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BEST IN BUILD AWARDS

Award Categories Terms & Conditions



BIFNZ

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General Eligibility:

For the Inaugural Awards Round Only: **2 Year Eligibility Period.**

Work, achievements, products, or initiatives completed by or occurring between 1st October 2024 and 30th September 2026.

This 24 month calendar year window to allow for the fact that the Hardware Awards have been absent from the market for several years.

Thereafter awards will revert to a twelve month award cycle and eligibility period from 1st October and 30th September.

Entry Open & Close Dates

Entries Open	Thursday 1st October
Entries Close	Monday 30th November
Late Entry Deadline	Wednesday 2nd December (subject to late fee)
Scrutineering Period	02 December - 08 December 2026
Judging Period	11 January - 12 February 2027
Finalists Announced	18 Feb 2027

Company Eligibility:

NZ-registered building supply companies, or international building supply brands with a formal operating presence in New Zealand (registered NZ office, NZ-based staff, GST registered, or formal NZ distribution agreement).

Companies must have been trading for a minimum of 12 months prior to the entry close date.

Individual Eligibility

NZ Citizens or Permanent Residents currently employed in the building supply industry. For individual awards (Young Achiever, Lifetime Achievement), nominators must confirm the nominee is aware of and consents to the nomination.

Individuals may self-nominate where appropriate, with written confirmation from their employer or line manager.

Entry Fees

Standard Entry	\$350 + GST per entry
Industry Association Member	10% discount (NZ Steel, Fletchers, Plumbing NZ, etc.)
Multi-Entry Discount	15% off from the 3rd entry onwards (same company)
Late Entry Fee	\$100 + GST surcharge (entries accepted up to one week after official close only)

Late Entries:

Where appropriate late entries will be accepted for one week following the official close date (to Wednesday 2nd December 2026), subject to a \$100 + GST late fee.

No entries are accepted after this date under any circumstances.

The entry fee must be paid in full for each entry before it can proceed for judging. Payment can be made via the entry portal. If a company requires an invoice, this can be requested via awards portal. Payment terms are: Net 7 days

No submissions will proceed for judging until payment has been received.

Scrutineering:

Eligibility of an entry will be confirmed by a Best in Build scrutineer and only submissions deemed to be eligible will progress to judging.

The scrutineer will verify: eligibility period compliance, NZ company registration status, completeness of submission, and absence of conflicts of interest.

For a Category to proceed to judging, a minimum of three (3) eligible entries is required.

In the event that less than three (3) eligible entries are received in any given category, The Best in Build Awards reserves the right to move the entry to another category if deemed eligible by the BIB scrutineer/s.

In the event an alternative category cannot be found, the entry fee will be refunded minus a \$50 administration fee.

NOTE: Judges are not involved in the scrutineering process. A conflicts of interest register will be maintained throughout.

Entry Process:

All entries should be submitted via the Best in Build online awards portal <https://bestinbuild.awardsplatform.com/>

Materials required to complete an entry (General):

All entries should include:

- Completed online entry form
- Company Bio (approx words)
- Evidence narrative (approx 1,000 words)
- High-resolution company logo for Company Categories
- High-resolution Head shot for Individual Categories

See also 'Information Required for Judging' section for each award

Awards and Definitions:

Award 1: Supplier of the Year (Overall excellence in supply chain)

Eligibility:

Any NZ-registered entity whose business involves the sale and distribution of building materials, products, or related services to trade customers (merchants, builders, contractors).

Judging Criteria:

Entries will be assessed against a weighted scoring matrix:

Revenue Growth	20% Year-on-year growth during eligibility period
Customer Service	25% CS scores, testimonials, issue resolution evidence
Supply Chain	35% Reliability, efficiency, availability metrics
Innovation & Improvement	20% Demonstrable initiatives implemented during eligibility period

Information required for Judging:

- Revenue and growth data (verified by accountant or CFO letter).
- Customer satisfaction data (NPS, CSAT, or equivalent).
- Supply chain performance metrics.
- Description of innovation or improvement initiatives.
- Minimum three independent trade customer testimonials.

To ensure a level playing field, revenue bands will be considered:

Small	Annual NZ revenue under \$5M.
Medium	Annual NZ revenue \$5M – \$30M.
Large	Annual NZ revenue over \$30M.

