



Women *in*
payments

UK-EU 2026

AWARD CATEGORIES & CRITERIA

*Kristy Duncan,
Founder & CEO,
Women in Payments*



INNOVATION AWARD

The Women in Payments Award for Innovation will be presented to a woman in the industry who best meets the criteria below. Nominations are encouraged from organizations and roles across the payments and fintech industry, including but not limited to back office, technology, operations, client-facing, product, and other roles.

CRITERION 1: INNOVATION

Has promoted payments innovation through creativity, vision, and perseverance in her organization or the payments industry. Has been instrumental in promoting innovations or creative process re-engineering which are original, have significant impact, can be easily and effectively adopted, have results that are measurable, can be applied elsewhere, and support and inspire others in the organization or industry to innovate.

CRITERION 2: PROBLEM-SOLVING

Creative use of new knowledge and/or technology to develop ideas aimed at addressing ongoing challenges, enhancing customer experience, and creating innovative systems, technology, products, programs and/or policies to solution such challenges.

CRITERION 3: PRODUCTIVITY

Has created a solution that reduces time, resources, risks, and/or costs associated with delivering a service, system or product. Has successfully implemented the solution, resulting in a positive impact to the product or customer experience beyond the nominee's own team or department.

CRITERION 4: MENTORSHIP

Is widely recognized for her expertise and actively works to empower others. Leads by example and motivates members of her team, organization or industry. Acts as a mentor, advisor, and teacher, to make a positive impact on members of her organization or the payments industry.

CRITERION 5: INTEGRITY & DIVERSITY

Has high integrity and sets high professional standards for ethics and quality of work. Has contributed to a positive and supportive learning environment by encouraging diversity of people and opinions.

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INSPIRATION AWARD

The Women in Payments Award for Inspiration will be presented to a woman who inspires others in the industry, often through thought leadership or mentorship. Nominations are encouraged from organizations and roles across the payments and fintech industry, including but not limited to back office, technology, operations, client facing, product, and other roles. The winner will be the nominee who best meets the following criteria:

CRITERION 1: SHARES VISION

Is able to create and share a strong vision and inspire a team towards achieving a goal, either in her organization or industry. Has demonstrated payments thought leadership by actively contributing to the payments debate.

CRITERION 2: LEADERSHIP

Exudes a strong desire for growth and has a vision for the future. Actively encourages debate about the evolution of payments in order to shape a strong payments ecosystem. Inspires others to reach great heights of performance and success and is consistently proactive in seizing opportunities. Creates an environment where everyone feels valued and heard.

CRITERION 3: EXUDES POSITIVITY

Freely shares knowledge and insights of the payments system with colleagues, industry professionals and/or outside the industry. Is a beacon of positivity in the face of challenges and failures and is able to uplift others through her positive outlook. Inspires others to accomplish goals, despite difficulty or roadblocks to achieving success. Inspires greatness and growth from others.

CRITERION 4: BUILDS RELATIONSHIPS & MENTORSHIP

Is widely recognized for her ability to build strong relationships and mentor others. Actively works to empower others to be positive team players and further change agents. Leads by example and motivates members of her team, organization or industry. Acts as a mentor, advisor and teacher, making a positive impact on members of her organization or the payments industry.

CRITERION 5: COMMUNICATION & INTEGRITY

Displays extremely strong communication skills and creates an environment where everyone feels valued and heard. Establishes connections with people to build strong relationships founded on integrity, impeccable ethics and high quality of work.

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RISING STAR AWARD

The Women in Payments Rising Star Award will be presented to a woman with a maximum of ten (10) years' experience in the payment industry, who is currently employed in UK-EU and who best meets the criteria below. Nominations are encouraged from organizations and roles across the payments and fintech industry, including but not limited to back office, technology, operations, client facing, product, and other roles.

CRITERION 1: DRIVE

Is always willing to go that extra mile to achieve excellence for herself, her organization and/or the industry. She supports and inspires others through promoting innovation and advancement. She is results-oriented, always seeking new ideas with the ability to translate them into action for her organization and customers.

