

Team



IoIC
Awards
2025

Best Small Agency (1-10 people)

Bowline Communications

Bowline is a small agency powered by a tight-knit team of nine, founded by sibling duo Jess and Tim Jeary.

They help clients go beyond the surface – from shaping internal culture and aligning values to crafting bold, external campaigns. Often, it's a full-circle approach: inside-out and back again.

2024 was a standout year. Bowline was appointed to the Shell Global Design Hub – a major three-year contract placing them on Shell's global roster for integrated campaigns. The team also deepened key client partnerships with the likes of BNP Paribas and National Friendly, welcomed new talent, and marked a decade in business.

Each team member brings unique strengths. Together, they've built an agency where creativity thrives, collaboration is a core value, and great results come naturally. This award entry, Bowline's first, is a tribute to the team's talent, dedication, and the lasting client relationships, a true testament to the agency's ongoing success.

Best Medium Agency (11-30 people)

Goldbug

We are engagement experts.

Led by senior brand and communication specialists, Goldbug is built differently from other agencies. We bring the outside in, to breathe real-life into stories, campaigns, brands, and businesses to make people look, listen, learn and take action.

With a rare mix of strategic rigour, creative excellence and content flair, coupled with an intuitive people-first perspective, we deliver work to unapologetic gold standards.

We give clients ideas that empower them to be bold and brave, and we know how to make employees feel heard and valued right across their business.

With a culture driven by a collective understanding of what good looks like and immense pride in the portfolio of clients we partner with, we confidently engage, educate, enlighten, and entertain in equal measure, every day.

The Surgery

Hello! We are The Surgery, an IC, design and digital agency on a mission to ban boring. We're an eclectic bunch of old-school wise heads and the next upcoming digital and design aces. We work with some brilliant clients across tech, finance, charities, FMCG, media outlets, and more, who all come to us for our expertise and stay for The Surgery's anti-boring' experience. We can help with IC strategy, campaigns and planning, events, employee value propositions, employer branding, apps, websites, and dynamic design. We love what we do, we have fun doing it, and reckon you will too (don't mention the b-word, and we'll get along fine). Our entry centres on some innovative and inspirational ways we helped a one-person IC team bring out transformational IC change in their business and how we persuaded leaders in another to realise just how important IC is.

Best Large Agency (30+ people)

Gallagher's Communication Consulting Practice: UK Team

Gallagher's UK Communication Consulting team exists to help organisations connect with their people in meaningful, measurable ways. Combining boutique creativity with global scale - offering deep expertise across internal communication, change, employee experience, digital, reward, and EVP. In the past year, we've reimagined our comms audit, launched new EVP and Change Comms propositions, and deepened the impact of our annual State of the Sector report. Our storytelling and video capabilities continue to set the pace, delivering award-winning campaigns that connect head and heart. But it's our impact that truly defines us: from reducing workplace injuries, to aligning cultures with strategy, and elevating employer brands. Clients call our work "transformational," "empowering," and "the best they've seen" - testament to the dedication of our team. We don't just respond to briefs; we help shape the future of the profession. That's why we believe we're worthy of being named Agency of the Year.

H&H

In a year of challenge and change, H&H didn't just adapt – they inspired. Their bold, human-centred approach turned uncertainty into clarity and complexity into connection. They reached over 5.3m employees – striving to make every interaction count. From guiding global clients through restructures to helping organisations build trust in the age of AI, H&H stayed agile without losing their essence. They kept things nimble, inclusive, and grounded in what matters most: people. Inside the agency, their culture stayed strong. They invested in each other, nurtured wellbeing, and stayed true to their values – proving that great work starts with a great team. H&H didn't just deliver impactful communications. They sparked belief. They built momentum. And they proved that when you create with care and lead with purpose, you don't just ripple change – you set it in motion.

Best In-House Team 1-5 people

Arup Internal Comms Team, UKIMEA region

Arup's UKIMEA Internal Communications team entered 2024 knowing they faced a year of significant change. A new regional strategy, arrival of new Chair, structural changes and a rapidly changing external environment meant colleagues needed clarity, confidence, and connection more than ever.

