

# British Council for Offices crowns the UK's best workplaces

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The nation's most outstanding workplaces have been announced. [British Council for Offices](#) (BCO) National Awards go to eight projects, with the life sciences TTP Campus receiving both the *Best of the Best* and the *Corporate Workplace* awards.

Held at the JW Marriott Grosvenor House, London, the BCO's annual awards celebrated designs that demonstrate and drive best practice in office design, fit-out, operation, community engagement and sustainability.

Recognised across the industry, the BCO National Awards programme sets the standard for best-in-class office buildings in the UK. The awards dinner, with guest speaker Clare Balding, attracted over 1,200 key players from the industry.

This year's event also saw the launch of a new category, the *Customer Experience Award*, which will form part of the BCO National Awards from 2025 onwards. The award will celebrate office buildings, business parks and campuses where an outstanding experience is provided to occupiers, their employees, visitors and the wider community.

The winners of the BCO National Awards 2024 are:

- *Best of the Best* – TTP Campus, Cambridgeshire
- *Corporate Workplace* – TTP Campus, Cambridgeshire

*Highly commended* – Grainhouse, London

- *Commercial Workplace* – 1 New Park Square, Edinburgh

*Highly commended* – 8 Bishopsgate, London

*Highly commended* – EQ, Bristol

- *Fit Out of Workplace* – Osborne Clarke by Interaction, Bristol

*Highly commended* – BP London

- *Projects up to 2,500m<sup>2</sup>* – Statkraft, The Garment Factory, Glasgow
- *Refurbished/Recycled Workplace* – Tower Hamlets Town Hall, London
- *Innovation* – The Forge, London
- *ESG* – One Strawberry Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne
- *Test of Time* – Deloitte HQ – 1 New Street Square, London

TTP Campus in Cambridgeshire has been crowned winner of both the Best of the Best and the Corporate Workplace awards. The life sciences campus for The Technology Partnership successfully encourages the cross-pollination of ideas across groups of innovative individuals across research, creativity and analysis to deliver world class solutions and technologies. With collaboration at the forefront, the campus consists of three key spaces – The Hive, The Exchange and The Tech Barn. The Hive sits at the heart of campus, adopting an open-plan layout mixing the various working spaces with lab work benches being placed adjacent to desk-working areas. The building hosts a central amenity area to encourage interaction amongst employees as well as clients, in addition to offering expansive views onto the surrounding landscape with glazed exteriors. The judges particularly commended the TTP Campus for its enhancement of biodiversity that supports the local area and village. The scheme has introduced two large wildlife ponds and planted wildflower meadows for both occupiers and the public to enjoy.

Winning the award for *Commercial Workplace*, 1 New Park Square, Edinburgh, played a crucial role in the regeneration of the business park typology in which it sits. Visitors are welcomed with a colonnaded entrance and an expansive reception area, featuring striking art in the form of a hanging tapestry weaved by a local art organisation. The judges were particularly taken by the pioneering mixed-mode ventilation and wider sustainable approach to materials. The project incorporates a new bakery and bar in addition to sports facilities such as a padel court and multi-use games area to create a vibrant and active environment for occupier wellbeing. By enhancing the public realm offer, the design leverages the new infrastructure and connections into Edinburgh and the wider region.

The Fit Out of Workplace award went to Osborne Clarke by Interaction in Bristol which followed a people and culture initiative, shifting away from the traditional legal workplace model. With a cradle-to-cradle approach to material selection, alongside using photovoltaic panels and greywater recycling, the building achieves the highest sustainability standards. The interior is decorated with an expanse of greenery in the form of interior gardens, a planted atrium and a landscaped roof terrace. The team also sourced local art to help support nearby business while creating a vibrant and lively space for the occupiers.