CRITERION 2: PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Consistently outperforms her peers in a variety of settings and circumstances. Performs with distinction and delivers strong results by building trust and confidence among her colleagues.

CRITERION 3: POTENTIAL

Exhibits behaviors that reflect her company's culture and values in an exemplary manner. Shows a strong capacity to grow and succeed throughout her career.

CRITERION 4: COMMUNICATION

Is widely recognized for her exceptional communication skills and consistently fosters clarity, connection, and collaboration. Leads by example in promoting open, respectful, and effective dialogue within her team, organization, or industry. Actively facilitates understanding and alignment to drive meaningful impact across her organization or the payments industry.

CRITERION 5: INTEGRITY & DIVERSITY

Has high integrity and sets high professional standards for ethics and quality of work. Has contributed to a positive and supportive learning environment by encouraging diversity of people and opinions.

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ADVOCATE FOR INCLUSIVITY AWARD

The Women in Payments Advocate for Inclusivity award will be presented to either a man or a woman in the payments and fintech industry who best meets the criteria below. Nominations are encouraged from organizations and roles across the payments and fintech industry.

CRITERION 1: PROMOTION OF FEMALE & DIVERSE LEADERSHIP

Actively contributes to the advancement and development of women and other diverse groups, either inside or outside his/her own organization and publicly celebrates the work and accomplishments of diverse leaders. Leads by example, promoting and broadcasting the need for continuous support and advocacy for diverse leadership. Is a strong role model for empowerment of women and other diverse individuals, encouraging the hiring and promotion of strong talent with diversity in mind.

CRITERION 2: ADVOCATE FOR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Helps support the development of women and other diverse individuals, encouraging them to increase their levels of participation and engagement. Is an advocate for equity and inclusion, including equal pay and equal opportunities for career growth. Provides a positive forum for women and diverse persons to network and find mentors within their industry.

CRITERION 3: SUPPORTS & EDUCATES

Promotes education, career development and mentorship opportunities, both formal and informal, for women and other diverse people in his/her organization.

CRITERION 4: MENTORSHIP

Is widely recognized for his/her expertise and actively works to empower others. Leads by example and motivates members of his/her team, organization or industry. Acts as a mentor, advisor and teacher, to make a positive impact on members of his/her organization or the payments industry.

CRITERION 5: INTEGRITY & DIVERSITY

Has high integrity and sets high professional standards for ethics and quality of work. Has contributed to a positive and supportive learning environment by encouraging diversity of people and opinions.

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ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE AWARD

The Women in Payments Environmental, Social and Governance Award will be presented to a woman in the industry who best meets the criteria below. Nominations are encouraged from organizations and roles across the payments and fintech industry.

CRITERION 1: LEADERSHIP/EXPERTISE

Is a strong leader and advocate for environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles - such as sustainability, social equity, and mental well-being—. Is recognized as a go-to resource for her ESG knowledge and expertise within her organization or across the broader industry. Demonstrates a strong commitment to advancing ESG values through both professional influence and broader community engagement.

CRITERION 2: POSITIVE IMPACT

Consistently seizes opportunities to guide colleagues, the industry, or the broader community toward positive social and environmental outcomes. Leads with empathy and integrity to foster inclusive, supportive, and purpose-driven environments. Adapts thoughtfully to changing circumstances to maintain forward momentum and impact.

CRITERION 3: RESILIENCE

Has demonstrated resilience in driving ESG-related projects, leading teams, or achieving goals despite challenges or evolving conditions. Actively builds and supports organizational or industry resilience—especially in relation to social well-being and sustainable progress—in times of uncertainty and change.

CRITERION 4: SUSTAINABILITY VISION

Possesses a clear and compelling vision for a sustainable future for her organization, the payments industry, or the broader community. Champions mental health and social justice as integral elements of sustainability, and actively shares her insights to inspire systemic, values-based change.