Led by Shalini Gupta, the team stepped up – not just to communicate, but to unite. They created 'The Big 5', a bold, impactful narrative that aligned strategy to the firm's purpose, using inclusive storytelling and authentic colleague voices to cut through complexity and inspiring action. In an employee-owned firm, the challenge was clear: help thousands understand the 'why', see their role in the delivery of the strategy and feel inspired to be part of the future.

Throughout uncertainty, the team delivered confidence, consistency and momentum. Recognised by the Board, they've repositioned internal communications as a strategic enabler, driving business outcomes and engagement across the region.

Northumbrian Water Group Internal Communications Team

Ahead of a period of unprecedented growth in the water industry, NWG's Internal Communications team have spent the last year readying ourselves for success by seeking out critical feedback, reviewing what's been before and looking to see where we can lead the way through innovation.

Best In-House Team 6-10 people

Google DeepMind Internal Communications Team

In 2024, Google DeepMind's Internal Communications team strategically supported rapid growth and reorganisation amidst a complex, dynamic environment. They fostered a connected, aligned, and empowered workforce of thousands of world-leading AI specialists.

The team's proactive and adaptable approach included a restructured team model, impactful events, and diverse communication channels, effectively addressing the unique challenges of a rapidly growing and specialised audience. They established robust baseline metrics for measurable continuous improvement, focusing on strategic comprehension (71% favourability), organisational pride (81% favourability), and holistic evaluation of individual formats and events (e.g., the company newsletter had an average rating of 4.8/5).

Their work was instrumental in reinforcing GDM's mission, driving innovation, and building a cohesive culture crucial to GDM's ongoing success as a pioneering force in AI.

Quilter Internal Communications Team

Quilter Internal Communications team has positively influenced engagement with a new purpose and culture, as well as supporting organisational change and welcoming new colleagues from an acquired business. The team also consistently produced high-quality, people led BAU communications across all channels and demonstrated immense adaptability, pace and efficiency in dealing with diverse, challenging and changing communication requirements.

Best In-House Team 10+ people

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Justice: manifesting IC change. 2023 had been a year of intense challenge at the MoJ. Through 2024, with maximum determination we rebuilt our own approach from the inside out, creating a team that led by example while delivering for the organisation.

Mitie Group Internal Communications Team

Mitie is a leading facilities management and professional services company, providing a wide range of services across various sectors. With a workforce of 72,000 colleagues, the Internal Communications (IC) team, led by Harriet Cloake, plays a leading role in connecting and engaging this diverse group.

The IC team consists of 12 multi-skilled professionals, including strategic business partners who support divisional leaders in communicating with their multidisciplinary teams, as well as technical specialists with expertise in writing and editing, storytelling, app design, content creation, video and podcast production, and event design. This diverse structure ensures effective collaboration and the delivery of high-impact communications, driving Mitie's internal communications strategy forward.

Santander UK

Santander UK introduced a new strategy, aligned to the Santander Group strategic direction, which the Internal Comms team has embedded in the business. The Strategic Blueprint is now something that's talked about and referred to every day around the organisation.

To make the Strategic Blueprint land with its people, the IC team redefined its role from communicators to trusted advisors, built relationships with the Executive Committee and leaders across the business and used its oversight to enhance communications at Santander UK – helping every employee understand and deliver the new strategy.

As a result of its efforts, the team met the outcomes it looked to achieve: including bringing in new talent, upskilling the team, refining content to align with the strategy, optimising communication channels and fostering a two-way dialogue between leaders and employees through new channels – all to boost trust, improve clarity and position IC as a critical driver of change.

Wheatley Group

Wheatley is Scotland's leading housing, care and property management group, operating in 19 local authority areas across the country. It employs almost 3000 staff and has an annual turnover of £412.6m. Wheatley communities are among the most deprived in Scotland and the Group's mission to 'Make Homes and Lives Better' is also at the heart of everything we do as a communications team.

The communications and marketing team's role is to bring Wheatley's life-changing work to life and support frontline staff and the business to help customers who are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

Whether it's listening carefully to staff from surveys or focus groups, creating more than 400 staff stories for the intranet, filming and editing more than 100 internal videos highlighting support for customers, or putting on a staff awards night to recognise the hard work of staff, Wheatley's communications team is helping 'Make Homes and Lives Better'.

