

Individual DealMaker of the Year 2026

This will be the 19th year in which the Individual DealMaker of the Year award is presented to an individual judged by his or her peers and the Independent Panel to have demonstrated an exceptional level of achievement and made an outstanding contribution to the South African M&A and corporate finance industry.

The DealMakers Advisory Board recognises that an award of this nature is necessarily subjective. It nevertheless believes that individuals who make an exceptional contribution to the development and execution of transactions, and to the broader industry, deserve recognition.

JUDGING CRITERIA:

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria:

Track record and significance of transactions

The quality, scale and significance of the transactions on which the individual has worked, with particular emphasis on the 2026 calendar year, while taking into account the candidate's broader track record over the past three years.

The Panel will consider the strategic importance and profile of the transactions, rather than simply their monetary value.

Individual contribution and deal-making ability

The extent to which the candidate made a **material and demonstrable contribution** to the development, structuring, negotiation and successful conclusion of the transaction(s).

The Panel will consider the individual's specific role and influence, including their ability to:

- identify and address critical issues;
- navigate competing interests;
- develop and negotiate solutions;
- influence outcomes; and
- drive a transaction towards successful conclusion.

The size or profile of a transaction will not, in itself, demonstrate an individual's contribution to it.

Leadership, judgement and influence

The individual's ability to lead and influence transactions and to demonstrate sound judgement in complex or challenging circumstances.

The Panel will consider evidence of:

- leadership of transaction teams;
- strategic and commercial judgement;
- effective negotiation;
- problem-solving and creativity;
- ability to build consensus among stakeholders; and
- the confidence and trust placed in the individual by clients and counterparties.

Complexity and execution

The degree of difficulty and complexity of the transactions in which the individual was involved, including, where relevant:

- multiple or inter-related transaction steps;
- complex deal structures;
- challenging conditions precedent;
- regulatory, competition or other approvals;
- associated debt, equity or other financing requirements;
- multiple stakeholders, jurisdictions or counterparties;
- significant time pressure; and
- innovative or creative structuring.

Peer and industry recognition

The individual's standing and reputation among fellow advisers, clients and other participants in the M&A and corporate finance community.

The Panel will consider the individual's professional reputation, integrity, influence and contribution to the development of the industry.

Overall distinction

The extent to which the individual stands out from his or her peers as an exceptional DealMaker.

In making its final assessment, the Panel will consider the candidate's track record, individual contribution, deal-making ability, leadership, judgement, execution capability and standing within the industry, together with the significance of the transactions on which he or she has worked.

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DEALMAKERS SUBJECTIVE ANNUAL AWARDS 2026

The awards will be unveiled at the Ansarada DealMakers Annual Awards on 18 February 2027.

Each year, Deal**Makers** recognises outstanding achievement through five subjective awards:

- Individual Deal**Maker** of the Year
- Deal of the Year
- Catalyst Private Equity Deal of the Year
- BEE Deal of the Year
- Business Rescue Transaction of the Year

Each award has its own specific judging criteria, designed to reflect the qualities and achievements that distinguish an exceptional individual or transaction in that category. These criteria will be used by the Independent Panel to assess submissions, determine the shortlist and select the eventual winner in each category.

ELIGIBILITY AND NOMINATION PROCESS

Transactions may be nominated by the advisory firms involved through a detailed submission setting out the nature of the transaction, its strategic rationale, the challenges encountered, the individual's or firm's contribution where relevant, and the anticipated or realised outcomes.

Unless otherwise specified a qualifying transaction must have been announced during the 2026 calendar year. The transaction does not need to have reached financial close.

Deal**Makers**, in consultation with the Independent Panel, will determine a shortlist of qualifying nominations for each category.

The winning individual or transaction in each category will receive a framed certificate and an inscribed floating trophy.

Where a qualifying transaction is announced after the nomination deadline, DealMakers must be informed in advance, with full details submitted no later than **18 December 2026**.

Nominations close at **12h00 on Friday, 27 November 2026**.

No extensions will be granted. Please submit all nominations to **marylou@gleason.co.za**.