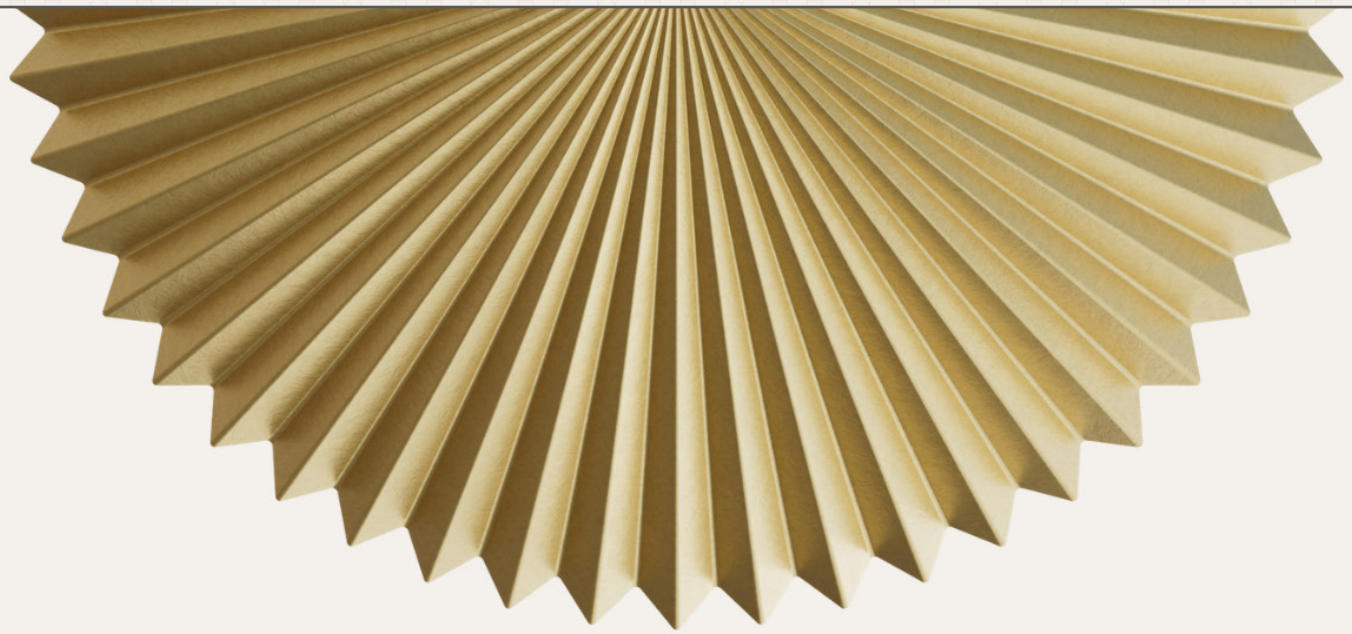

ENTRY GUIDE

POPAI
UK & IRELAND
AWARDS
2027

Welcome

The POPAI Awards celebrate creativity, innovation and excellence in-store and throughout the shopper experience. They are the ultimate showcase for those dedicated to achieving excellence in shopper engagement – a hallmark that provides the benchmark for success and the catalyst for continuous improvement.

This guide contains everything you need to know about entering the POPAI Awards: **entry criteria, categories, key dates, details of the judging process** and more.

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How to write a winning entry

When writing a winning entry for the POPAI Awards, take the time to craft a clear, complete, and visually engaging submission. You can save your entry online and return later to refine and finalise it, ensuring every detail is accurate and compelling.

Remember that judges can only assess what you provide, and as they may not be experts in your specific sector, clearly explain any nuances or category-specific details to help them understand your work.

Keep your explanatory text short, clear, and relevant, and ensure that your supporting images showcase high retail standards such as strong merchandising, effective store placement, and good lighting—poor photos never win.

Bring your project to life by including a short video (maximum one minute, mp4 format, up to 15MB each) to help judges experience your work in action, but note that video content cannot be annotated.

Finally, if you use AI tools to help write your case study, do so appropriately. Your authentic insight and clarity are what will make your entry stand out. Even if you are a seasoned entrant, look out for the TIPS in this guide.



2026 Gold Award winners.



2026 Gold Display of the Year winners.

Key Dates

23 April 2027	Entry deadline *(early bird fees apply)*
7 May 2027	Final deadline
May/June 2027	Judging
8 July 2027	Nominations announced
5 October 2027	POPAI Awards 2027 Gala Dinner

Details on entering

How to enter:

- Log in or register at popai.co.uk and select 'Enter now' from the Awards page.
- Fill out your entry title (max 5 words) and select the appropriate category.
- Complete all entry questions with as much relevant information as possible.
- Upload your images (max 5) to highlight key elements of your entry and supporting information (e.g. video, proof of shipment).
- Submit your entry along with full payment.



