

## Application Form - Excellence in Learning & Development

### Category Definition

Excellence in Learning and Development recognizes organizations that achieve exceptional impact in building critical workforce capabilities through innovative and future-ready L&D initiatives. Organizations should have taken a strategic, business-aligned approach to developing both tacit and explicit knowledge, focusing on skills that meet evolving industry and organizational demands. By moving beyond traditional training formats, organisations should have leveraged modern learning ecosystems—such as experiential learning, digital platforms, immersive technologies, and data-driven personalization—to deliver engaging, scalable, and high-impact development experiences, that has fostered a culture of continuous growth, adaptability.

### Category Sub-elements and Evaluation Parameters

INNOVATION	IMPACT	SCALABILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creative and tech-enabled solutions for driving skill enhancements and behaviour changes, creating knowledge advancement opportunities and enabling systemic changes at an organisation level that cater to a continuous learning culture and career management framework.</li> <li>Variety of approaches/delivery modes/platforms used in the project/ initiative</li> <li>Awareness generation and popularizing the system/process in the organization (communication &amp; engagement)</li> <li>Integration of the project/ initiative with the HR strategy and overall organization strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measuring success through direct and indirect, observable metrics and benefits resulting from the initiative action items (at employee, stakeholder and systemic levels)</li> <li>Parameters used to measure business and strategic impact of the project/ initiative (qualitative and quantitative metrics)</li> <li>Parameters used to measure the satisfaction level, usage, and value of the project/ initiative for the target audience and employees covered by the program (people impact metrics)</li> <li>Recognition of the initiative/ project in internal and external forums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-sustaining, and technology enabled action plan, showcasing future forward approach in business sustainability that fosters proactive learning, predicts role based learning gaps, identifies individual potential and provides a holistic and agile learning environment.</li> <li>Financial and people related investments, leadership and strategic buy-in, employee driven agendas and clear stakeholder wise ownership &amp; accountability (e.g. details of organizational culture and infrastructural changes made, alignment with strategic business goals)</li> <li>Adequate balance between a human touch (exceptions, personal connect) of the project/ initiative and transactions required due to processes implemented (through established norms, detailed guidelines)</li> <li>Continued improvement in the metrics/sustained reasons made through design elements and implementation planning</li> </ul>

## **Eligibility Criteria**

Eligible initiatives may be single or multiple programs that have been effectively operational (implemented and not just in planning phase) for at least 12 months. The following are indicative disciplines that the initiative could fall under:

- Organizational Learning Strategy
- Employee Training Programs
- On-the-Job Training Programs
- E-Learning and Digital Training
- Career Development and Pathing
- Learning Culture and Engagement Initiatives

## APPLICATION FORM

**As a reminder, please specify if you are applying as the local entity/subsidiary/independent firm in the given geography. And ensure that the project/ initiative has been in operation (been implemented and not only in planning phase) in the entity applying for the award for minimum 12 months.**

Details of SPOC (Single Point of Contact): This could be the CHRO or relevant Functional Head.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section A - Participant Information

All questions are mandatory. Your questionnaire may not be considered complete if these questions are left blank.

1. Company/Entity Name Applying for the Award (share full registered name):
2. Please share abbreviation of the Company/Entity Name (this is for publishing/printing on certificates and additional collateral, if you are a winner of the SHRM STAR Awards 2025):
3. Upload a hi resolution jpeg file of your company logo (this is for our records and publishing on the website, if you are a winner of the SHRM STAR Awards 2025):
4. Date of Incorporation of Company/Entity:
5. Parent Company Name (if applicable):
6. Parent Company Headquarters (if applicable):
7. Regions of Operation (if applicable):
  1. GCC (Gulf Countries Corporation)

2. Levant
3. North Africa
4. Europe
5. Americas
6. Asia-Pacific
7. Others (please specify)

8. Nature of Business/Industry Type:

1. Healthcare
2. Pharmaceuticals
3. Manufacturing
4. Services
5. Hospitality
6. IT/ITeS
7. Consulting
8. Education
9. Automotive
10. Military
11. Real Estate
12. Others

