

2026 CFA Awards of Excellence & Franchisees' Choice Designation Companion Document

Award Categories

To reflect the wide range of franchise opportunities in Canada and enable franchise systems to be rated against their peers in their class, the Awards of Excellence are divided into Traditional and Non-Traditional segments and include seven distinct categories. Winners are determined from the franchisees' assessments.

Franchisees' Choice Designees are entrants with survey scores exceeding a benchmark standard. Additionally, the CFA recognizes consecutive winners that have won more than five years in a row.

1. CFA Award of Excellence

The Awards of Excellence are awarded to CFA franchisor members that have demonstrated the strongest and most mutually beneficial relationships with their franchisees. There are two categories: CFA Award of Excellence in Franchising, and the Franchisees' Choice Designation.

Considered the pinnacle of franchise achievement in Canada, the CFA Awards of Excellence in Franchising are given annually to franchise systems that have demonstrated superior franchise relations, leadership, training, and communications.

To reflect the wide range of franchise opportunities in Canada and to enable franchise systems to be rated against peers in their class, the Awards of Excellence include seven categories. Winners are determined from the franchisees' assessments, and a weighting is given for a higher response rate. The prestigious CFA Award of Excellence in Franchising Grand Prize is given to a Gold winner in the Traditional category and a Gold winner in the Non-Traditional category.

2. CFA Franchisees' Choice Designation

The Franchisees' Choice Designation honours CFA member franchise systems with exceptional rankings in franchisee satisfaction.

Franchisees are asked to assess their franchisor in key areas of the franchise business model, including the franchisee selection process, franchisee information package, leadership, business planning and marketing, training, and support, as well as ongoing operations and the relationship between the franchisor and franchisee.

In the due diligence process of investigating a franchise opportunity, speaking with existing franchisees about the opportunity being explored is essential. For prospective franchisees, the Franchisees' Choice Designation identifies that a franchise brand has received a solid endorsement through its satisfaction ratings from its franchisees. The Franchisees' Choice Designees are representative of the spectrum of franchise opportunities and the diversity and standard of excellence of CFA members.

“By recognizing our Franchisees' Choice Designees, we honour the fundamental principle of franchising: collaborating in synergy, achieving mutual success, and thriving together. We extend our heartfelt

congratulations to the Franchisees' Choice Designees of this year for earning the trust and admiration of their franchisees through their exceptional efforts and commitment.”

Sherry McNeil, President & CEO of the Canadian Franchise Association

Eligibility & Participation

To qualify, Franchise Systems must:

- Participation in the CFA Recognition Awards is **free** and **exclusively open to CFA members in good standing** at the time of nomination and award presentation.
- Have a minimum of 6 franchisees (owners, not just locations)
- New and Emerging Systems (with 6–10 franchisees): 100% franchisee participation in the survey is required
- All other Franchise Systems (with 6–100 franchisees): Minimum of 10 franchisee survey responses are required

A Fair Judging Process

The CFA partners with **The Portage Group**, an independent research firm, to administer the program. Portage oversees survey distribution, collects responses, and tabulates the results to determine the winners.

Benefit from a rigorous judging process overseen by an experienced panel of franchise experts, ensuring each evaluation is thorough, impartial, and rooted in industry expertise.

Why Enter the 2026 CFA Awards of Excellence?

Winning a CFA Award offers powerful exposure and enduring recognition. Here's what you'll gain:

- **Yearlong visibility** as a CFA Awards winner across all CFA platforms
- **Editorial features** in CFA's print and digital publications
- **Prestige and credibility** as a recognized leader in your category
- **Promotional assets** and branded digital collateral to help you spotlight your success across your own channels

How to Submit

Entries must be submitted through the [CFA Awards Portal](#)

Entries must be submitted by individual brand. Each unique brand is required to complete its own questionnaire and provide a distinct list of franchisee contacts.

- Entry into the program is free and considered complete once the online submission form has been submitted.
- The Portage Group will confirm receipt of the registration via email and request the franchisee contact list. This list will be used to distribute the survey.
- To support franchisee participation, franchisors will receive a customizable email template to share with their network. The message encourages franchisees to complete the survey (approx. 15 minutes) and outlines the purpose of the CFA Awards Program.

Deadline for Submissions: **December 31, 2025**

For **questions** about the CFA Awards Program, please contact Lina Zita, Membership Specialist at lzita@cfa.ca.