

Press Release: For immediate release

Franco-British Business Awards celebrate business success in a trying year

London, 23rd November 2022 – The French Chamber of Great Britain is pleased to announce the winners of its 2022 Franco-British Business Awards, celebrating the tenacity of business to deliver growth and innovation during a year of ongoing challenges.

Now in their 23rd year, the awards recognise French and British companies going above and beyond to support people and communities, build inclusive and diverse workforces, make progress on climate action, and nurture the Franco-British relationship.

This year's ceremony, held at London's St Pancras Renaissance hotel, saw **Optivo, Browne Jacobson LLP, Vranken-Pommery Monopole, VINCI Construction Grands Projets, IONA, and Café Joyeux** picked as winners across six categories.

Fabienne Viala, President of the French Chamber of Great Britain, commented:

“The Franco-British Business Awards are a very special moment in the Chamber's calendar celebrating the remarkable achievements of our community of Franco-British companies. In this very challenging business environment, it is critical to recognise the remarkable ways our businesses have navigated a path to growth.

I warmly congratulate this year's winners. They are exemplars of the strong commercial, political and cultural ties between France and the UK.”

Further details are available on the French Chamber [website](#).

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The awards and winners



This award recognises a company which has demonstrated commitment to supporting local or national communities, either in France or in the UK. Its work must have had a significant, meaningful and sustainable impact on the community it supports, addressing current social challenges.

Winner: [Optivo](#)

Through a dedicated social innovation project, housing provider Optivo has helped over 4,000 people living in social housing in both France and the UK to access training, peer support and specialist advice for starting up their own business.



This award recognises an organisation that is going above and beyond to champion diversity and inclusion. The organisation must be able to demonstrate quantifiable, significant and verifiable steps to promote and achieve a diverse, inclusive and equitable workforce.

Winner: [Browne Jacobson LLP](#)

Commitment to improving social mobility is at the very core of Browne Jacobson's strategy. As well as removing minimum grade requirements for training contracts, the law firm has overhauled its recruitment processes and launched FAIRE (Fairer Access into Real Experience), a dedicated outreach programme offering work experience to candidates from lower socio-economic backgrounds



This award recognises a particularly successful example of a French and a British business working together to deliver a significant project. It celebrates an initiative that contributes to maintaining a close relationship and continuing the collaboration between France and the UK.

Winner: [Vranken-Pommery Monopole](#)

Vranken-Pommery Monopole became the first major champagne house to produce an English sparkling wine when it launched Louis Pommery England in 2017. Establishing a UK presence has helped the brand to promote the exchange of knowledge and skills between French and British workforces, as well as helping to build up a new British market for a French-inspired product.



This award, in partnership with Heart of the City, recognises an organisation that is going above and beyond to champion carbon neutrality. The organisation must be able to demonstrate it has put in place a quantifiable, significant and verifiable transformation plan to achieve Net Zero.

Winner: VINCI Construction Grands Projets

International construction firm VINCI impressed the jury with its ambitious plans to decarbonise its supply chain and reach net zero emissions by 2050. VINCI has committed to using 90% low-carbon concrete on all new projects by 2030 and actively contributes to international research programmes seeking out sustainable solutions for infrastructure.



This award recognises an organisation which has been trading for less than three years and has demonstrated strong vision, entrepreneurship and innovation since its inception. The organisation must be able to provide evidence of a compelling vision and financial plan to reach the next stage of its growth and establish itself within its market.

Winner: IONA

Launched in October 2021, IONA's goal is to revolutionise logistics through the use of drones to deliver goods to remote areas, cutting down on both costs and carbon emissions. The company expects to make its first flight next March and to launch its first operational franchise in 2024.



The Coup de Cœur Award, sponsored by the Conseillers du Commerce Extérieur de la France, recognises a candidate that, whilst not winning within a category, has impressed the jury members with the quality of its initiative.

Winner: Café Joyeux

Café Joyeux offers training and secure employment to people with cognitive disabilities like autism and Down's syndrome. Operating nine cafés in cities across France, Café Joyeux intends to open up a branch in London next year.

About the Chair of the jury

Pascal Boris CBE served as CEO of BNP Paribas UK from 1999 to 2007 and is a co-founder of the Cercle d'Outre-Manche, an independent thinktank bringing together French business leaders with an interest in promoting Franco-British connections.

Having served as President of the French Chamber of Great Britain from 2001 to 2007, he now sits on its board as Honorary President of the company.

About the organiser

Counting over 400 companies of all sizes and sectors among its membership, the **French Chamber of Great Britain** was established in 1883 with the goal of improving the commercial and industrial relationships between France and the UK. The diversity and high profile of its members – 40 per cent of which are non-French nationals – contributes to its success and reputation acquired over nearly 140 years.

The Chamber's core missions are to:

- Strengthen business relationships and encourage partnerships between French and British business to support growth and investment across the UK, by providing members with opportunities to network, exchange ideas and learn from peers;
- Promote the positive contribution of French business to the British economy, by bringing together members with key decision-makers and influencers on both sides of the Channel; and
- Assist French businesses entering the UK market through a range of business services from company registration to accounting and market research

The Chamber is part of the network of International French Chambers of Commerce and Industry, spanning 125 Chambers in 95 countries, and more than 33,000 businesses.

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