9. Nature of Ownership:

1. Corporate
2. Partnership
3. Trust
4. Government
5. Semi-Government
6. Foreign Owned Multinational

10. Revenues (as of Financial Year 2025)

1. < \$ 5mm

2. > \$5mm < \$20mm
3. > \$20mm < 50mm
4. > \$50mn

11. Structure of the HR function

1. Centralized versus decentralized
2. Outsourced/In-House HRIS
3. Extent of automation

12. Financial Year followed (Responses provided in Section A and B will be considered accordingly)

1. Jan – Dec
2. Apr – Mar
3. Jun – Jul
4. Other

13. HR Metrics:

Metrics	Unit	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Revenue Growth	%			
Profit Growth	%			
Total Employee Headcount (Full Time Equivalent/ Permanent Employees)	Nos.			
Total Contractual Employee Headcount	Nos.			
Total HR Employee Strength (FTE)	Nos.			
HR to Employee Ratio	%			
Diversity Ratio [females, males, differently abled]	%			
Average Employee Age	Years			
Voluntary Attrition Rate (Annual)	%			
Employee Engagement Scores	On a scale of 1 to 10			

## Section B – Quantitative and Qualitative Metrics

This section covers the **quantitative and qualitative aspects of the initiatives** under the concerned category. Providing all the information under this section will enhance your nomination and aid the jury in accurate evaluation of your application.

For the **qualitative** section, space is available to capture **details of the depth and breadth of your organization’s initiative**. Please restrict your responses in this section to approximately **500 words per response**.

For the **quantitative** section, please provide **metrics that support the responses provided in the qualitative section with tangible metrics that show the direct and indirect impact of the initiative/s**. A few indicative options of metrics tracked for this award category are provided for each sub-element. You may fill the details basis the metrics that are tracked in your organization.

Both the quantitative and qualitative aspects follow the **three pillars of evaluation, which are Innovation, Impact and Scalability**. Each evaluation criteria is clearly defined. Please go through the definitions for each and share your responses accordingly.

## INNOVATION

This criterion looks at:

- **Creative and tech-enabled solutions for driving skill enhancements and behaviour changes, creating knowledge advancement opportunities and enabling systemic changes at an organisation level that cater to a continuous learning culture and career management framework.**
- **Variety of approaches/delivery modes/platforms used in the project/ initiative**
- **Awareness generation and popularizing the system/process in the organization (communication & engagement)**
- **Integration of the project/ initiative with the HR strategy and overall organization strategy**

### INNOVATION: Qualitative Metrics

For the qualitative section, space is available to capture details of the depth and breadth of your organization’s initiative. Please restrict your responses in this section to approximately 500 words per response.

**1. What were the key problem areas/ issues faced by the organization that required an innovative initiative/ organization-wide change to be implemented?**

[Indicative qualitative metrics – Difficulty in long term talent planning, Dealing with change, key stakeholder involvement, employee accountability, unable to address role specific skill gaps, etc.]

**2. Describe the initiatives that emerged to address the above-mentioned problem areas/ issues and their key objectives.**

[Indicative qualitative metrics – Alignment of organization values, autonomy in decision-making, employee buy-in through using consultative and inclusive processes, better communication approaches to deal with uncertainty of change, etc.]

## INNOVATION: Quantitative Metrics

For the quantitative section, please **provide metrics that support the responses provided in the qualitative section with tangible metrics** that show the direct and indirect impact of the initiative/s.

A **few indicative options of metrics** tracked for this award category are provided as well (**click here**). You may fill the details basis the metrics that are tracked in your organization.

Metric Name	Unit of Measurement	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Metric #1 (i) <click here to view sample metrics>	[%,#,\$,Hrs]	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only
Metric #2 (i) <click here to view sample metrics>	[%,#,\$,Hrs]	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only
Metric #3 (i) <click here to view sample metrics>	[%,#,\$,Hrs]	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only
Metric #4 (i) <click here to view sample metrics>	[%,#,\$,Hrs]	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only
Metric #5 (i) <click here to view sample metrics>	[%,#,\$,Hrs]	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only

### Indicative Quantitative Metrics:

- Creative and tech-enabled solutions:
  - % of learning delivered through AI-driven or personalized platforms (e.g. learning hours generated through AI-based adaptive learning systems); Increase in usage of immersive technologies (VR/AR) for skill-building (e.g. leadership simulations using VR); Learning Management System leveraging AI and machine learning
  - Number of digital coaching or micro-learning nudges generated by AI systems; % of content being designed to cater to different learning styles, leadership styles for easier absorption; % of programs implemented with the help of employee champions/ mentors; % of programs designed through simulation based learning
- Variety of approaches/delivery modes/platforms used in the project/ initiative
  - Number of distinct learning modalities offered (experiential labs, simulations, mobile learning, webinars, gamification, micro learning, job rotations); % of workforce engaged in multi-modal learning journeys; Growth in cross-functional learning opportunities (job shadowing, stretch assignments)
  - Coverage across regions, business units, and talent cohorts; Number and percentage of employees participating in learning and development programs; Geographical or business unit expansion of programs
- Awareness generation and popularizing the system/process in the organization (communication & engagement)