CRITERION 5: ACTION & COMMITMENT

Has taken tangible leadership action through initiatives that promote environmental sustainability, social equity, or mental health in meaningful and lasting ways. Demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainable practices that positively influence her team, organization, and community. Shares strategies and best practices that contribute to ESG progress across the industry and beyond.

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BECKY CLEMENTS AWARD OF DISTINCTION

The Women in Payments Becky Clements Award of Distinction is a lifetime achievement honour. It will be presented to a woman who is a recognized role model and positive contributor to the overall image of the industry and who best meets the criteria below. Nominations are encouraged from organizations and roles across the payments and fintech industry.

CRITERION 1: ACHIEVEMENT

Has influenced industry trends, acts as a role model and successfully reached and exceeded goals—taking her team, organization and/or industry to the next level.

CRITERION 2: CONTRIBUTION

Acts as a payments ambassador to promote a positive image of her organization, industry initiative and the payments industry as a whole. Actively contributes to the collective success of the payments industry as a whole. Is viewed as a trusted advisor by peers and colleagues and is often a source of industry expertise.

CRITERION 3: LEGACY

Is known for her personal and professional authenticity and building her career on a strong set of values. Has built strong and positive relationships with co-workers and industry stakeholders. Is seen as a role model within her organization and throughout the industry.

CRITERION 4: MENTORSHIP

Is widely recognized for her expertise and actively works to empower others. Leads by example and motivates members of her team, organization or industry. Acts as a mentor, advisor and teacher to make a positive impact on members of her organization or the payments industry.

CRITERION 5: INTEGRITY & DIVERSITY

Has integrity and sets high professional standards for ethics and quality of work. Has contributed to a positive and supportive learning environment by encouraging diversity of people and opinions.

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RESILIENCE AWARD

The Women in Payments Resilience Award will be presented to a woman who has successfully re-entered the payments and fintech industry after a hiatus of at least three years or entered it for the first time after working in a different industry. This award celebrates resilience, determination, and the ability to overcome challenges to make a successful entry or re-entry to the industry. Nominations are encouraged from across the payments and fintech industry. The winner will be the woman who best meets the following criteria:

CRITERION 1: RESILIENCE & DETERMINATION

Displays remarkable resilience, determination, and motivation to return to the industry after time spent away; or enter the payments and fintech industry from another industry. Demonstrates a strong will to restart and advance her career and set an inspiring example for others with her unwavering commitment.

CRITERION 2: IMPACTFUL CONTRIBUTION

Has made a significant and positive impact in her role or organization since returning or joining the industry. Contributes to the advancement of her team, organization, or the wider payments and fintech ecosystem.

CRITERION 3: LEADERSHIP & INITIATIVE

Exhibits strong leadership and initiative. Takes on leadership roles or projects, inspiring others through her actions, and shows a proactive approach to tackling challenges and driving progress. Draws on past experience to contribute effectively to her organization or industry.

CRITERION 4: ADAPTABILITY & OVERCOMING BARRIERS

Demonstrates exceptional adaptability and the ability to overcome barriers. Embraces new skills, knowledge, and industry developments, enhancing her contributions while effectively navigating challenges with strategic thinking and innovation.

CRITERION 5: COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS LEARNING & GROWTH

Shows a strong commitment to continuous learning and professional growth within the payments and fintech industry. Actively seeks out opportunities to expand her knowledge, skills, and expertise, contributing to her own development and the advancement of her organization or the industry.

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UNSUNG HEROINE AWARD

The Women in Payments Unsung Heroine Award will be presented to a woman in the industry who embodies excellence in a critical but often under-recognized role. This includes, but is not limited to, professionals in risk management, compliance, operations, audit, infrastructure, and regulatory functions. Nominations are encouraged from across the payments and fintech ecosystem.

CRITERION 1: DEDICATION & IMPACT

Demonstrates consistent excellence and deep commitment to her role, ensuring the stability, safety, and integrity of systems and processes. Plays a foundational role in protecting the organization from risk while enabling growth and innovation behind the scenes.

