MRSI
SHAPING TOMORROW, TODAY



Best Start Up of the Year

Description:
Are you building something that changes how organisations understand people, interpret data or make decisions?

An AI solution. A data platform. An analytics product. A new research approach. An unconventional business model.

If you have identified a problem, built a solution and demonstrated that it works, we want to hear from you.

The MRSI Golden Key Award for Best Startup of the Year recognises young ventures challenging conventional approaches and creating value through innovation, initiative and execution.

What have you built? What have you proved? Where can you take it?

What Should Your Entry Tell Us?

1. **The Problem:** What problem did you identify? Why does it matter?
2. **The Solution:** What have you built? What makes it different from existing alternatives?
3. **The Proof:** Who has used it? What has worked? What results can you demonstrate?
4. **The Journey:** What challenges did you face? How did you overcome them with the resources available?
5. **The Possibility:** Where can this go? How can it grow, sustain itself and create wider value?

Ambition matters. Evidence matters more.

If you have turned an idea into something that works, this is your opportunity to get recognised.

Evaluation Criteria

- **Originality:** What makes the idea, solution or business model different.
- **Execution:** How effectively the startup has turned its idea into something that works.
- **Progress:** Evidence of testing, adoption, customer response or measurable results.
- **Future Potential:** The opportunity to grow, sustain the business and create wider value.

- **Entrepreneurial Drive:** Initiative, risk-taking and the ability to overcome challenges.

Startups will be evaluated on what they have achieved, keeping in mind their stage of growth and the resources at their disposal.

Evaluation Criteria:
1. Presentation quality – written entry form and face-to-face/virtual presentation, finesse, clarity, and brevity.
2. Innovation and Differentiation – how the organisation challenged conventional research or insight models.
3. Impact – measurable business, brand, or client outcomes achieved through the work.
4. Agility and Resourcefulness – effectiveness in overcoming limitations of scale, funding, or capability. 5. Scalability and Sustainability – potential of the approach or model to grow and sustain over time. 6. Entrepreneurial Spirit – evidence of ownership, risk-taking, and leadership in driving change.

Who can apply?

- **Age:** No more than five years old at the award entry deadline.
- **Business:** Developing products, services, technologies or business models **that help organisations make better decisions** through AI, data, analytics, insights or innovative approaches to understanding people, markets and behaviour.
- **Independence:** A distinct venture with its own management and operations. Investor-backed ventures and corporate spinouts are eligible, provided they operate independently.
- **Originality:** Not merely a renamed, restructured or split-up version of an existing business.
- **Progress:** A product, service or solution that has been tested in the real world, with evidence of successful pilots, customer adoption or measurable outcomes.
- **Joint Entries:** Startups may apply jointly with a client or partner, provided the startup's contribution is clearly identified.

Built something different? Proved that it works? Show us.

Entities who can apply:
1. Research Agencies
2. Analytics Companies
3. Technology or Research-based Consulting Organisations
4. Client Organisations (Brands or Businesses) that qualify as startups or emerging companies
5. Joint Entries
6. Joint nominations between a startup (agency or brand) and a client organisation are permitted, provided the startup’s role and contribution are clearly defined and form the core of the entry.
7. If a joint entry involves a large or established client/agency organisation, the evaluation will focus on the startup’s innovation and execution, not the scale or investment of client/agency Project Period

Entry Form Sample

Question Details

1	Question:	Summary: A concise overview of your organisation and the case being presented, highlighting the business challenge, innovation introduced, and resulting impact.
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000
2	Question:	Background: Brief description of the problem or opportunity that led to undertaking research, analytics, or insight work. Include context about the organisation?s early-stage constraints or limitations.
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000
3	Question:	Considerations / Approach 1. Describe how your organisation approached the challenge through innovation in research, analytics, or insight application.
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000
4	Question:	Considerations / Approach 2: Explain what was done differently compared to established or traditional methods.
	Type:	Text
5	Question:	Considerations/Approach 3: Outline how limited resources (financial, data, manpower, or time) were managed or turned into an advantage.
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000
6	Question:	Considerations/Approach 4: Highlight any partnerships, technology use, or novel processes that enabled delivery.
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000
7	Question:	Outcome 1: What measurable business, brand, or client impact was achieved as a result of the work?
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000

7	Question:	Outcome 1: What measurable business, brand, or client impact was achieved as a result of the work?
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000
8	Question:	Outcome 2: How did this outcome contribute to growth, learning, or reputation for the organisation?
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000
9	Question:	Outcome 3: What aspects of this approach are scalable or replicable?
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000
10	Question:	Outcome 4: What, if any, are the limitations or learnings from this experience?
	Type:	Text
	Character Limit:	1000

Notes:

1. Text responses have a character limit and each question has a different limit. Please check it before preparing your answer.
2. Image: Yes – means you can upload 1 image which will be included with your text response for the particular question. Only one image can be uploaded per question. Do not add text with very small font in the image.
3. Website Link: Yes – means you can add 1 weblink/ YouTube video link which will be available to the jury to view when evaluating the entry
4. Sub-questions are indicative. Please only answer what strengthens your submission/ entry.