

Regulations



M&A Awards 2026

Showcasing excellence in M&A, corporate finance and private equity.

MAAwards.nl - MenA.nl



Dear Dealmaker,

As your M&A Community Managers, we - Laura de Munck and Elisa Houweling - are very pleased to welcome you to the 27th edition of the M&A Awards on the 10th of December, at the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam. A prestigious evening for a milestone moment in our industry.

This special evening offers a valuable opportunity to pause and celebrate everything you have achieved together with fellow M&A professionals over the past year. In the fast-paced world of mergers and acquisitions, this is the perfect moment to reflect, to connect, and to look ahead to what is coming next.

You will be surrounded by top-level professionals who have all faced challenges, closed significant transactions, and helped shape the future of the corporate landscape. Together, we will highlight the most remarkable moments of the year and honour the professionals, deals and companies who have made a lasting impact.

Whether or not you take home an award, your role in the world of mergers and acquisitions is essential. Do not forget to vote for the professionals and companies you believe deserve recognition.

We look forward to welcoming you in the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam, for a spectacular evening of recognition, celebration, and connection.

Warm regards,

Elisa Houweling & Laura de Munck
M&A Community Manager & Young M&A Community Manager

PS The 2026 M&A Awards is almost sold out. Don't miss out and reserve your party tickets today on MAAwards.nl.



Award categories and criteria

The following regulations are applicable to the 2026 M&A Awards:

Categories for deals

1. Best Deal, 2. Best Mid-Cap Deal and 3. Best Small Cap Deal

The best deals are determined by skilled execution, complexity of the transaction, innovative funding, a competitive purchase price and an excellent strategy behind the transaction. Also, a great deal shows evidence of great and authentic leadership, including development of a strong, progressive culture and wider contribution to all stakeholders and society.

Categories for professionals

4. Best Young PE Manager, 5. Best Young M&A Advisor and 6. Best Young M&A Lawyer

The best young and talented professionals (aged up to and including 35) with a minimum of between three and eight years of experience in the M&A profession and a proven track record of deals on [Dealmaker.nl](https://dealmaker.nl). The ideal candidate makes a strong contribution to the team, reacts quickly and cooperates well with seniors, juniors and clients. The person is eager to learn, delivers superior performance and is regarded as a rising star in one's field of expertise.

7. Best M&A Advisor and 8. Best M&A Advisor Mid-Market

The nominee has been involved in several leading deals (M&A Advisor > €250 million and M&A Advisor Mid-Market > €5-250 million), where he or she has demonstrably added value to all stakeholders through deep market insights, multiple years of experience, tailored service, and excellent dealmaking skills. Due to his or her approach, clients eagerly want to work with this Dealmaker. As a senior professional, this Dealmaker contributes to the development of young talent and to the quality of the field.

9. Best M&A Lawyer and 10. Best M&A Lawyer Mid-Market

The nominee has been involved in several leading deals (M&A Lawyer > €250 million and M&A Lawyer Mid-Market > €5-250 million), where he or she is recognized as an excellent and acknowledged lawyer with multiple years of experience in the merger and acquisition practice. Industry expertise, strong cross-border capabilities, first-class legal knowledge, and exceptional negotiation skills make this person a highly sought-after lawyer in the market. As a senior professional, this Dealmaker contributes to the development of young talent and to the quality of the field.

11. Best Debt Advisor

The nominee has been involved in several leading deals where he or she successfully resolved financing issues through deep market insight, creativity, and a strong sense of all stakeholders' interests. With an excellent track record ranging from acquisition financing to refinancing and restructuring, this advisor is seen as reliable and professional by clients, banks, and lawyers. As a senior professional, this Dealmaker contributes to the development of young talent and to the quality of the field.



12. Best M&A Tax Advisor

The title of Best M&A Tax Advisor is earned by the tax expert with an excellent track record, an impressive history, and expertise in overseeing all relevant tax aspects of the transaction, including deal structure, and mitigating or quantifying tax risks relevant to the transaction. The nominee is a respected expert and advisor for solving complex tax issues and has a broad view and impact on the legal, commercial, and financial aspects of the transaction. As a senior professional, this Dealmaker contributes to the development of young talent and to the quality of the field.

Categories for firms

13. Best M&A Law Firm and 14. Best Dutch M&A Law Boutique

The Best M&A Law Firm ranks high in the [league tables](#) (M&A Law Firm > €250 million and M&A Law Boutique > €5-250 million). The firms' elite teams with strong cross-border abilities and in depth industry knowledge is much in demand and indispensable for any successful merger or acquisition.

