



# **CORPORATE FINANCE** *Awards 2025*

**Celebrating excellence within the Corporate Finance industry**

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# CORPORATE FINANCE *Awards 2025*

## Overview

**T**he second edition of the Corporate Finance Awards was held virtually on 17 July 2025 to celebrate the outstanding financial performances of the UK's middle and larger sized companies.

The awards also recognise the supplier organisations that support corporate finance, including private equity and accountancy firms, banks, asset managers, and tech and other key providers.

The past year has shown us how volatile the business space can be, not only here at home, but across the globe, with geopolitical events and investor reactions to the market affecting how companies operate and tackle a range of issues.

Successful firms have navigated these challenges through efficiency, people and cost management, leadership and with an expert use of technology, and these awards acknowledge the feats achieved by these companies.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the firms that entered the awards, congratulate those who won an award, and we look forward to welcoming you back for the Corporate Finance Awards 2026.

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## The winners

**Asset Manager of the Year**

WINNER: Royal London Asset Management

**Technology Provider of the Year**

WINNER: Behavox

**Corporate Consultancy of the Year**

WINNER: VSA Capital

**Business Lender of the Year**

WINNER: Capify

**Corporate Finance Team of the Year**

WINNER: Transport for London

**Investment Strategy of the Year**

WINNER: Pluto Finance

**M&A Deal of the Year**

WINNER: VSA Capital

**Best Use of Artificial Intelligence**

WINNER: Auquan



# CORPORATE FINANCE *Awards 2025*

## **Asset Manager of the Year: Royal London Asset Management**

This award is presented to the firm that has displayed great performance figures, as well as strong levels of innovation, ESG integration and stewardship across the year, demonstrating that it is a real leader in this asset management industry.

The winner of the Asset Manager of the Year, for the second year running, is Royal London Asset Management.

Royal London Asset Management is one of the UK's leading investment companies and it has built a reputation as an innovative asset manager by investing across all major asset classes.

It manages over £173bn of assets as of December 2024, which are split across equities, fixed interest, multi-asset investing, property and cash, and sustainable investing.

While 2024 was an extremely challenging year for investors because of geopolitical tensions, rising inflation and rising interest rates, Royal London Asset Management was able to provide a strong and consistent long-term performance.

In this period, 84% of its active funds were ahead of benchmark over three years to the end of March 2025.

Royal London Asset Management believes that companies that prepare for a more sustainable future are more likely to deliver long-term returns for clients, as governments, regulators and consumers continue to focus on delivering a better future for society and the environment.

The firm also understands that being a responsible investor means integrating the environmental, social and governance factors into its active investment decisions where appropriate according to individual fund objectives. Therefore, the firm integrates, analyses and assesses ESG issues across its funds to better manage investment risks and opportunities.

Each investment team at Royal London Asset Management is responsible for considering ESG factors and principal adverse impacts in their investment processes, alongside financial and non-financial factors.

As well as working to be a responsible investor, Royal London Asset Management has carried out a number of stewardship activities in 2024 to ensure that it is making a contribution to society in a wider sense.

This includes launching a new Ethical AI programme, to tackle AI's ethical and sustainability challenges; making its first natural capital investment in prime UK farmland to protect biodiversity for future generations; and invested in residential and commercial mortgage-backed securities within its sustainable funds.

Furthermore, Royal London Asset Management has committed to achieving net zero across its investment portfolio by 2050 and is aiming to reduce carbon emissions from its investment portfolios by 50% by 2030.

Alongside its aims as an asset manager, the firm continues to maintain an open and transparent approach with its clients. This communication is provided through regular thought leadership updates via its website and social media channels.

It also produces blogs, articles, podcasts, webinars and reports which are readily available via its website, as well as its quarterly updates, such as its Royal London Sterling Credit ESG analysis report.

Royal London Asset Management has proven throughout the year that it is not just a responsible asset manager, but an investor that prepares its clients for a more sustainable future with the aim of providing long-term returns.

Congratulations once again to Royal London Asset Management for winning this award.

# PERFORMANCE POWERED BY PERSPECTIVE

It's how we deliver **asset management excellence** with  
a longer-term perspective at Royal London Asset Management.

Discover more at [rlam.com](http://rlam.com)

Left: Alexandra, Head of Client Services

Right: Adam, Business Development Manager

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# CORPORATE FINANCE *Awards 2025*

## Business Lender of the Year: Capify

The Business Lender of the Year Award is presented to the firm that was deemed to have served the full SME landscape and has delivered capital faster than ever to where it was needed most.

The year's winner is Capify.

Capify is a small business loan lender that offers fast, flexible business loans of up to £3m over terms of up to two years, available on a secured or unsecured basis.

Founded in 2002 by CEO David Goldin, Capify expanded to the UK during the 2008 financial crisis to support SMEs when traditional lenders stepped back. Since then, the firm has funded over £1.2bn to more than 20,000 businesses, becoming a leading alternative finance provider.

Unlike traditional lenders, Capify delivers funding decisions within hours and access to capital as fast as the same day, believing that business lending should be an enabler to help companies invest in growth, manage working capital, refinance debt and navigate economic challenges.

Over the past year, Capify has worked to advance this mission by evolving into a multi-brand lending group and launching two new offerings alongside its Capify.co.uk product, which is its core business lending platform.