Tip

You can save your entry online and return at a later date to complete and submit.

What can be entered?

- ✓ Displays, campaigns and projects that were live in the 3 year period up to the awards deadline.
- ✓ Displays, campaigns and projects that haven't previously been entered into the POPAI Awards.
- ✓ Work produced as a response to a genuine brief from a client and not altered for the purpose of the award entry.
- ✓ Work designed or manufactured in the UK or Ireland placed in any market around the world.
- ✓ Work placed in the UK or Ireland regardless of where it was designed or manufactured.
- ✓ Work entered but NOT nominated in the immediately preceding Awards competition, where new information has become available.

Who can enter?

- ✓ POPAI members and non-members.
- ✓ Creative agencies, P-O-P manufacturers, shopper technology specialists, brands and retailers from across the UK & Ireland.
- ✓ Suppliers involved in the technical construction of an entry or just the design (with appropriate permissions).
- ✓ Suppliers from outside the UK & Ireland providing the entry was placed in the UK or Ireland.

You won't be able to enter

- ✗ Work that has won any colour of POPAI award in past competitions.
- ✗ Prototypes that have not been commercially released.
- ✗ Concept designs or works created only for the purpose of entering the awards.
- ✗ Work into multiple categories (apart from Installation Project Management, Sustainability and Innovation add-on)
- ✗ Any mention of the entrant name or logos. This is forbidden and will be removed by POPAI prior to judging.

What you need to enter

1. Client approval.
2. 3-5 photos, at least one of which must have been taken in-store.
3. Answers to the entry questions.
4. Production date / run quantity / unit price / proof of shipment.
5. Payment, which must be received in order for the entry to be judged.

Judging Process



Tip

Remember – judges can only critique entries based on the info they are given.

Your work is judged and nominated for an award according to POPAI's set criteria by a panel of esteemed retail and brand professionals.

Each judge is allocated one or more categories. After a preliminary round of judging online, the panel gathers in London for a final day, with full and fair discussion of initial nomination recommendations before a final selection is made. In the first round, entries are scored based on how well they perform against the set judging criteria.

The identities of individual entrants remain undisclosed to judges throughout the duration of the process.

Judging Criteria

Judges are asked to consider several important factors when deciding on whether an entry is worthy of nomination including how well the entry:

- Meets the brief and satisfies both brand objectives and shopper needs.
- Overcomes practical in-store challenges and demonstrates original thinking.
- Performs in terms of retail impact - was it well executed and relevant to its context?
- Communicates brand and promotional messages.
- Performs against key performance measures.

Using the whole entry case study, along with photos and video, the judges look for evidence to score your entry out of 10 for each of the applicable criteria in your category from the below:

Criteria	Brief & Marketing Objectives	Design	Materials	Touchpoints	Use of Retail Sapce	Branding	Performance	Planning	Complexity	Resource Management	Timescale	Production	Supply Chain	Installation	End of Life
General Categories / Short Run / Wholesale / Merchandising / Window Display	10	10	10		10	10	10								
Store Design / Shop-in-shop & Pop-up	10	10	10		10	10	10								
In-store Campaign, Ominchannel, Retail Media, Experiential	10	10		10	10	10	10								
Retail Technology	10	10		10	10	10	10								
Installation Project Management	10						10	10	10	10	10				
Sustainability		10	10									10	10	10	10

Why enter?

Winning an Award is highly prized by industry clients and suppliers alike and sends the message that your business is dedicated to creativity, innovation and excellence in shopper engagement.

With a broad range of categories, the awards cover all aspects of the industry. Your submission will be judged by an independent panel of esteemed retail and brand professionals.

You will:

- Gain unparalleled recognition for your project on a national and potentially international platform
- Associate with the Award's core values: creativity, innovation and excellence
- Celebrate your team's achievements
- Raise the profile of your business amongst leading retail brands

What do you win?

All nominated entries will receive a POPAI Award. The level of Award given is determined by how well the entry meets the Judging Criteria as set out in this guide. There is no requirement for each Award category to receive a Gold, Silver and/or Bronze Award; first past the post does not automatically equal gold.



BRONZE – Represents a fine example of how to enhance the total shopper experience



SILVER – Standout work, well executed with an original and inspiring idea at its heart



GOLD – The ultimate accolade, reserved for only the most outstanding work that achieves true excellence in terms of idea, context, implementation and retail performance.