15. Best M&A House and 16. Best M&A House Mid-Market

The Best M&A House ranks high in the [league tables](#) (M&A House > €250 million and M&A House Mid-Market > €5-250 million). The firm is widely known as the preferred party by CEOs and investors. The Best Dutch M&A House is a rainmaker and a shaper of the Dutch corporate landscape. It performs beyond expectations.

17. Best Transaction Services Firm and 18. Best Transaction Services Firm Mid-Market

The Best Transaction Services firm (Transaction Services Firm > €250 million and Best Transaction Services Firm Mid-Market > €5-250 million) identifies and solves all potential problems and contributes to a successful negotiation for the best price and conditions for one's clients. The advice is indispensable for a smooth transition and faster realization of post-merger synergies.

19. Best Private Equity House, 20. Best Private Equity House Mid-Market, 21. Best Private Equity House Lower Mid-Market, 22. Best Family Office, 23. Best Hands-On Investment firm, 24. Best Venture & Growth Capital Provider

The winners in this category are leading the pack with smart investments that bring sustainable value to all shareholders and stakeholders. The winning firms are involved in landmark deals and are considered a role model for the industry.

25. Best Acquisition Finance Provider

The Best Acquisition Finance Provider is a bank or direct lender best known for its anticipation of clients' interests, outstanding knowledge and ability to combine attractive pricing with the right terms. Its technically very competent teams are exemplary.



26. Best Diversity Award

Inclusion is crucial in today's society, which is why we would like to award the firm which over the past year has contributed the greatest and therefore meets society's demand. The winning firm has shown crucial innovative progress, which is reproducible and moving the needle the most, providing inspiration for others.

Framework

1. Annually in October, the organization conducts the M&A Awards survey. Via the survey a selected group of experts can cast their vote for the longlisted firms and dealmakers.
2. Based on the M&A League Tables, the organization draws up a list of leading companies in M&A, corporate finance and private equity. Added to this list are corporates involved in deals from the end of 2025 until the end of 2026 larger than 50 million euros. Experts working in these companies are invited to take part in the survey.
3. The M&A League Tables is used by the organization to create longlists for the survey and to select and check experts, nominated deals and firms. The period used for the rankings is from 1 November 2025 until 1 November 2026.
4. The longlisted deals must at least have one Dutch component. A company is regarded Dutch if it is listed on the Euronext Amsterdam Stock Exchange or is headquartered in the Netherlands or has key activities in the Netherlands. Exceptions can be made (1) if the editorial board of [Dealmaker.nl](https://dealmaker.nl) has reasons to assume a company is registered in the Netherlands for other than operational reasons (e.g. fiscal), (2) in case the company uses dual headquarters, (3) or in case the company separated the legal and operational headquarters.
5. The longlisted deals need to be announced* or closed between November 1, 2025 and November 1, 2026. (*nothing in the public domain is to question the eventual approval of the transaction).
6. A deal can only be nominated once for the M&A Awards.
7. To be eligible for a M&A Awards nomination, a Dealmaker must be employed in the Netherlands and has substantial operations in the Netherlands.
8. In case multiple offices of a company were involved in a deal, only the Dutch office (i.e., the Dutch entity) will be nominated for a particular M&A Award category.
9. A deal, professional or firm cannot be nominated in multiple categories. In that case the nomination in the category with the most votes will count and the nomination in the other category will be cancelled. The votes will not be lost, but will be added to the score of this deal, professional or firm.



- 10.** Firms and professionals must have been actively involved in multiple Mid-Market and Large Cap deals between November 1, 2025 and November 1, 2026. Foreign firms and professionals can also be nominated, on the condition that they have been active in this time frame in the Dutch market.
- 11. a.** Nominations for Best M&A Advisor, Best M&A Advisor Mid-Market, Best M&A Lawyer and Best M&A Lawyer Mid-Market must be submitted via MAAwards.nl. Each organization can nominate a maximum of two individuals per award category, with at least one of them being a female nominee. An organization can also nominate someone from outside their organization to meet the criteria mentioned above. The deadline for submissions is September 14, 2026 at 23:59 hours.
- b.** Nominations for Best Debt Advisor and Best M&A Tax Advisor must be submitted via MAAwards.nl. Each organization can nominate a maximum of two individuals per award category. An organization can also nominate someone from outside their organization to meet the criteria mentioned above. The deadline for submissions is September 14, 2026 at 23:59 hours.
- 12.** Nominations for the categories Best Deal en Best Mid-Market Deal must be submitted via MAAwards.nl. Only forms received before October 12, 2026 23:59 hours are valid. Deals that are not eligible for nomination;
- Joint Ventures
 - Minority Investments
 - IPOs
 - Bare asset deals
 - non-Dutch deals
- 13.** Nominations for the categories Best Small Cap Deal must be submitted via MAAwards.nl. Only forms received before October 12, 2026 23:59 hours are valid. Deals that are not eligible for nomination;
- Joint Ventures
 - Minority Investments
 - IPOs
 - Bare asset deals
 - non-Dutch deals
- 14.** Nominations for the categories Best Young M&A Advisor, Best Young Private Equity Manager and Best Young M&A Lawyer must be submitted via MAAwards.nl. Only forms received before October 12, 2026 23:59 hours are valid.
- 15.** Nominations for the categories Best Diversity Firm Award must be submitted via MAAwards.nl. Only forms received before October 12, 2026 23:59 hours are valid.
- 16.** The determination of the nominees and the winners of the M&A Awards is supervised by a civil law notary.