Best Public Sector or Not for Profit Team 1-5 people

Defence Equipment and Support

Over the last two years, Defence Equipment and Support - the part of the Ministry of Defence delivering equipment and support services to our armed forces - have been redesigning and implementing a new operating model and ways of working to speed up acquisition, increase platform availability and enable more effective collaboration across Defence with industry and allies. This hugely complex change has taken place alongside unprecedented operational delivery at a time of fraught global security. A small communications team have worked for two years to build the case of change, increase understanding of the new DE&S and support 12,000 people through transition into the new organisation. With a variety of skills and strengths, a big dose of empowerment, and resilience and adaptability demonstrated every step of the way, DE&S witnessed truly remarkable outcomes and results that speak for themselves.

Lothian Pension Fund Communications Team

The Lothian Pension Fund Communications team is a small, agile and perfectly formed team of four communications professionals who are passionate about what they do. Together they amass over 70 years' of industry experience and work together to leverage their different skills to create best in class communications and events.

2024 brought the LPF Communications team their biggest challenge since Covid. The team led both the colleague, member and stakeholder communications for an office move as well as the design and fit out for the new building that came with its own issues and snags. The project ran in tandem with the creation of other key deliverables, so posed both a time and skills challenge, but the team remained agile and worked together to rise to the challenge.

The team created a multi channel suite of communications to help colleagues on their change journey, maintain morale and better prepare them to settle into the new workspace, all while maintaining their business as usual service seamlessly.

Best Public Sector or Not for Profit Team 6-10 people

West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Record waiting lists, endless negative headlines about the ‘failing’ NHS and sinking public confidence in the service, hit staff morale hard. Colleagues were tired, frustrated and felt under-valued. Over 12 months, we rebooted our entire approach to put the heart back into West Herts by showcasing and celebrating the everyday difference our teams made. We embedded engagement and story-telling into every aspect of what we did; we hosted Thank You events for 3,500 colleagues for the first time, we staged a ‘TV premiere’ exclusively for our nurses, we worked together with the Trust to create a set of values – created by and owned by colleagues, and told the simple, emotive stories of how our people were saving and improving lives across our channels. We found solutions to long-standing problems and showed the power of authentic leadership to colleagues, as well as recruiting a team of celebrity supporters to remind colleagues of how special they were. Against all the odds, we improved in every single People Promise score in our staff survey.

The University of Edinburgh's Internal Communications Team

In 2024, the University of Edinburgh’s Internal Communications team delivered a significant package of work to strengthen engagement, transparency and trust across its diverse 18,000-strong staff community.

With a wide-ranging remit, the team supported major initiatives, including change communications, leadership visibility and staff experience. A new Change Communications Framework provided clear guidance for colleagues managing change, while a refreshed programme of town halls improved dialogue on key operational challenges. Staff engagement campaigns increased awareness and participation in workplace initiatives.

Leadership communications saw a major shift, with revamped town halls, local engagement sessions, and digital enhancements increasing senior leader visibility. Tailored professional services communications also aimed to increase inclusivity and make messaging relevant.

By taking a strategic, evidence-based approach, the team has embedded stronger, more inclusive communication practices across the University.

The University of Warwick's Internal Communications team

The University of Warwick internal communications team is a new team, formed two years ago. Building internal communications up from a low-resourced team, their strategy takes them from broadcast to engagement. The team have refreshed and added to their channels, redesigning them around the needs of the user.

As a team they are united by a shared passion for accessibility. They have developed written and visual style guides to make content easier to understand. Through a business partnering model they have helped the University’s offline community feel connected.

They have gained the trust of senior leaders to grow their profile and guide them through a number of crisis issues.

The result has been an increase in engagement, setting them on the right track to fulfil the strategy. The new team are already award-winning, with three national awards now under their belt including two IoIC Awards of Excellence.

Best Public Sector or Not for Profit Team 10+ people

Ministry of Justice

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National Trust Internal Communications Network

In the past year the National Trust Internal Communications Network has substantially transformed internal communications at the Trust. We've connected with staff and volunteers on a scale never previously achieved, with thousands of people joining online briefings and town halls. By providing simple to use materials, in different formats, our leaders and managers had the confidence to step-up and engage their team on complex and difficult subjects.

Throughout 2024 we delivered richer, more personal storytelling content, put leaders and managers at the heart of our communications and increased staff and volunteer engagement in our seasonal campaigns like never before.