Categories (minium run 50+)

Gold winners from these categories will be eligible for the Display of the Year Award, chosen by judges and announced at the Awards dinner.

Click HERE for Entry Questions >>>





Tip

Remember that your entry will not be judged by anyone currently working in that sector. Please describe any nuances/specifics to your entry to assist the judge.



Tip

Make sure your supporting images demonstrate high retail standards such as merchandising and store placement.

Entertainment & Leisure

What can I enter? Toys, games, cinema, sports, fashion, clothing, and other leisure activities.

Grocery & General Merchandise

Permanent Display

What can I enter? Items sold in multiple grocery, convenience stores and forecourts, as well as general merchandise products.

Grocery & General Merchandise

Temporary Display

What can I enter? Items sold in multiple grocery, convenience stores and forecourts, as well as general merchandise products. Single display/ FSDU. In-aisle, in-category, shelf-based or secondary-sited.

Grocery Theatrical

What can I enter? More than just an FSDU, large scale-display often but not always related to a season or event.

Home, Garden & Consumer Electronics

Permanent Display

What can I enter? Home décor, consumer electronics, telecoms, gardening, DIY and automotive.

Home, Garden & Consumer Electronics

Temporary Display

What can I enter? Home décor, consumer electronics, telecoms, gardening, DIY and automotive.

Cosmetics & Beauty

Permanent Display

What can I enter? Make-up, hair care, perfume, aftershave and related products.

Cosmetics & Beauty

Temporary Display

What can I enter? Make-up, hair care, perfume, aftershave and related products.

Pharmacy & Wellbeing

What can I enter? Medicines and first aid, health and wellbeing, skincare, foot care, and dental care.

Retail Services & Signage

What can I enter? Financial services, travel agents, betting shops, out-of-home and other retail outlets where no physical product is sold. Also, signage display from any retail sector.

Categories (no minimum run)

Retail Media

What can I enter?
Campaigns bought and managed through internal retail media centres.

Merchandising

What can I enter? Retail display solutions which offer a technical and/or storage mechanic for the product which may or may not be visible to the shopper.

VM

What can I enter? Creative visual displays and installations that enhance retail environments, communicate brand identity and inspire shoppers.



Tip

Bring your work to life by including a short video in your entry for the judge (max. 1 minute long, mp4 only & max. file size 15MB each)

Click HERE for Entry Questions >>>



* *Entries to the Installation Project Management category are not eligible for the Innovation or Sustainability add-on category.*

Short Run *(max. run 49)* Permanent Display

What can I enter? Displays whose planned rollout was a run of less than 50 units. Permanent display relating to any retail sector. Must not be a trial or a component part of a larger display project.

Short Run *(max. run 49)* Temporary Display

What can I enter? Displays whose planned rollout was a run of less than 50 units. Temporary display relating to any retail sector. Must not be a trial or a component part of a larger display project.

Retail Technology

What can I enter? Entries where the core or sole proposition is a shopper facing, digital solution.

Experiential

What can I enter? Physical activations and events providing an immersive shopper experience.

Wholesale

What can I enter? Temporary or permanent displays which have been placed in to wholesale retail environments.

Shop-in-shop & Pop-up

What can I enter? Display concepts forming a branded retail area as part of a larger store or mall. Also, temporary retail spaces.

Omnichannel

What can I enter? Comprised entirely or predominantly out-ofstore mechanics. Executions across multiple touchpoints. Temporary/seasonal only. ***Cannot include items that are eligible for the Retail Media category.***

In-store Campaign

What can I enter? May include a touchpoint from out-of-store, but is entirely or predominantly comprised of in-store elements. Temporary/ seasonal only. ***Cannot include items that are eligible for the Retail Media category.***

Window Display

What can I enter? Any display designed to be placed into store windows.

Store Design

What can I enter? Whole-store spaces. May include updates, store refreshes and rebrands.

*Installation Project Management

What can I enter? Installation/ implementation and postplacement activities, with entries covering the project management involved in the process of installation along with compliance, maintenance, merchandising and staff training projects.

HoReCa & QSR *(Hotels, Restaurants, Cafés & Quick Service Restaurants)*

What can I enter? Displays and installations that enhance customer experiences and drive engagement within hospitality environments.

Sustainability & Innovation



Tip

Keep explanatory text short, clear and relevant.



Tip

Video content cannot be annoted.



Tip

Poor photos never win. Aim to have a fully merchandised display with good lighting.

Sustainability: Add-on category

Recognising the differences in design and manufacture disciplines, we have now split this category into temporary display and permanent display.