Award 2. Manufacturer of the Year (Best product development & quality)

Eligibility:

Any entity that designs and/or produces building products, whether manufactured in NZ or produced overseas (overseas-made products must hold recognised NZ compliance certification. For example: CodeMark, BRANZ Appraisal, or equivalent). Companies that purely import and rebadge products under a third party's IP should enter the Importer/Distributor of the Year category.

Judging Criteria:

Product innovation and R&D	25% Investment in Innovation and R&D during the eligibility period
Quality and durability	25% Evidence: Testing data, certifications, warranty/returns rates
Market impact	25% Adoption rates and industry feedback
Innovation & Improvement	25% Manufacturing or production efficiency improvements

Information required for Judging:

- Product overview and technical specifications.
- Independent testing results or certifications (BRANZ, CodeMark, ISO, etc.).
- R&D investment data.
- Market adoption evidence.
- Customer or specifier testimonials.

To ensure a level playing field, revenue bands will be considered:

Small	Annual NZ revenue under \$5M.
Medium	Annual NZ revenue \$5M – \$30M.
Large	Annual NZ revenue over \$30M.

Award 3. Importer/Distributor of the Year

Eligibility:

A company whose primary business is importing building products from overseas manufacturers and distributing them within NZ through trade/retail channels.

Judging Criteria:

Compliance with NZ Standards	30% CodeMark / BRANZ (or equivalent) recognition for imported products.
Sourcing & Product-Range Quality	25% Rigour of supplier selection; breadth and quality of the range.
Customer & Sales Support	25% Technical and after-sales support to trade customers.
Market Development & Education	20% Customer education and growth of the NZ market for the category.

Information required for Judging:

- Product portfolio overview.
- Supply chain performance.
- Evidence of NZ standards compliance.
- Customer testimonials and satisfaction data.

Award 4. Merchant Partner of the Year

Eligibility:

A trade-focused merchant, whether part of a national chain, a buying group member, or independently operated, whose primary customer base is trade professionals (builders, contractors, tradespeople) rather than end consumers.

Judging Criteria:

Trade customer service excellence	(30%) NPS, CSAT or equivalent results, testimonials, and evidence of consistent, responsive service to trade account customers.
Product range and availability	(25%) Breadth and depth of the stocked range; in-stock rates and order fulfilment performance on core trade lines.
Staff training and product knowledge	(15%) Investment in staff training and the technical and product knowledge available at the counter and in the field.
Loyalty and support programmes for trade customers	(15%) Trade account benefits, loyalty schemes and value-added services such as estimating, delivery and credit support.
Community or industry engagement	(15%) Support for the local trade community through events, sponsorship, training and industry participation.

Information required for Judging:

- Customer satisfaction data.
- Evidence of trade-specific programmes or initiatives.
- Staff training investment data.
- Minimum three trade customer testimonials.

Judges should consider separating national chains from independent merchants, or applying a normalised customer satisfaction metric that allows fair comparison regardless of scale.

Award 5. Innovation in Building Materials

Eligibility:

Any product used in the construction, renovation, or maintenance of residential or commercial buildings — including structural, cladding, roofing, insulation, interior lining, plumbing, electrical, fixings, and finishing products.

The product should have been introduced to the NZ market within the eligibility period and represent a demonstrable advance either in performance, material science, sustainability, installation efficiency, cost reduction, or safety over existing solutions currently available in the NZ market.

Judging Criteria:

Performance Improvement	(30%) Quantified technical advance over existing solutions.
Installer/User Efficiency	(25%) Time or cost savings for the installer or end user.
Market Adoption	(20%) Evidence of uptake and commercial viability.
Quality & Durability	(25%) Testing data, certifications, warranty terms.

Information required for Judging:

- Product overview and technical specifications.
- Independent test results or certifications.
- Evidence of market introduction during eligibility period.
- Performance and efficiency data.

Award 6. Sustainable Product of the Year.

Eligibility:

Products that demonstrably reduce environmental impact across their lifecycle. This encompasses: Embodied carbon, responsible material sourcing (FSC timber, recycled content), low VOC or chemical content, energy efficiency in use, durability and longevity (reducing replacement frequency), and end-of-life recyclability or compostability.

All building product categories are eligible: Structural, insulation, cladding, interiors, building services.

Judging Criteria:

Verified environmental benefit	(35%) Quantified lifecycle impact reduction — embodied carbon, waste, energy or water — supported by EPD or LCA data.
Independent certification and compliance	(25%) Third-party validation (Declare, Cradle to Cradle, BRANZ, Green Star-recognised or equivalent) and Building Code compliance.
Performance without compromise	(20%) Durability and fitness for purpose equal to or better than the conventional alternative it replaces.
Market impact and scalability	(20%) Adoption during the eligibility period and the potential to shift mainstream practice in the sector.

