  - 24 Finalists Chosen by our Judging Panel
- ▶ 24 Finalists Announced across Irish Media
- ▶ EOY "*Meet the 2025 Finalists*"

## May

CEO Retreat to Japan

## June

EY World Entrepreneur of the Year™ 2025 - Monaco

## June - October

- ▶ Finalists Entrepreneurial Evolution Sessions
- ▶ Finalist Digital Series Filming

## September

- ▶ EOY "Meet the Judges"
- ▶ Female Forum

## October

Final Judging

## November

**27<sup>th</sup> November**  
EY Entrepreneur of the Year Awards™ 2025

# Female Forum

The past few years of the EOY programme have seen the largest cohorts of female finalists enter the programme. We believe that is vital to support and encourage our female alumni members and promote entrepreneurship amongst women in Ireland.

A key element of our EOY Alumni Community is our Female Forum, where our female alumni members and prominent Irish female entrepreneurs and leaders come together to discuss ideas, collaborate, and encourage each other to continue in their pursuit of entrepreneurship.

We are incredibly proud of the achievements of all of our female Alumni Members, and we are always looking out for the best and brightest female entrepreneurs in Ireland to join our ever-expanding alumni community and attend our various female forum events.

#FemaleForum



“

Being selected as a finalist for The EY Entrepreneur of the Year™ programme was hugely positive and rewarding experience. Being able to connect with so many incredible entrepreneurs and forge lasting friendships and connections with them has been fantastic. The alumni network is incredible source of support, advice, and inspiration. The collective experience and business expertise of these brilliant business minds is beyond compare. Being part of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year programme has been hugely positive experience for us and one that we would recommend to any entrepreneur.

**Rosaleen and Maxine Hyde**  
Ballymaloe Foods

2024 International Finalists



# Judging Criteria

Our panel of independent judges is at the heart of the integrity of EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™.

When reviewing the judging reports, the judges are looking for evidence of specific entrepreneurial traits listed in the box on the right.

The Independent Judging Panel comprises of previous category and overall winners of The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme, as well as representatives from our sponsor agencies. The Judging Panel is responsible for choosing the shortlist of 24 finalists, as well as selecting the category and overall winners. Please visit our website to find out more about the judging process, criteria, and judging panel.

[More information](#)

- ▶ **Entrepreneurial spirit and vision**
- ▶ **Financial performance**
- ▶ **Innovation**
- ▶ **Strategic direction**
- ▶ **Sustainability and growth in employee numbers**
- ▶ **Industry impact**
- ▶ **Personal integrity/influence**
- ▶ **Risk management**

# CEO Retreat

Along with our gala awards ceremony, the highlight of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ calendar is the CEO Retreat.

[Click here to watch the 2024 CEO Retreat highlights](#)

Our 24 Finalists are invited to join our EOY Alumni on a week-long retreat. This is Ireland's largest unofficial trade mission and offers an exceptional calibre of executive education in the world's top universities, as well as unrivalled networking and business development opportunities for the cohort of Finalists and EOY Alumni who attend. In previous years, our annual CEO Retreats have taken us to many different cities, including Hong Kong, Vancouver, Austin & New York, Singapore and in 2024 we visited Cape Town, South Africa.

Year on year, the CEO Retreat has been the source of many new ideas, collaborations, and invaluable relationships for the island's most prestigious entrepreneurs. In 2025 we are excited to head to Tokyo and Kyoto in Japan for our CEO Retreat. As one of the most technologically advanced economies with a strong industrial and large global trade presence it is the ideal destination to create new connections, receive top class executive education and bring back new ideas and inspiration.



“

Being a Finalist in EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2024 was a phenomenal experience. Meeting current and previous finalists introduced me to a large pool of likeminded people who are more than willing to provide support and counsel. The CEO Retreat to South Africa was a brilliant trip. Getting to see another country and how business is done there was a fantastic learning experience. The programme has been hugely positive experience for me and one that I would recommend to any entrepreneur.

**Duncan O'Toole**  
Captured Carbon

2024 Sustainability Award Winner



# EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year™

EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ is a global programme run by EY in over 145 cities across 60 countries worldwide. Every June, individual country winners come together in Monte Carlo for the EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Awards.



