Financial Markets
Excellence Awards

FINANCIAL MARKETS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

GCC Financial Markets & Treasury Awards

Comprehensive Program Governance Handbook, Submission Criteria & Entry Guidebook

Organised By

UAE FMA
جمعية الإمارات للمتداولين في الأسواق المالية
UAE Financial Markets Association

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1. Program Introduction & Executive Mandate

The Financial Markets Excellence Awards, organized by the UAE Financial Markets Association (UAE FMA), celebrate excellence, innovation, leadership, and outstanding achievements across the GCC financial markets and treasury industry. The awards recognize institutions and solution providers that have demonstrated exceptional performance, innovation, client service, market leadership, and contribution to the development of the financial markets ecosystem.

The Awards Ceremony will be held annually. Specifically, this edition takes place during the Gala Dinner at the 6th GCC Financial Markets & Treasury (GCC FMT) Conference, bringing together senior executives, regulators, central banks, financial institutions, technology providers, and market participants from across the GCC and international financial markets.

As GCC economies accelerate their economic diversification mandates, expand sovereign and corporate debt issuances, integrate advanced digital treasury platforms, and adopt ESG capital standards, the financial markets require a clear benchmark of operational and strategic excellence. The Financial Markets Excellence Awards serve as the definitive regional platform to validate market leadership, foster institutional trust, and spotlight institutional milestones.

1.1 Regulatory Alignment & Strategic Framework

The awards framework is designed in alignment with national financial transformation policies and central bank directives across the GCC, including the Central Bank of the UAE (CBUAE) Financial Infrastructure Transformation (FIT) Programme, the Saudi Central Bank (SAMA) Financial Sector Development Program (FSDP) under Vision 2030, and equivalent regional monetary authority initiatives (CBB, QCB, CBM). The program actively incentivizes financial engineering, local liquidity depth, and cross-border regulatory compliance.

2. Strategic Objectives

- ## Recognize Excellence
  Celebrate outstanding performance, operational resilience, and institutional achievement across treasury and financial markets.

- ## Promote Innovation & Best Practices
  Encourage pioneering financial engineering, digital transformation, automated risk management, and best-in-class operational standards.

- ## Encourage Transparency & Market Development
  Foster liquid, transparent, and efficient primary and secondary capital markets across debt, equity, foreign exchange, and money markets.

- ## Highlight Regional Contribution
  Spotlight organizations actively contributing to GCC financial market growth, cross-border capital flows, and economic sustainability.

- ## Showcase Industry Leadership
  Offer a high-profile platform to honor forward-thinking leadership, talented treasury teams, and market-making institutions.

- ## Provide an Independent Benchmark
  Offer a rigorous, audit-verified evaluation framework that serves as an objective mark of distinction across the GCC region.

3. Governance & Administrative Architecture

To reinforce the credibility of the awards, the documentation clearly distinguishes between governance, operational oversight, judging, and verification:

Governance Tier	Responsible Entity	Key Responsibilities & Operational Mandate
Awards Organizer	UAE Financial Markets Association (UAE FMA)	Overall program ownership, official branding, stakeholder alignment, host logistics, and award gala execution.
Host Event	GCC Financial Markets & Treasury (GCC FMT) Conference	Serves as the official host platform, gathering central banks, regulators, tier-1 financial institutions, and global experts.
Awards Ceremony	Gala Dinner during the GCC FMT Conference	The annual flagship gala dinner where official awards, trophies, and regional accolades are presented.
Awards Steering Committee	UAE FMA Appointed Oversight Board	Responsible for governance, rules, timelines, category design, procedural integrity, and overall oversight.
Independent Judging Panel	External Sector Experts & Former Regulators	Responsible solely for evaluating nominations, scoring technical entries, and selecting winners based strictly on published criteria.
Independent Verification Firm	External Audit / Advisory Partner	Validates the scoring process and arithmetic accuracy for selected categories to further enhance transparency.

3.1 Judicial Recusal & Conflict Declaration Protocol

All appointed members of the Independent Judging Panel must execute a formal Conflict of Interest Declaration prior to receiving nomination dossiers. If a judge holds current or prior employment, advisory roles, or material commercial ties with a nominated entity within the preceding 24 months, the judge is legally obligated to recuse themselves from evaluating, scoring, or participating in panel deliberations for that category.

4. Award Sectors & Comprehensive Category Framework

Sector 1 – Financial Institutions & Banking

Eligible Organizations: Commercial Banks, Islamic Banks, Investment Banks, Development Banks, and Government Financial Institutions.