Information required for Judging:

- Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).
- Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs).
- Third-party certifications: Green Star, Living Building Challenge Declare, Cradle to Cradle, BRANZ assessments, or equivalent.
- Carbon footprint or emissions data.

Award 7. Safety Equipment Award

Eligibility:

'Safety Equipment' is defined as discrete physical products designed to protect individuals on-site for example: PPE, fall arrest systems, guardrails, etc.

Judging Criteria:

Risk Reduction	(35%) Demonstrable reduction in incidents or near-misses.
Ease of Adoption	(20%) Compliance burden, ease of implementation on-site.
Industry Uptake	(20%) Evidence of adoption across multiple sites or companies.
Certification	(25%) Independent testing, Standards compliance (AS/NZS), regulatory recognition.

Information required for Judging:

- Technical specifications.
- Independent testing or certification documentation.
- Incident or near-miss data (before/after if applicable).
- Case studies from on-site use.
- Employer or user testimonials.

Award 8. Technology & Digital Solutions in Construction

Eligibility:

Software, platforms, digital tools, or connected hardware solutions that improve efficiency, safety, quality, or communication in the construction and building supply sector. Includes: estimating/quoting tools, project management platforms, BIM/digital twin tools, supply chain visibility platforms, IoT-enabled equipment, and AI-assisted design or compliance tools.

Judging Criteria:

Efficiency & productivity gains delivered	(30%) Quantified time, cost or quality improvements for users.
NZ market adoption	(25%) Users, companies or projects live during the eligibility period.
Innovation and fitness for the sector	25%) A genuine advance on existing tools for NZ building and supply.
Data security, privacy & reliability	(20%) Credentials, uptime and compliance.

Information required for Judging:

- Product overview and demonstrated functionality.
- Evidence of NZ adoption — number of users, companies, or projects.
- Quantified efficiency, time, or cost savings.
- Data security and privacy compliance credentials.
- User testimonials or case study from a NZ-based project.

Award 9. Best Customer Service, Supplier

Eligibility:

Customer service encompasses: responsiveness, order accuracy, issue resolution, technical/product support, and the overall experience of trade customers. Measured via NPS or CSAT survey results, resolution time data, testimonials, and evidence of service improvement initiatives implemented during the eligibility period.

Judging Criteria:

Customer satisfaction outcomes: NPS / CSAT results and the trend across the period	(%35) Verified NPS or CSAT results and the improvement trend across the eligibility period.
Responsiveness & issue resolution	(30%) Resolution times and quality of complaint handling.
Technical & product support	(20%) Depth of advice and trade support.
Service improvement initiatives	(15%) Changes implemented during the eligibility period.

Information required for Judging:

- Customer satisfaction data — quantified (CS score, or equivalent).
- Complaint and resolution time data.
- Description of service improvement initiatives implemented during eligibility period.
- Minimum three independent trade customer testimonials.

Award 10. Best Logistics & Supply Chain Solution

Eligibility:

Any initiative, system, or process improvement implemented by a NZ building supply company to enhance the efficiency, reliability, cost-effectiveness, or sustainability of its logistics or supply chain operations. Includes: last-mile delivery, inventory management, demand forecasting, supplier relationship management, and reverse logistics.

Judging Criteria:

Performance improvement delivered	(35%) Gains in delivery times, availability, cost or emissions
Reliability & resilience	(25%) Consistency and the ability to absorb disruption
Innovation of the solution	(20%) Originality and sophistication of the approach
Evidence & measurability	(20%) Quality of the before / after data provided

Information required for Judging:

- Description of the solution or initiative.
- Quantified performance metrics — delivery times, stock availability rates, cost savings, or emissions reductions.
- Evidence of implementation during the eligibility period.
- Before/after comparison data where available.

Award 11. Regional Supplier Excellence Award

Eligibility:

A supplier operating primarily within a defined geographic region of NZ (e.g. Northland, Bay of Plenty, Canterbury, Otago/Southland) rather than as a national chain. Typically independent, owner-operated, and serving a local trade community. Eligibility is capped at companies with no more than three locations.

Judging Criteria:

Service to the local trade community	(30%) Satisfaction and strength of relationships.
Business performance for scale	(25%) Growth and results relative to size and region.
Community & local industry engagement	(25%) Demonstrable local contribution.
Innovation & improvement	(20%) Initiatives implemented during the period.