Sam Moffett, Managing Director of Moffett Automated Storage represented Ireland at the EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Awards in June 2024 in Monaco. Vellayan Subbiah, Chairperson of Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Co. Ltd. And Executive Vice-Chairman of Tube Investments Of India was named EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year™ 2024. The interconnection between all of the global EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programmes is another example of the invaluable benefits of the programme.

 This year, we are delighted that Sharon Cunningham and Orlaith Ryan of Shorla Oncology will be representing Ireland in June 2025. We are excited to be able to share more information with you about this event in the coming months.

Previous speakers at EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year™ include, singer-songwriter, humanitarian & philanthropist Bono, Martha Stewart of Martha Stewart Omnimedia; Paul Polman of Unilever; Alma Clooney, International Human Rights Attorney; Dan Schulman President and CEO of PayPal; and Felix Baumgartner, Pilot, Red Bull Stratos, to name but a few.

# EY Private

EY has unrivalled global experience of advising and supporting the world's leading private businesses, from Silicon Valley to multi-generational family businesses to our best-in-class EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme. This is the core focus of our global firm.

As a leader of a private or family business, you have the drive to challenge and grow your business to its full potential. As globally connected advisors who appreciate your ownership mindset, our EY Private specialists and teams are dedicated to helping you drive your strategy and are personally invested in supporting private businesses reach their true potential. In EY we are, 'Advisors to the Ambitious'.

[More information](#)



“

The EY Entrepreneur of the Year™ programme is such a positive and rewarding experience that offers so many benefits to participating entrepreneurs.

I learned so much from the programme and forged friendships and connections with inspirational entrepreneurs from a wide range of industries.

The alumni network continues to be an invaluable support group to me today and their collective experience and business expertise is second to none.

I wholeheartedly recommend this programme and I encourage any entrepreneurs who may be considering getting involved to go for it!

**Caroline Dunlea**

CEO & Co-Founder, Core Optimisation

2022 Emerging Finalist



For the past 28 years EY has been proud to acclaim, drive and support entrepreneurship across the island of Ireland through the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme. The volume, variety and calibre of the nominations we receive each year continues to exceed expectations and I am certain that 2025 will prove no different.

At a time of unprecedented commercial, technological, social and scientific progress Irish entrepreneurs are really seizing the moment and impacting communities and markets not only here in Ireland but across the globe. As a small island nation Ireland is a giant of entrepreneurship and Irish entrepreneurs are widely regarded as global leaders and pioneers in many sectors.

Our EOY Alumni community continues to flourish and has grown to include more than 650 of Ireland leading entrepreneurs who between them employ more than 250,000 people and generate revenues of more than €25 billion. Their impact is hugely significant. As they continue to scale and innovate the potential for what these remarkable business leaders will achieve into the future is truly immense.

One of the greatest strengths of Ireland's entrepreneurial ecosystem is its diverse composition. For this reason, we are actively seeking and encouraging nominations from entrepreneurs of all ages, backgrounds and industries across the island of Ireland. 24 finalists will be selected for this year's programme. As finalists they will participate in

an exciting strategic growth programme over a 10-month period, including a week-long CEO Retreat to Japan in May. This group will also be welcomed into our acclaimed alumni community where they will have the opportunity to learn from and be inspired by many of Ireland's leading entrepreneurs who remain the heartbeat of the programme.

As Partner Lead for the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Ireland programme it is a genuine privilege for me to celebrate and support these extraordinary entrepreneurs as they pursue their exceptional endeavours. I look forward to welcoming this year's finalists into our programme and having them contribute to the powerhouse that is the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year programme network both in Ireland and across the globe.

*Roger Wallace*



**Roger Wallace**

Head of Assurance, Partner Lead,  
EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Programme

**in** Roger Wallace

# EOY Team

The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ team are the energy and drive responsible for delivering the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme. Contact us on [eoym@ie.ey.com](mailto:eoym@ie.ey.com) if you have any questions, want to find out more or need assistance during the nomination process.