- Program communication/ learning modules engagement rate (email opens, clicks, intranet visits, video views); Increase in voluntary course enrollments after communication pushes
- Growth in social learning participation (discussion forums, internal knowledge-sharing communities); Participation rate in L&D events (learning weeks, hackathons, workshops)
- **Integration of the project/ initiative with the HR strategy and overall organization strategy**
  - % of strategic roles with defined capability academies or learning pathways; number of critical roles mapped to structured learning pathways; % of internal roles filled through capability development rather than external hiring
  - Alignment of L&D KPIs with business outcomes (productivity, quality, customer metrics); % match of the TNA analysis outcomes mapped into the L&D calendar; % of development goals mapped to employees matched with L&D programs taken up (e.g. % employees whose development goals mapped 100%)

## IMPACT

This criterion looks at:

- Measuring success through direct and indirect, observable metrics and benefits resulting from the initiative action items (at employee, stakeholder and systemic levels)
- Parameters used to measure business and strategic impact of the project/ initiative (qualitative and quantitative metrics)
- Parameters used to measure the satisfaction level, usage, and value of the project/ initiative for the target audience and employees covered by the program (people impact metrics)
- Recognition of the initiative/ project in internal and external forums

### IMPACT: Qualitative Metrics

- 3. How did you assess the effectiveness of the initiatives undertaken and what were the results? Please share relevant metrics that are tracked to evaluate effectiveness.**

[Indicative qualitative metrics – Employee satisfaction scores, client/employee feedback, manager feedback, improved skills and knowledge base/ overall performance ratings, observable business impact, etc.]

- 4. What impact have your initiatives had on your key stakeholders?**

[Indicative qualitative metrics – Employee engagement, employee empowerment, employee loyalty, openness to change, improved ability of to manage change, etc.]

## IMPACT: Quantitative Metrics

For the quantitative section, please **provide metrics that support the responses provided in the qualitative section with tangible metrics** that show the direct and indirect impact of the initiative/s.

A **few indicative options of metrics** tracked for this award category are provided as well (**click here**). You may fill the details basis the metrics that are tracked in your organization.

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Metric #4 <sup>(i)</sup> <click here to view sample metrics>	[%,#,\$,Hrs]	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only
Metric #5 <sup>(i)</sup> <click here to view sample metrics>	[%,#,\$,Hrs]	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only

### Indicative Quantitative Metrics:

- Business and Strategic Impact
  - Improvement in productivity or performance outcomes attributable to skill development (e.g. Teams completing role-specific academies impact on productivity); Reduction in time-to-productivity for new hires or newly promoted employees; Pre- and post-training assessment scores showing improvement in skills and knowledge
  - Improvement in business unit performance post program participation; Cost savings from internal talent mobility supported by career pathing; Increase in business KPIs tied to capability uplift (quality, customer scores, safety metrics)
- Systemic Impact
  - Percentage of roles with updated capability frameworks and mapped learning pathways; Increase in cross-functional mobility or project rotations enabled by L&D; Average time to promotion for program participants versus non-participants

- Improvement in overall workforce capability index (based on assessments or certifications); Organization-wide participation coverage across geographies, units, or job levels
- **People Impact**
  - Increase in employee learning engagement scores (learning satisfaction, usefulness rating); Retention improvement among employees engaged in structured learning programs
  - Growth in individual development plan (IDP) completion rates; Increase in certifications or skill credentials earned
- **Stakeholder Perception and Recognitions**
  - Improvement in brand reputation and stakeholder trust; Leadership confidence scores in workforce readiness and capability; Employee engagement scores pre- and post-training program implementation; Survey results on employee satisfaction with L&D programs
  - Increase in learning and development-related positive media mentions or social engagement metrics, awards received for the initiative in internal or external forums, industry associations, regional/ global forums (e.g., learning program recognition, External awards or certifications received for learning and development)

## SCALABILITY

This criterion looks at:

- **Self-sustaining, and technology enabled action plan, showcasing future forward approach in business sustainability that fosters proactive learning, predicts role based learning gaps, identifies individual potential and provides a holistic and agile learning environment.**
- **Financial and people related investments, leadership and strategic buy-in, employee driven agendas and clear stakeholder wise ownership & accountability (e.g. details of organizational culture and infrastructural changes made, alignment with strategic business goals)**
- **Adequate balance between a human touch (exceptions, personal connect) of the project/ initiative and transactions required due to processes implemented (through established norms, detailed guidelines)**
- **Continued improvement in the metrics/sustained reasons made through design elements and implementation planning**

### SCALABILITY: Qualitative Metrics

**5. What are the key factors that are required for the initiatives to sustain and grow over the next few years?**

[Indicative qualitative metrics – Budget allocation, team expansion, employee involvement audit, process audit and formal stakeholder feedback, formal policy on initiatives etc.]