Information required for Judging:

- Revenue and growth data (verified by accountant or CFO letter).
- Customer satisfaction data (NPS, CSAT, or equivalent).
- Supply chain performance metrics.
- Description of innovation or improvement initiatives.
- Minimum three independent trade customer testimonials.
- Evidence of community or local industry engagement.

Award 12: Emerging Supplier Award

Eligibility:

A company that has been trading for between 2 and 5 years at the entry close date, OR an established company that has launched a clearly distinct new business unit or product line within the eligibility period and can demonstrate rapid market traction.

Judging Criteria:

Judges will assess momentum and potential rather than absolute scale, given shorter operating histories. Key factors taken into account:

Growth trajectory	(35%) Revenue and customer base
Market differentiation	(25%) Clarity of the offer and a demonstrable point of difference from established competitors
Commercial viability	(20%) Sustainable margins, funding position and the operational capability to support continued growth
Future potential and strategic direction	(20%) Credibility of the growth strategy and the quality of plans for the next stage of the business

Information required for Judging:

- Brief overview of the company or new business unit, with its launch date.
- Growth data — revenue and customer-base trajectory since launch or market entry.
- Evidence of market traction — new accounts, orders or coverage during the eligibility period.
- Two to three customer or trade-partner testimonials.

Award 13. Industry Training Award

Eligibility:

This award recognises outstanding investment in growing and diversifying the building industry and supply-chain workforce. It focuses on apprenticeship and trades training — including initiatives that encourage more women into the industry — and on engaging Māori and Pasifika students and trainees and supporting their pathways into the building industry and supply chain. Eligible activities include apprenticeship and cadetship programmes, partnerships with schools, training providers and iwi or community organisations, scholarships, mentoring, and targeted recruitment, support and retention initiatives.

Judging Criteria:

Reach and participation	(30%) Apprentices and trainees supported, with evidence of increased participation by women, Māori and Pasifika.
Quality of the pathway	(25%) How effectively the initiative moves people into training and into lasting roles in the industry and supply chain.
Partnership and engagement	(20%) Meaningful collaboration with schools, iwi, training providers or community organisations.
Outcomes and retention	(25%) Completion, retention and progression results during the eligibility period.

Information required for Judging:

- Description of the apprenticeship, training and engagement initiatives undertaken during the eligibility period.
- Participation data — numbers of apprentices and trainees, identifying participation by women, Māori and Pasifika.
- Evidence of partnerships (schools, iwi, training providers or community organisations) and of completion or retention outcomes.
- Testimonials from apprentices, trainees or partner organisations.

Award 14: Leadership in Sustainability

Eligibility:

This award recognises organisation-wide commitment to sustainability, not a single product or initiative.

An eligible company should demonstrate strategic, measurable sustainability performance within the eligibility period, including: setting and reporting against emissions reduction targets, sustainable procurement policies, waste reduction programmes, staff wellbeing, and engagement with recognised frameworks such as the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), ISO 14001, or B Corp certification.

Judging Criteria:

Strategy & governance	(25%) Clarity of targets and board-level ownership.
Measurable performance against targets	(35%) Independently verified emissions, waste or progress data.
Breadth across the organisation	(20%) Commitment beyond a single product or site.
External validation	(20%) Recognised frameworks or certifications (SBTi, ISO 14001, B Corp).

Information required for Judging:

- Sustainability strategy documentation.
- Independently verified emissions or waste data.
- Progress against stated targets.
- External recognition, certification, or audit reports.

Award 15: Industry Training & Development Champion

Eligibility:

A company that has made outstanding investment in the skills and career development of its people during the eligibility period. Includes: formal training programmes (NZQA qualifications, vendor/product training), mentorship schemes, graduate or cadet programmes, succession planning frameworks, and a demonstrable culture of continuous development.

Judging Criteria:

Investment in people	(30%) Training hours and spend per FTE.
Breadth & quality of programmes	(25%) Qualifications, mentorship, cadet and graduate schemes.
Outcomes	(25%) Qualifications achieved, plus retention and engagement data.
Culture of development	(20%) Evidence of an embedded, ongoing commitment.

Information required for Judging:

- Evidence of training hours and investment per FTE.
- Outline of Programmes run and qualifications achieved by staff.
- Employee engagement or retention data.
- Testimonials from staff who have benefited from development programmes.