**Eimear McCrann**, Director  
EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ & EY Private  
+353 86 065 2598  
[eimear.mccrann@ie.ey.com](mailto:eimear.mccrann@ie.ey.com)



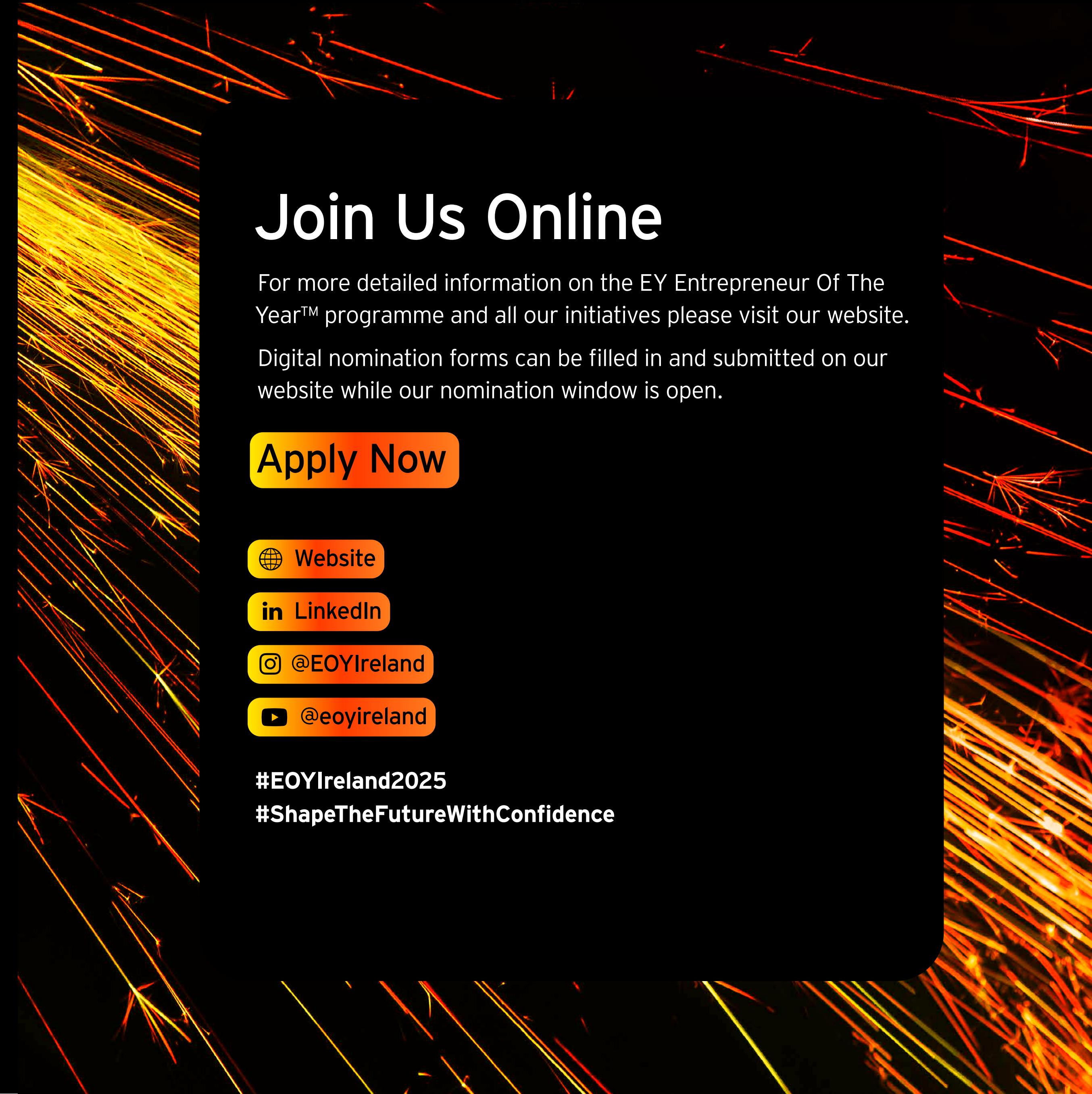
**Katie Donnelly**, Assistant Manager  
EY Entrepreneur Of The Year  
+353 87 348 4534  
[katie.donnelly@ie.ey.com](mailto:katie.donnelly@ie.ey.com)