- 17.** The M&A Awards are evaluated annually. Subjects of evaluation are among others the regulations and the categories.

Definitions

- 1.** Regulations: this document defining the nomination process and the determination of the winners.
- 2.** Organization: Sijthoff, Weesperplein 4A, 1018 XA Amsterdam, organiser of the M&A Awards.
- 3.** M&A League Tables: a database maintained by Sijthoff listing deals and professionals in the Dutch market that is used in the M&A Awards procedure. Submitting deals, companies and professionals to the M&A League Tables is free of charge.
- 4.** Deals, firms and professionals categories:
 - Deals
 - a. Large Cap segment: deals with a value larger than 250 million euros.
 - b. Mid Cap segment: deals with a value between 50 and 250 million euros.
 - c. Small Cap segment: deals with a value between 5 and 50 million euros.
 - Firms and professionals categories:
 - a. Large Cap segment: deals with a value larger than 250 million euros.
 - b. Mid-Market segment: deals with a value between 5 and 250 million euros.
- 5.** Private equity categories:
 - a. Top segment: funds larger than 1 billion euros.
 - b. Mid-Market segment: funds with a value between 100 million and 1 billion euros.
 - c. Lower Mid-Market segment: funds with a value up to 100 million euros.
- 6.** Experts: people working in M&A, corporate finance and/or private equity in senior positions such as partner or managing director as well as M&A Directors, CFOs and General Counsel of the largest Dutch companies with M&A, Corporate Finance in their portfolio.
- 7.** [Panel of Judges](#): small dedicated groups of experts selected to cast their votes for specific M&A Awards categories.
- 8.** Survey: online research among experts to determine M&A Awards results. Via the survey a selected group of experts can cast their vote for the longlisted firms and dealmakers.
- 9.** Deal: a transaction between multiple companies in which shares are bought and sold and/or funding is being provided.



- 10.** Nominations: completed endorsement for the categories Best M&A Advisor, Best M&A Advisor Mid-Market, Best M&A Lawyer and Best M&A Lawyer Mid-Market, Best Debt Advisor, Best M&A Tax Advisor, Best Deal, Best Deal Mid Cap, Best Small Cap Deal, Best Young M&A Advisor, Best Young Private Equity Manager and Best Young M&A Lawyer describing which deal or individual is nominated.
- 11.** Longlist: a list naming deals, firms or professionals used in the survey. Enabling voters to choose their favorite. Longlists are drafted on the M&A League Tables and the organization's insight.

Determination nominees and winners

- 1.** In the categories Best Deal, Best Deal Mid Cap, Best Small Cap Deal, Best Young M&A Advisor, Best Young Private Equity Manager and Best Young M&A Lawyer nominations can be submitted via MAAwards.nl. A selection of the nominated deals is presented to the different Panels of Judges. Scores are determined for 75% by the Panels of Judges and for 25% by votes of visitors of Dealmaker.nl.
- 2.** In the category Best Small Cap Deal pitches are presented by the nominees in front of a Panel of Judges.
- 3.** In the categories Best Young M&A Advisor, Best Young Private Equity Manager and Best Young M&A Lawyer, nominees will present themselves and their pitch in front of a Panel of Judges.
- 4.** In the category Best Diversity Firm, pitches are presented by the nominees in front of the Panel of Judges. The Panel of Judges will choose the winner based on three criteria: Move the needle – is what they are doing moving the needle in Diversity & Inclusion. Reproducible – is what they are doing capable of being easily replicated and so gaining greater traction in the industry. Innovative – is what they are doing innovative and different and what positive developments have they shown compared to last year as well as previous years.
- 5.** In the categories Best M&A Advisor, Best M&A Advisor Mid-Market, Best M&A Lawyer and Best M&A Lawyer Mid-Market, Best Debt Advisor and Best M&A Tax Advisor nominations can be submitted via MAAwards.nl. Scores are determined by the expert votes in the M&A Awards survey. The survey outcome for these categories is calculated by combining the number of votes and the position in the [M&A League Tables](https://M&ALeagueTables.nl). Each weighing 50%. The number of deals and the value of the deals are taken into account.*
- 6.** The results in all other categories are exclusively based on the outcome of the survey.