Permanent Display

What can I enter? Permanent display produced with a strong focus on meeting sustainability requirements as an integral part of the overall design, production and implementation process.

Temporary Display

What can I enter? Temporary display produced with a strong focus on meeting sustainability requirements as an integral part of the overall design, production and implementation process.

Innovation: Add-on category

Any entry to the POPAI Awards can also be entered in the Innovation category by answering one extra question.

What can I enter? Work that pushes the boundaries of what can be done with retail display and shopper engagement, using creative thinking, materials and/ or technology in a novel way. The judges will see the main entry and your answer to the question below.

* *Entries to the Installation Project Management category are not eligible for the Innovation or Sustainability add-on category.*

Click HERE for Entry Questions >>>



Supporting Information

Images – minimum of 3 and maximum of 5 *(.jpgs only)* at least one showing the work in-store, or online and NO collages *(maximum file size 10MB each)*.

Proof of shipment – Delivery note or order form *(.pdf)*.

Videos – optional 1 minute video *(.mp4 only & maximum file size 15MB each)*. Must not be a showreel. Supporting video is to demonstrate any functionality, design or aesthetic elements which are not clear in a photo or case study. No words or annotations are allowed on video unless annotating a technical element, e.g. hidden bracket.

Entry Fees

SAVE MORE IF YOU ENTER BEFORE 23 APRIL 2027

POPAI Members
Single entries: £370 before 23 April 2027 / £420 from 26 April 2027
5+ entries: £335 before 23 April 2027 / £385 from 26 April 2027

Non-Members
Single entries: £440 before 23 April 2027 / £490 from 26 April 2027
5+ entries: £400 before 23 April 2027 / £460 from 26 April 2027

Special Categories
Innovation: £190
Sustainability: £190

All prices above are exclusive of VAT

Key Dates

23 April 2027	Entry deadline *(early bird fees apply)*
7 May 2027	Final deadline
May/June 2027	Judging
8 July 2027	Nominations announced
5 October 2027	POPAI Awards 2027 Gala Dinner

Terms & Conditions of Entry

1. Full payment (cheque, credit card (2.5% admin fee), BACS transfer) must be received and cleared before the entry deadline.

2. No entry fees will be refunded under any circumstances.

3. The entrant must, and confirms and warrants that it does, own all the rights and/or have all the permissions needed to enter the entry in the competition on these terms. If POPAI asks it to do so, the entrant must promptly provide whatever proof of those rights and permissions POPAI reasonably requires. The entrant agrees to indemnify POPAI against the consequences of the entrant being in breach of this clause 3.

4. The entrant irrevocably grants POPAI the right: (i) To make and reproduce images and details of the entry, and any images, text and information provided by the entrant, in any form and in any medium (including on POPAI's website and its printed and electronic publications); and (ii) To distribute all the aforesaid, and to display and communicate all the aforesaid to the public, anywhere in the world.

5. If the entrant provides the relevant information with the entry, POPAI will ensure that any images of the entry it reproduces will be accompanied by appropriate detailsof any rights related to the entry.

6. POPAI may move an entry into a different category without prior notice or consultation if it considers the alternative category is more appropriate. No entry fees will be refunded if it does.

7. POPAI reserves the right to combine, divide and change categories, and to create new categories, without prior notice or consultation.

8. POPAI may disqualify the entry if: (i) The entrant has broken any rule set out in the entry form or has breached any of these terms; or (ii) A third party challenges or disputes the entrant's right to enter the entry in the competition and does not withdraw that challenge or dispute when invited to do so. No entry fees will be refunded if POPAI disqualifies the entry.

9. All entries are made available to members on the POPAI website after nominations have been announced. If any entry has sensitive information within the case study, please mark this with **before and after** the text you wish to omit from the public domain. This does not include the cost of a project which is already for judges eyes only and will not be shown on POPAI website.

10. If POPAI establishes that an entrant has broken the awards rules, the offending entry may be disqualified from the Awards.

11. POPAI will not provide feedback on an individual entry's performance in the Awards.

12. POPAI reserves the right to validate any of the entry content.

13. Client permission must have been received for an entry to compete in the POPAI Awards and that the entrant holds copyright for the entry, or have written permission from the copyright holder and in this case that the copyright holder does not require recognition.

14. By entering the POPAI Awards entrants confirm that they will abide by the rules, and that they accept the terms and conditions of entry.

POPAI

PART OF THE shopi GLOBAL NETWORK

Make sure your work receives the recognition that could be in-store.

ENTER NOW >>> Visit popai.co.uk/awards