**Anne Marie Butler**, Manager  
EY Entrepreneur of the Year™  
+353 87 654 6739  
[anne.marie.butler@ie.ey.com](mailto:anne.marie.butler@ie.ey.com)



**Gillian Ladden**, Senior Associate  
EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™  
+353 87 446 9975  
[gillian.ladden@ie.ey.com](mailto:gillian.ladden@ie.ey.com)



## Join Us Online

For more detailed information on the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme and all our initiatives please visit our website.

Digital nomination forms can be filled in and submitted on our website while our nomination window is open.

[Apply Now](#)

 [Website](#)

 [LinkedIn](#)

 [@EOYIreland](#)

 [@eoyireland](#)

**#EOYIreland2025**

**#ShapeTheFutureWithConfidence**

# Sponsors

## Premium Corporate Partner

### Julius Bär

For over 130 years, Julius Baer has helped individuals and families grow and preserve their wealth. Throughout this time, we have demonstrated the same pioneering mind-set as many of our clients, with our entrepreneurial spirit stemming from our rich family heritage as a private bank. Thanks to our ongoing international expansion, we have the unique ability to provide our private clients with truly global expertise, delivered at a local level. We build our relationships based on trust. In today's challenging and often uncertain economic and political climate, our investment approach is engineered to provide an attractive return while taking into account each individual's unique needs approach to risk. We offer a wide range of investment and wealth planning services, meaning we can provide a tailored solution based on individual needs. We blend heritage and stability with a forward thinking, innovative approach. This is demonstrated not only in how we manage our clients' wealth, but also by how we support the next generation.

[Website](#)

[@juliusbaer](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

## Government Agency Sponsors



As the regional business development agency, Invest Northern Ireland's role is to grow the local economy. It does this by supporting new and existing businesses to innovate, create jobs, and sell outside Northern Ireland, whilst also attracting new investment to the region. Invest NI provides strong government support for businesses as part of the Department for the Economy by delivering the Government's economic development strategies. Invest Northern Ireland has been part of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ since day one and have provided an incredible amount of support throughout the years.

[Website](#)