7. The survey outcome for the firm categories M&A House, M&A House Mid-Market, M&A Law Firm, M&A Law Boutique, Best Transaction Services Firm, Best Transaction Services Firm Mid-Market, Best Acquisition Finance Provider are calculated by combining the number of votes and the position in the [M&A League Tables](#). Each weighing 50%. The number of deals and the value of the deals are taken into account.*
8. Votes casted by Private Equity Investors, entrepreneurs, CEOs, CFOs, M&A Directors and General Counsel are counted twice.
9. Per company a maximum of 10 professionals are eligible to vote.
10. If more than 10 experts in the same discipline and from the same company participate in the survey, only the rating of the expert with the most completed survey will be taken into account. If 11 experts have filled in the questionnaire equally, only the rating of the most senior experts will be taken into account.
11. Experts are allowed to vote for multiple companies or professionals or deals in one category. In the individual categories, experts can only vote for 1 person, and it is not possible to vote for multiple individuals.
12. If an expert votes for a firm or colleague he or she is currently working for or votes on him - or herself, the vote is declared invalid.
13. Individual Dealmakers who have won a M&A Award in the categories Best M&A Advisor, Best M&A Advisor Mid-Market, Best M&A Lawyer and Best M&A Lawyer Mid-Market, Best Debt Advisor and Best M&A Tax Advisor the previous year cannot be nominated for a M&A Award in the same category in the following year.
14. The organization verifies if all questionnaires, votes and nominations meet the requirements as stipulated in these Regulations. If needed, endorsements, votes and nominations are declared invalid. If the organization decides that a category has not received enough votes or the number of endorsements is lower than 3, the organization withdraws the category.
15. If multiple persons, deals or companies receive exactly the same amount of votes, the organization decides who to nominate and who will win.

* Explication: The first step is to calculate points based on the votes from experts. Suppose the nominated firm holds position 1 based on the number of votes. This gives $21 - 1 (\text{position}) = 20$ points. The second step is to calculate points based on the M&A League Tables. Suppose the nominated firm holds position 1 in the M&A League Tables based on the number of deals done and position 3 based on the total deal value of deals done. The score in the league tables is $(21 - 1) * 50\% + (21 - 3) * 50\% = 19$. The third step is to combine the points from the votes and the M&A League Tables. The total score is $(20 + 19) * 50\% = 19,5$.



Announcement of results

- 1.** Nominees can find confirmation of their nomination via announcements on MAAwards.nl and MenA.nl as well as via media such as Het Financieele Dagblad.
- 2.** A description is made of nominated deals, firms and professionals. In case of the 7 jury categories, this description will be used in various publications. Nominees are asked to submit the requested information with regards to the deal (particulars, size, etc.). These descriptions will be revised and then published on MenA.nl. If the organization does not receive a description, it will draft up a text at its sole discretion.
- 3.** All nominees and winners receive a media kit containing the logo of the M&A Awards, which they can use in their communication.
- 4.** The winners will be announced during the exclusive gala dinner on the night of the M&A Awards.



Winners 2025

Exemplifying excellence in M&A, corporate finance and private equity.

Best Deal 	Best Deal Mid-Market 	Best M&A Law Boutique 	Best M&A Law Firm DE BRAUW BLACKSTONE WESTBROEK
Best M&A House Mid-Market 	Best M&A House 	Best Transaction Services Firm Mid-Market 	Best Transaction Services Firm Deloitte.
Best Acquisition Finance Provider 	Best Venture & Growth Capital Provider INVESTNL	Best Hands-On Investment Firm 	Best Family Office 
Best Private Equity House Lower Mid-Market 	Best Private Equity House Mid-Market 	Best Private Equity House WATERLAND	Best M&A Advisor Nicholas Aperghis Aperghis & Co
Best M&A Advisor Mid-Market Jean-Luc Zeguers IMAP Netherlands	Best Debt Advisor Jan Deurhof AXECO	Best M&A Tax Advisor Rowdy Schouten JSA Tax	Best M&A Lawyer Mid-Market Maurice Dudink deBreij
Best M&A Lawyer Lennard Keijzer De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek	Best Diversity Firm Baker McKenzie.	Best Deal Small Cap 	Best Young M&A Advisor Fenne Schenkelaars ABN AMRO Bank
	Best Young M&A Lawyer Baris Koca A&O Shearman	Best Young PE Manager Joris Bakker H2 Equity Partners	



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