**2024 – Best Communication of Sustainability**

***Categories:*** *Small-, Mid-, and Large-cap Listed Companies.*

**IR Principles**

Please note that for all awards categories, companies need to emphasise how they have successfully addressed the following IR principles:

* Having an integrated equity story and investment case that is clearly communicated across all stakeholders setting out the company’s approach to long-term value creation
* Engaging with investors, analysts and other relevant stakeholders with the depth, transparency, and consistency to enable their fair assessment of the growth and value drivers of the company
* Meeting or exceeding regulatory requirements around disclosure and focusing on greater transparency of communication on material risks, challenges, progress and milestones both internally and externally.

**Award Description**

For this award we are looking for evidence of year-round continued communications with investors and stakeholders that set out the way the company approaches the identification, assessment and management of sustainability-related opportunities, risks and performance, and ultimately – effective communication to stakeholders around how this underpins the company’s long-term resilience and sustainable growth.

We recognise that this is a rapidly evolving area for many companies and each will be at different stages of their journey. We would like to see businesses communicate how internal approaches are being adapted to meet evolving needs of their stakeholders in relation to the company’s externalities. We are not necessarily looking for best practice across all areas of sustainability, we are looking for clear improvements in the year.

Some of the following key areas where transparency is increasingly expected by stakeholders include:

**Integration**

* Demonstrating how sustainability is proactively integrated across the business, and overall company vision, purpose and strategy
* Sharing the extent sustainability KPIs form part of performance objectives across the organisation; and link into remuneration

**Assessment of progress**

* Explaining how the company proactively assesses progress against long-term and interim sustainability milestones, and acts on learnings from this.

**Board effectiveness**

* Explaining how relevant sustainability and stakeholder related information is shared with the board on a timely basis and how it has impacted strategic decisions across all relevant areas

**Stakeholder engagement**

* Showing how there is proactive communication on sustainability-related matters with existing investors, as well as potential investors
* Demonstrating regular, transparent and clear communications with wider stakeholders. Demonstrating how communication channels are adapted to the target audience in terms of content and its delivery
* Explaining how stakeholder feedback and priorities are considered, this is best achieved through conducting a double materiality assessment.

In summary the judges are looking for evidence of transparency around how inputs on matters integral to the company's long-term resilience are gathered, assessed and acted on; what information is shared with the board; how the resulting decisions become part of the company’s strategic objectives and are tracked on an ongoing basis at the business.

There is increasing scrutiny from all stakeholders on concrete steps companies are taking to anticipate, address and mitigate financial impacts of ESG issues. A real opportunity exists for companies to be proactive in setting out their sustainable growth strategies, achievements and challenges as part of reporting and in engaging with the investment community.

Overall, judges will be looking for evidence of a clearly defined approach to transparency, with a consistent and proactive point of view on sustainable long-term value creation across all communications with investors.

**AWARD CRITERIA**

**Introduction**

Please provide in 1000 words or less a concise but insightful description of how your sustainability communications have developed in the year, keeping in mind the IR principles and individual awards description, and paying particular attention to what the judges are looking for. It would be helpful if you could highlight innovations, what you have done differently, and most importantly any evidence of success.

**Overview**

Provide a brief summary of your company’s key transparency objectives in relation to sustainability developments and priorities in the year, to set the scene for discussing communication achievements in the year.

**Strategy and Approach**

Explain how your approach to integrating your sustainability strategy within the company’s long-term value proposition has been reflected in your investor communications.

In consideration of wider stakeholders beyond investors, articulate how you have engaged with them in the year to ensure you understand and have responded to their priorities through your communication channels.

**Outcomes**

Demonstrate how you have measured the effectiveness of your communications of sustainability. Highlight any key outcomes that have resulted from your transparency of your approach to sustainability.

*(Max. 1000 words:)*

*Alongside your submission, please include links to relevant supporting materials. To assist with the judging process, please indicate in your entry the pages or sections of your annual report and any other supporting documentation where key information is covered/ can be found.*

*Please note Small-cap, Mid-cap and Large-cap criteria will be comparable to FTSE 100, 250 and Small-cap sizes as at 31 March, 2024.*