[@InvestNI\\_Europe](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

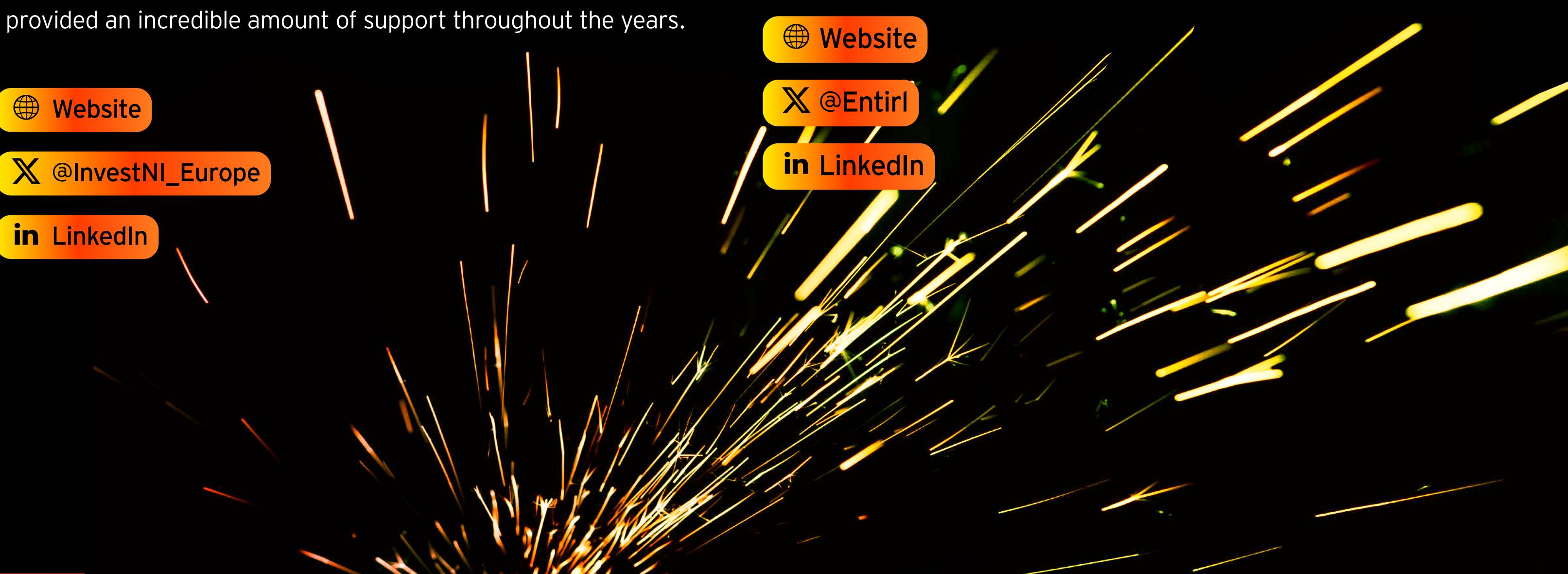


Enterprise Ireland is the Irish government agency responsible for the development and growth of Irish companies internationally in order to grow exports and jobs. Enterprise Ireland works with entrepreneurs and businesses to help them to start-up, develop innovative products and services, and scale internationally. Since the very beginning, Enterprise Ireland has been an amazing supporter of the programme and has made a huge contribution over the years.

[Website](#)

[@Entirl](#)

[LinkedIn](#)



## Media Supporters

# THE IRISH TIMES

The Irish Times is Ireland's leading quality news media publisher. Founded in 1859, it enjoys a weekly readership of 1.2 million in print and online.

The Irish Times is an authoritative and independent commentator and analyst of events nationally and internationally in print, on mobile and online. It is the only Irish news organisation with a network of correspondents around the world, who provide a view of the world through Irish eyes.

The Irish Times Group is the owner of two national titles, The Irish Times and the Irish Examiner, seven regional newspapers, two radio stations, MyHome.ie and a number of other digital assets. It is also the largest contract printer in Ireland.

Governed by a Trust to guarantee its independence and uphold its ethos of quality and trusted content, The Irish Times Group is the largest Irish-owned news media publisher on the island.

 [Website](#)

 [@IrishTimes](#)

 [LinkedIn](#)



**EY | Building a better working world**

**EY exists to build a better working world, helping to create long-term value for clients, people and society and build trust in the capital markets.**

**Enabled by data and technology, diverse EY teams in over 150 countries provide trust through assurance and help clients grow, transform and operate.**

**Working across Assurance, Consulting, Law, Strategy, Tax and Transactions, EY teams ask better questions to find new answers for the complex issues facing our world today.**

EY refers to the global organisation, and may refer to one or more, of the member firms of Ernst & Young Global Limited, each of which is a separate legal entity. Ernst & Young Global Limited, a UK company limited by guarantee, does not provide services to clients. Information about how EY collects and uses personal data and a description of the rights individuals have under data protection legislation are available via [ey.com/privacy](http://ey.com/privacy). EY member firms do not practice law where prohibited by local laws. For more information about our organisation, please visit [ey.com](http://ey.com).

© 2025 Ernst & Young. Published in Ireland. All Rights Reserved.

P\_26531.indd 01/25. Produced by Creative (Ireland)

ED none

The Irish firm Ernst & Young is a member practice of Ernst & Young Global Limited. It is authorised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland to carry on investment business in the Republic of Ireland. Ernst & Young, Harcourt Centre, Harcourt Street, Dublin 2, Ireland.

Information in this publication is intended to provide only a general outline of the subjects covered. It should neither be regarded as comprehensive nor sufficient for making decisions, nor should it be used in place of professional advice. Ernst & Young accepts no responsibility for any loss arising from any action taken or not taken by anyone using this material.

**ey.com**