Award Category Title	Core Assessment Focus & Performance Indicators
Best Overall GCC Treasury Bank of the Year	Holistic liquidity management, balance sheet strength, product coverage across the GCC, and quality of independent market research and commentary.
Best Interbank Foreign Exchange (FX) Provider / Market Maker for GCC Currencies.	Superior execution, pricing depth across GCC currencies, and market-making capabilities in FX Spot and FX Swaps.
Best Money Market & Repo Liquidity Provider for GCC CCY	Excellence in interbank money market placement, repo/reverse-repo pricing and liquidity, securities financing, short-term yield optimization, and cash management in GCC currencies.
Best Islamic & Debt Capital Markets House (Sukuk)	Leadership in Islamic debt issuance, DCM execution and underwriting volume, and secondary market trading liquidity, bid-ask spreads, and execution speed across GCC Sukuk and bonds.
Best Sustainable Finance & ESG Treasury House	Pioneering green bonds/Sukuk, sustainability-linked loans (SLLs), and ESG capital market frameworks.
Best ALM & Balance Sheet Management Team	Excellence in IRRBB management, FTP modeling, LCR/NSFR compliance, and balance sheet optimization.

Award Category Title	Core Assessment Focus & Performance Indicators
Best MBILL and TBOND Primary Dealer in the UAE	Excellence in primary dealing, market-making, distribution and liquidity provision for AED-denominated government bonds, MBills and Sukuk, supporting the development of the UAE local-currency market.
Best Quality Research Bank/House for GCC Markets Commentary and Outlook	Recognises excellence in high-quality, independent and actionable research, commentary and market outlooks covering GCC economies and financial markets.

Sector 2 – Financial Brokerage & Inter-Dealer Intermediaries

Eligible Organizations: Interbank Brokers, FX Brokers, Money Market Brokers, Fixed Income Brokers, Multi-Asset Brokers, and Electronic Brokerage Platforms.

Award Category Title	Core Assessment Focus & Performance Indicators
Best Inter-Dealer Broker (IDB) – Voice & Electronic	Exceptional liquidity aggregation, price discovery, hybrid brokerage across money markets and FX, and multi-jurisdictional GCC reach connecting regional clients to global liquidity pools.
Best Retail & Institutional FX Broker	Superior execution quality, low slippage, multi-asset platform access, and regulatory compliance.
Best Fixed Income Brokerage Firm	Execution volume, liquidity provisioning, and trade facilitation for sovereign debt and corporate Sukuk.
Best Electronic Trading Platform & Technology	High-frequency infrastructure, low-latency API connectivity, front-end design, and platform uptime.
Best Brokerage Team of the Year & Client Service	Outstanding institutional client support, volume expansion, client satisfaction metrics, low fail rates, seamless straight-through processing (STP), and robust back-office operations.

Sector 3 – Treasury Technology, FinTech & Ecosystem

Eligible Organizations: TMS Providers, Corporate Treasury Teams, FinTech Solution Providers, Software Vendors, Payment Tech Providers, Financial Data & RegTech Providers.

Award Category Title	Core Assessment Focus & Performance Indicators
Best Treasury Management System (TMS)	TMS modularity, ERP integration, cloud security, regional deployment footprint, and usability.
Best Treasury Automation & Cash Management Solution	STP capabilities, reduction of manual workflows, real-time cash forecasting, balance aggregation, and sweeping.
Best Treasury Risk Management & Analytics Platform	Advanced risk engines (VaR, stress testing), FX exposure tracking, predictive modeling, and executive dashboards.
Best AI & Machine Learning Solution for Treasury	Practical AI/ML applications in predictive liquidity modeling, anomaly detection, and automated pricing.
Best Digital Innovation in Trading & Settlement (Blockchain, Digital Assets & API Solutions)	DLT deployment for Sukuk issuance, smart contract automation, trade settlement or digital payments, multi-bank execution, algorithmic FX hedging, automated rate aggregation, and open banking API robustness.
Global Markets Innovation Award	Recognises outstanding innovation in global markets through technology, products, trading solutions, digitalisation or market initiatives that enhance efficiency, liquidity, transparency and client outcomes.

5. Submission Guidelines & Program Timelines

Program Phase	Target Timeline	Phase Requirements & Deliverables
Nominations Open	**Official Announcement**	Online nomination portal opens. Submission guidelines, templates, and rubrics published.
Submission Deadline	**2nd October, 2026**	All completed nomination forms, case studies, performance metrics, and client testimonials submitted.
Shortlist Announcement	**23rd October, 2026**	Independent Judging Panel completes initial scoring; top 3 nominees per category shortlisted.
Judicial Deliberation	**6th November, 2026**	Final judge interviews, verification spot-checks, and scoring aggregation completed under auditor supervision.
Awards Gala Ceremony	**20th November, 2026**	Official winner announcements and trophy presentations during the 6th GCC FMT Conference Gala Dinner.