The first brand, CAPEEDGE.co.uk, was created for owner-managed businesses with £5m in turnover. It provides secured loans from £500,000 to £3m, and addresses complex requirements with funding available within 48 hours.

The other brand, Rapital.co.uk, is designed for under-served businesses with low credit scores, past defaults, or CCJs, with Capify offering flexible, short-term capital from £5,000 to £250,000.

Each brand is engineered to meet the specific needs of its target segment to ensure that it matches the right product to virtually any SME.

Throughout the year, Capify has demonstrated a great relationship with its customers.

Its team is trained to identify and assist vulnerable applicants with clear processes and escalation paths, while its underwriting process ensures that every loan is sustainable. If a loan is not right, the firm does not proceed, even if it means saying no.

This relationship is reflected in its excellent Trustpilot rating, which demonstrates its commitment to service, transparency and responsible lending.

The firm has also launched a new dedicated broker channel in the past year. It combines cutting-edge technology with personal support to deliver seamless experiences and define the Capify experience.

This includes smart decisioning, which is powered by Open Banking and real-time data, as well as live dashboards that track borrower health, enabling proactive renewals or support.

In conclusion, Capify is redefining what it means to be a modern business leader. It serves the full SME landscape with industry-leading speed, responsible proactive and a culture that is rooted in care.

The firm is not just growing its business, but it is building a smarter, more inclusive financial ecosystem for UK SMEs through continued investment in products, platforms and people.



# When running a business, certainty is everything.

That's why thousands of SMEs across the UK trust Capify.  
And, return to us whenever they need to move forward.

Whether it's covering cash flow, hiring new staff, or investing in growth, we're here with fast, flexible funding that works around you - ***not the other way round.***

- ✓ Trusted by UK businesses for **over 15 years**
- ✓ Loans from **£5,000 to £3,000,000**
- ✓ **Same-day funding** available

Because with the right support, ***business gets easier.***



Capify.co.uk



0800 151 0980



Trustpilot



Excellent



**CORPORATE FINANCE  
Awards 2025**

**WINNER**

Business Lender of the Year



# CORPORATE FINANCE *Awards 2025*

## Investment Strategy of the Year: Pluto Finance

Having won in this category in 2024, Pluto Finance was named the winner of the Investment Strategy of the Year for a second year running.

Pluto, a leading UK-based real estate credit platform, specialises in development and bridge lending for residential housing projects.

This year's judges heaped praise on the firm for its semi-open-ended vehicle, Fund VIII, and described Pluto's track record in residential development and bridge lending as "exemplary".

Since its launch in 2011, Pluto has deployed over £3.3bn in loans, facilitating the delivery of more than 12,000 homes across the UK. The firm lends to SME developers to fund the building of high impact housing schemes, addressing the UK's acute housing shortage while generating strong returns for institutional investors.

By unlocking institutional capital for residential development, Pluto has become a vital conduit between private investors and public need. Central to the firm's success has been its ability to blend bespoke fund structuring, ESG alignment, and thematic investment strategies into one coherent, scalable model.

Pluto's place-based investment strategy, developed in collaboration with UK pension funds and LGPS clients, allows investors to allocate capital towards specific regional objectives or social outcomes, from the delivery of affordable housing in underfunded localities to supporting net-zero development goals.

Alongside this, Pluto has expanded its low carbon lending initiative, which offers interest rate incentives to developers meeting stringent sustainability criteria. These homes are designed to reduce whole-life carbon emissions by up to 92%, representing a major step forward in aligning private capital with the UK's decarbonisation targets.

Pluto's strategy has not only proven durable, but it is also actively scaling. Last year's launch of Fund VIII, which particularly caught the eyes of our judges, is one such example.

An evergreen structure, the fund has already secured £400m from a high-quality institutional investor base of pensions, LGPS pools, insurance, charity and asset manager clients – several of whom have participated in re-ups from earlier vehicles.

Fund VIII deploys capital across two core strategies – 60% in development loans of between £5m and £60m to SME developers delivering housing affordable to the local area, and 40% in bridge loans of £2m to £30m against transitional assets entering residential use.

To date, Fund VIII has 43 live loans and 11 repaid loans, with strong pipeline momentum and investor appetite continuing to build.

Pluto's lending has delivered strong, consistent rates of return and backed developments that have delivered more than £1.8bn in additional economic value. The firm continues to deliver clarity, offering investors access to long-term, secured returns while playing a leading role in tackling one of the UK's most urgent structural challenges.

Congratulations again to Pluto Finance for showcasing an outstanding investment strategy.



# Empowering Local Communities with Private Real Estate Debt



Lending since  
**2011**



**£3.3bn**  
Lent  
to date



**£11m**  
Average  
facility size



**12,000+**  
Homes  
financed

## About Pluto Finance

**market leading access | stable secured returns | local affordable opportunities**

Pluto Finance is a real estate private credit platform, specialising in senior lending on predominantly residential assets in the UK. Since its inception in 2011, the company has provided over £3.3bn of lending across bridging and development finance, funding the delivery of over 12,000 new homes. Pluto Finance is part-owned by the Universities Superannuation Scheme, the UK's largest private sector pension scheme.



[www.pluto-finance.com](http://www.pluto-finance.com)



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