CRITERION 2: LEADERSHIP & EXPERTISE

Is a trusted expert and go-to resource in her field. Leads with quiet strength, precision, and integrity. Contributes valuable insights that influence business-critical decisions, even without formal recognition or visibility.

CRITERION 3: ADVOCACY & INFLUENCE

Advocates for best practices, ethics, and risk-aware decision-making within her organization. Builds strong cross-functional relationships and influences others through credibility, collaboration, and subject matter expertise.

CRITERION 4: COLLABORATION & SUPPORT

Known for her dependability, team spirit, and willingness to step in wherever needed. Serves as a connector and stabilizer in fast-paced or high-pressure environments, supporting both colleagues and organizational success.

CRITERION 5: INTEGRITY & RESILIENCE

Upholds the highest standards of integrity in everything she does. Remains steady and solution-focused in the face of challenges, regulatory change, or organizational transformation. Demonstrates resilience while maintaining a positive, professional approach.

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WOMEN IN PAYMENTS UK-EU 2026 AWARDS PROGRAM CATEGORIES & CRITERIA

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Each nominee can only be nominated for one award category, duplicate nominations will not be accepted.
- A maximum of one nominee per category per organization.
- Self-nominations are not allowed.
- Each nominee submitted must reside in the UK-EU region (Europe, Middle East, and Africa).

Please have the following prepared in advance of submitting the application online:

Nominator (may not be the same as nominee)

- Name
- Organization
- Email
- Phone

Nominee

- Name
- Organization
- Job title
- Biography
- Email
- LinkedIn Profile (URL)
- Phone
- Address
- Headshot

Award

- Category
- Describe how the nominee meets the criteria for this award. (min 500 – 1000 max characters)
- Outline of the nominee's experience in the organization or within the payments industry in the areas of leadership, mentorship, integrity and diversity. (min 500 – 1000 max characters)
- Describe the nominee's most significant achievements in the organization or the payments industry in the areas of leadership, mentorship, integrity and diversity. Provide concise examples of initiatives, efforts, programs and or policies that have contributed to success. (min 500 – 1000 max characters)
- List any recognition or awards received by the nominee, the organization that awarded them and date awarded.
- Biography (min 500 – 1000 max characters)
- Profile picture of the nominee (max 1000 x 1000 pixels). Black and white photographs will not be accepted.

References

- Min of one (1) mandatory reference letter from colleagues and peers who can support the nomination. However, we encourage you to provide additional two supplementary references for a strong nomination. This is optional.

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- Name, Organization, Email, Phone
 - Capacity in which they know the nominee (min 100 – 300 max characters)
- Reasons why they support the nomination (min 100 – 300 max characters)

SAMPLE SCORING SHEETS

RISING STAR

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Drive	Professional Excellence	Potential	Communication	Integrity & Diversity	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

INNOVATION

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Innovation	Problem Solving	Productivity	Mentorship	Integrity & Diversity	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

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ADVOCATE FOR INCLUSIVITY

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Promotion of Female & Diverse Leadership	Advocate for Diversity & Inclusion	Supports & Educates	Mentorship	Integrity & Diversity	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

INSPIRATION

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Shares Vision	Leadership	Exudes Positivity	Builds Relationships & Mentorship	Communication & Integrity	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

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ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Leadership/Expertise	Positive Impact	Resilience	Sustainability Vision	Action & Commitment	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

BECKY CLEMENTS AWARD OF DISTINCTION

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Achievement	Contribution	Legacy	Mentorship	Integrity & Diversity	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

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RESILIENCE

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Resilience & Determination	Impactful Contribution	Leadership & Initiative	Adaptability & Overcoming Barriers	Commitment to Continuous Learning & Growth	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

UNSUNG HEROINE

Nomination #:					
Nominee:					
Title:					
Organization:					
Dedication & Impact	Leadership & Expertise	Advocacy & Influence	Collaboration & Support	Integrity & Resilience	Total Score
/10	/10	/10	/10	/10	/50

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