Award 16: Best Collaborative Project Partner

Eligibility:

A company (supplier, manufacturer, or distributor) that has demonstrated exceptional collaborative practice on a specific project — working across organisational boundaries with contractors, designers, or other suppliers to deliver an outstanding outcome.

Judging Criteria:

Strength of collaboration	(30%) Working effectively across organisational boundaries.
Project outcome	(30%) Impact on delivery, quality, cost or programme.
Contribution to problem solving	(20%) Value added beyond the contracted role.
Independent endorsement	(20%) Strength of the supporting nomination(s).

Information required for Judging:

- Project brief and overview.
- Description of the collaborative contribution.
- Outcome data: Delivery, quality, cost, or programme impact.
- Supporting nomination from the project lead, main contractor, or other project partner.

Award 17: Lifetime Achievement in Building Supply

No competitive entries are sought.

Instead, an open industry nominations process is run: Any company, individual, or industry body may submit a written nomination (max 500 words) to BIB by Best in Build close to the entry date.

A selection panel of three to five respected industry figures, independent of BIB, will review all nominations and recommend a recipient to the BIB Board for final approval.

This process is consistent with industry awards best practice.

Nominations can be submitted via the Best in Build Awards Portal.

NOTE: No fee is payable for nominating someone in this category

Award 18: Trade Store of the Year

Eligibility:

An individual store or branch of a trade-focused merchant, whether part of a national chain, a buying group, or independently owned. Entries are made at store level and a company may enter more than one store. The store's primary customer base must be trade professionals (builders, contractors, tradespeople) rather than end consumers.

Judging Criteria:

Trade customer experience	(30%) Store-level NPS, CSAT or equivalent results, testimonials, and evidence of consistent service at the counter, in the yard and on delivery.
Operational excellence	(25%) Stock availability, order accuracy, and the efficiency of despatch and delivery to site.
Team knowledge and culture	(25%) Product knowledge, training investment, staff retention and the store's health and safety record.
Local market performance	(20%) Growth relative to the local market and standing within the local trade community.

Judges should take account of store size and local market conditions so that smaller and provincial stores can compete on equal terms with large metropolitan branches.

Information required for Judging:

- Store profile — location, team size and customer base.
- Store-level customer satisfaction data and a minimum of three trade customer testimonials.
- Stock availability, order accuracy or delivery performance data.
- Evidence of team training, retention and health and safety performance.

Award 19: Trade Account Manager of the Year

Eligibility:

An individual currently employed by a NZ trade merchant in a customer-facing account management or sales role — including trade account managers, sales representatives and counter sales leaders. Nominations are sought from employers, customers and industry bodies. Self-nominations are accepted with employer endorsement.

Judging Criteria:

Customer relationships and service	(30%) Strength and longevity of trade customer relationships, evidenced by testimonials and account retention.
Sales performance	(25%) Results against target and account growth during the eligibility period, assessed relative to territory and opportunity.
Product and technical knowledge	(20%) Depth of knowledge and the quality of advice provided to trade customers.
Problem solving and initiative	(15%) Evidence of going beyond the role to resolve issues and add value for customers.
Professional conduct and industry involvement	(10%) Integrity, teamwork and participation in the wider building supply industry.

Information required for Judging:

- Nominee biography and role overview (max 800 words).
- Sales or account performance data, presented relative to territory and opportunity.
- Minimum three testimonials, including at least one from a trade customer and one from the employer.
- Evidence of training, qualifications or industry involvement.

Award 20: Young Achiever in Building Supply

Eligibility:

An individual, under 35 years of age at the close of entry date, currently working in the NZ building supply sector. Nominations are sought from employers, industry bodies. Self-nominations are also allowed with employer endorsement

Judging Criteria:

Career achievements to date	(25%) Progression, responsibilities and results achieved relative to age and opportunity.
Demonstrated impact on their organisation or the wider industry	(25%) Specific, evidenced contributions to their organisation or the wider building supply sector.
Leadership qualities and professional conduct	(20%) Initiative, integrity and the respect of colleagues, customers and industry peers.
Community or industry involvement	(10%) Participation in industry bodies, mentoring, volunteering or community initiatives.
Future potential	(20%) Trajectory and the capacity to become a future leader of the building supply industry.

Information required for Judging:

- Nominee biography and career highlights (max 800 words).
- Two to three supporting testimonials, at least one must be from the employer.
- Any relevant certifications, qualifications, or external recognition.