This year Projects up to 2,500m<sup>2</sup> was awarded to Statkraft, The Garment Factory in Glasgow, which involved the sensitive restoration of a category B listed heritage building, maintaining the character and original features of the existing building while meeting modern occupier needs. The renewal saw the creation of an open-plan office space with a creative, social and warm working environment, and visitors

are met with a colourful wall made from rolls of materials in the reception area. The project team engaged with the future occupiers when making key design decisions, crafting a user-friendly and unique space that embodies the company's heritage. Drawing on local, recycled and recyclable materials, the design was praised by judges for being both sustainable and socially conscious.

Receiving the award for Refurbished/Recycled Workplace, Tower Hamlets Town Hall, London, is an exemplar of what can be achieved through building restoration, demonstrating how workplaces can have a positive impact on surrounding communities. The project carefully modernised the existing Grade II listed building while retaining its strong heritage. The blend of the old Georgian façade and staircases alongside the new interventions create a dramatic building that is both welcoming to the community whilst also serving as a practical and efficient workplace. As a result, Tower Hamlets Town Hall is a new focal point of Whitechapel's regeneration, bringing a historic London landmark back to life and reinvigorating it with a new purpose.

The Innovation award went to The Forge, London, which pioneered an innovative procurement route in championing design for Manufacture (P-DfMA). The project sets a new benchmark for construction by adopting new methods to improve safety as well as reducing waste and increasing build quality, from which its global recognition will help drive the wider industry forward for years to come. Powered only by renewable energy, the final design consists of two buildings with a welcoming landscaped courtyard and high quality amenity areas such as state of the art end-of-trip facilities, while a green roof contributes to its local biodiversity.

The ESG award was given to One Strawberry Lane in Newcastle Upon Tyne, an exemplar of how to deliver on all elements of ESG at the highest level, bringing a positive impact both to its building users and the wider community. While the ground floor is a dedicated community space delivering an array of social value activities for employees, the building also encourages public participation by opening meeting spaces up to voluntary community sector organisations free of charge. The project also gave back to the community during its construction, with 65% of project spending directed to local enterprises. The judges were equally impressed by the building's approach to sustainability, which used an innovative carbon monitoring tool during construction to measure and manage carbon emissions throughout the building's lifecycle.

Deloitte HQ – 1 New Street Square in London won the Test of Time award. The building provides a unique and flexible base for Deloitte, allowing the company to adapt in the space to meet its changing needs. Following the pandemic, Deloitte consolidated from six buildings into two, all while occupying the space. The fit-out has increased the connection to nature, such as through the addition of a greenhouse, as well as providing greater office flexibility for the future with alternative working spaces and seating arrangements to accommodate for fluctuating occupancy. The feature staircase boasting artistic design and a green wall is a new focal point of the office inviting mixing and collaboration across all workers.

Peter Crowther, President of the BCO and Partner at HERE, said: "The winners of this year's BCO Awards highlight the need for offices to not only provide the most efficient and productive working environments but to also contribute to their surrounding cities and communities. As the demand for cutting edge lab spaces continues to rise, it is fitting that TTP Campus received two awards by raising the bar and driving the sector forward with its innovative and unique approach to design, collaboration and creativity. Congratulations to all the winners which each demonstrate a remarkable commitment which goes beyond expectation."

Richard Kauntze, Chief Executive of the BCO, commented: “The aim of the BCO National Awards is to celebrate the achievements and progress within the industry by awarding the best-in-class and most forward thinking office designs. It was a joy to see that this year all the winners showed a unique approach to broadening the positive impact offices can achieve beyond their immediate occupiers. From incorporating local artwork to using advanced monitoring tools and modern methods of construction to drive ESG, this year’s winners set a new standard which I hope will guide the wider industry forwards.”

Mike Burton, Chair of the BCO’s National Judging Panel and Director at AECOM, added: “It was a pleasure to contribute to the selection and decisions in the BCO National Awards once again this year. All entries were of an especially high calibre and it has been truly inspiring to observe and evaluate such an array of commercial excellence. Congratulations to all the well-deserving winners.”

Gold sponsors of this year’s BCO Awards are AECOM and Troup Bywaters + Anders, and Silver sponsor is Quantem. The BCO Awards are in association with EG.