**6. What are some of your planned learning and development Initiatives for the next 2 to 3 years?**

## SCALABILITY: Quantitative Metrics

For the quantitative section, please **provide metrics that support the responses provided in the qualitative section with tangible metrics** that show the direct and indirect impact of the initiative/s.

A **few indicative options of metrics** tracked for this award category are provided as well (**click here**). You may fill the details basis the metrics that are tracked in your organization.

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Metric #5 <sup>(i)</sup> <click here to view sample metrics>	[%,#,\$,Hrs]	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only	Enter a numerical value only

### Indicative Quantitative Metrics:

- Long-term Commitment and Resource Prioritization:
  - Timelines or financial commitments, resource allocations for long-term goals and milestones set for learning and development initiatives (consistency in planning and implementation, success metrics for employee participation and engagement, and cultural impact, % of learning and development funds allocated across multi-year cycles; Growth in learning participation or hours delivered over multiple years)
  - Milestones for an employee led, technology enabled action plan with data driven tracking & implementation (dashboards, impact-tracking tools), number of dedicated resources/roles (Expansion in L&D headcount or certified internal trainers/coaches) added annually; Increase in number of strategic programs run annually
- Continuous Improvement:
  - Number of program enhancements, redesigns, or new modules added annually; frequency of program updates based on feedback and performance reviews, Increase in learner satisfaction scores post-iteration

- Increase in program adoption or completion rates after each iteration; Reduction in capability gaps across cohorts measured annually; improvement in digital adoption rates each year
- Integration with Business Strategy:
  - Degree of alignment between learning and development initiatives and the company’s core business strategy, inclusion of learning goals in employee performance metrics and reports; % of organizational KPIs influenced by L&D metrics
  - Number of strategic initiatives executed by program graduates; Increase in internal fill rate for critical roles enabled by learning and career pathing
- Transparency and Reporting:
  - Frequency and reach of L&D analytics dashboards published; Number of learning data points tracked and reported (skills, readiness, effectiveness)
  - % of learning programs with measurable ROI or impact reporting; % of L&D data externally validated or benchmarked
- Sustainable Impact:
  - Expansion of learning & development initiatives across regions/business units (scalability index); target for multi-year improvement trend in addressing capability gaps (multi-year improvement in workforce capability index)
  - Targeted retention rate of program graduates over 2–4 years; Targeted percentage of employees progressing to higher roles through learning pathways

**7. Please use the space below to add any further details/information to supplement your responses provided in the above three sections for Innovation, Impact and Scalability.**

*Note: You may choose to attach up-to five supporting collaterals for a particular award category (maximum file size: 5 MB for PDF and 2 GB for MP4). These collaterals will be accepted only in the form of PDF documents or MP4 video files. [Please note no excel formats, links hyperlinked in text will be accepted. In case of a video submission, this video needs to talk specifically about the intervention/ practice been showcased and should not be a generic one.]*

**GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS USED/STANDARD UNDERSTANDIGN OF TERMINOLOGY**

<b>Terms</b>	<b>Descriptions</b>
FY (Fiscal Year)	Refers to the financial year followed in the region. 1 <sup>st</sup> April to 31 <sup>st</sup> March (Please clarify in Section A in case of exception)
Leadership Team	The top 2 tiers of your organization i.e. the Chairman/ MD/ CEO and Executive Board (or equivalent).
Senior Management	This includes first level reports of the Leadership Team
Middle Management	This includes senior managers with experience ranging between 8 to 16 years
Junior Management	This includes first level managers with experience ranging between 2 to 8 years
Staff	This includes Individual contributors with no people managerial responsibility (i.e., no one reporting to them)
Blue Collar	Skilled and unskilled workers
Full Time/ Permanent Employees	These are employees, who are on the payroll of the organization and work a normal week. These do not include seasonal staff, temporary staff, contractors, consultants, vendors etc.
Employee Growth Rate	Year on Year increase in the number of employees (Full time and Permanent employees only)
Average Employee Age Group	This refers to the average age group (range) within which most of the organization's employees would fit.
Offer Drop %	Percentage of Employment Offers rejected
Employee Engagement Scores	We are referring to the Employee Engagement survey which is conducted every year in the organization. Calculated as number of respondents (employees who have responded to this area/shared this as a factor of engagement related to the organization) as a percentage of the total number of respondents.
Customer Satisfaction Scores	Customer Satisfaction Scores captured through a survey. This includes external customers only.