6. Standardized Evaluation Scoring Rubric

To ensure complete impartiality and objective evaluation, the Independent Judging Panel scores all entries using a standardized 100-point rubric distributed across **five** weighted core dimensions:

Evaluation Pillar / Dimension	Weighting	Scoring Criteria & Required Evidence
1. Quantitative Performance & Growth	**30 Points (30%)**	Measurable achievements including growth in transaction volume, market share expansion, yield optimization, cost reduction, or system uptime.
2. Innovation & Solution Design	**30 Points (30%)**	Uniqueness of proprietary solution, technical complexity, creative problem-solving, and alignment with GCC market structure challenges.
3. Operational Execution & Compliance	**15 Points (15%)**	Implementation speed, risk management controls, system resilience, governance standards, and zero critical regulatory infractions.
4. Market Impact & Industry Leadership	**20 Points (20%)**	Contribution to market liquidity, client service excellence, thought leadership, ESG alignment, and commitment to GCC workforce development.
5. FX Global Code Commitment & Implementation	**5 Points (5%)**	Eligible organisations receive 5 points for FX Global Code commitment and implementation. **For ineligible organisations, Operational Execution & Compliance carries the full 20% weighting.**

Calibration Matrix

- 90–100 (Market-Defining): Global-standard innovation, ironclad quantitative proof, zero operational flaws, exemplary governance.
- 70–89 (Best-in-Class): Strong regional implementation, verifiable performance outcomes, minor execution friction.
- 50–69 (Competent): Standard operational optimization meeting baseline peer levels; limited innovation.
- 1–49 (Deficient): Unoriginal solution, unverified or vague metrics, regulatory omissions, or significant operational red flags.

6.1 Minimum Threshold & Non-Conferment Standard

To maintain the prestige and integrity of the awards, a strict minimum threshold of 75.0 points (out of 100) is required for any category winner. In categories where only a single institution submits an entry, or where no participant achieves the 75-point threshold, the Independent Judging Panel reserves the explicit governance right to withhold conferring the award for that year.

7. Operational Guidelines & Submission of Supportive Documents

7.1 Entry Requirements & Word Limits

- **Executive Summary (Max 300 words):** High-level summary of the submission.
- **Core Innovation & Solution Overview (Max 750 words):** Detailed description of the product, desk, strategy, or platform solution.
- **Quantitative Case & Performance Data (Max 750 words):** Verifiable hard metrics, growth percentages, transaction volumes, and ROI vs baseline.
- **Governance, Risk Management & Future Outlook (Max 500 words):** Audit compliance, risk controls, CBUAE/GCC regulatory alignment, and long-term sustainability.

7.2 Quantitative Proof Standards

Claims made within nominations must be backed by acceptable supporting documentation:

- Official platform screenshots (e.g., Bloomberg, Refinitiv, TMS dashboards) showing aggregated volume.
- Audited financial statement extracts or official annual report references.
- Independent third-party audit reports or executive sign-offs (CFO/Treasurer/Chief Risk Officer attestation letters).

7.3 Digital Submission Portal & File Format Rules

All nomination dossiers and supporting evidence must be submitted digitally via the official UAE FMA Awards Portal or communicated email format. Submissions must adhere to the following technical standards:

- **Document Format:** Primary nomination dossier must be compiled as a single, searchable PDF document (max 15MB).
- **Supporting Evidence:** Raw volume proofs, spreadsheets, or audit certificates must be included as indexed annexes or linked within the digital portal.
- **Data Anonymization:** Confidential transaction logs or client data must be sanitized/redacted prior to submission.

8. Post-Award Protocols & Compliance Rules

8.1 Post-Award & Branding Protocol

- **Press Embargo:** Winners are subject to a strict press embargo until official announcement during the GCC FMT Gala Dinner.
- **IP & Seal Usage Guidelines:** Award winners receive full licensing rights to use the official Financial Markets Excellence Award Winner Seal for corporate communications, press releases, and marketing collaterals for a period of 12 months post-conferment.

8.2 Operating Rules & Governance Controls

- **Qualifying Period:** All submitted metrics, case studies, and achievements must pertain to activities within the preceding 12-month calendar window.
- **Regional Footprint:** Participating entities must maintain an active operational presence and hold appropriate regulatory authorization within at least one GCC member state.
- **Executive Verification:** Submissions must include a formal sign-off from a C-level executive or Head of Department certifying data accuracy.
- **Judicial Recusal:** Judges affiliated with any nominated institution are strictly barred from scoring or participating in discussions for that specific category.
- **Data Privacy & NDAs:** All submission documentation, proprietary financial data, and case studies are treated with strict confidentiality under non-disclosure protocols.

9. Award Nomination Fees

Organisations may **nominate themselves for one or multiple award categories**, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for each selected category. Each category nomination is assessed independently and carries a separate nomination fee.

Organisations with achievements spanning different areas can nominate in multiple relevant categories, giving them additional opportunities to have their work independently evaluated and recognised by the Judging Panel.

PRICE UAE FMA MEMBERS	PRICE NON-MEMBERS
US $500 per category nomination	**US $1000** per category nomination

UAE FMA

جمعيـــة الإمـــارات للمتـــداولين فـــي الأســـواق الماليـــة

UAE Financial Markets Association

Thank You

FME

CONTACT US

eman@uaefma.com
juna.m@uaefma.com

+971 4 256 6622
+971 55 258 9011

www.uaefma.com