eCase Launches eCase FOI Awards

Tuesday 1 November, 2022

Tuesday 1st November 2022, London- eCase the correspondence case management service relied on by local authorities, government departments and their agencies, as well as the wider public sector, is excited to announce that today it has launched a new initiative for FOI practitioners across the UK: the first annual eCase FOI Awards.

These awards are the first of their kind: they focus specifically on the FOI community and encompass those working within both FOIA and FOISA legislation. They will recognise the significant work that has been achieved by FOI practitioners, celebrate their successes, and help them share best practice and learnings across the FOI community.

Open to all public sector practitioners, the eCase FOI Awards have been created by the eCase team as part of their ongoing commitment to developing and nurturing the FOI community. Nominations will be open from today, Tuesday 1st November, until 11pm on Thursday 15th December and will culminate in an awards ceremony which will take place at eCase's UK-wide FOI Conference on 8th February 2022.

The Awards are being judged by an independent panel of experts from organisations across the FOI Spectrum: ICO, OSIC, NADPO, IRMS, Campaign for Freedom of Information and CFOI Scotland.

Talking about creating the eCase FOI Awards, Director at eCase, Richard Clarke said, "Transparency is absolutely fundamental to democracy and we know that there is a huge amount of great work being done every day within the FOI community to support that. Through these awards, we are creating a platform for practitioners to showcase their great work and share and learn from each other. It's time that FOI practitioners were recognised for the fantastic work they do, by the experts who know what they do best. As such, we are delighted to have an independent judging panel made up of the most influential and important organisations, groups and champions of transparency in the UK."

Talking about the Awards, Warren Seddon, Director of FOI and Transparency, ICO said, "As the regulator of the freedom of information legislation for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, the ICO is delighted to be a judge at the eCase FOI Awards. We welcome the opportunity to recognise good practice and the role of public authorities in promoting transparency and access to information."

Reflecting on the Awards, Daren Fitzhenry, Scottish Information Commissioner said, "The staff who deliver FOI on a daily basis - publishing information, responding to requests, and advising and assisting people to access public information are key to the success of freedom of information; helping to ensure that individuals and communities across the UK are aware, informed and engaged. These new awards are an opportunity to publicly recognise the hard-work, dedication and commitment to FOI principles that I regularly see from staff working in FOI, and I'm delighted to be involved in this exciting development."

Speaking on behalf of IRMS about the eCase FOI Awards, committee member and Fellow, Barry Moult said, "Excellence in transparency relies on 4 things: Process, Training, Organisational Support and Records Management. These awards will not only highlight where this is being delivered, but also provide a blueprint that others can aspire to and implement for the good of their organisation and themselves. FOI practitioners do great and important work every day. It's really great that these awards give them this chance to shine."

Commenting about the Awards on behalf of NADPO, committee member, Lynn Wyeth said, "I'm delighted to see awards finally shining the light on Freedom of Information practitioners. We've all been a little busy with data protection since 2016 but it's really important to remember that Freedom of Information is a vital part of a functioning democracy. My current research has confirmed to me just how many current committed, hardworking and knowledgeable FOI officers there are out there, often not getting the recognition they deserve in this high-pressure public-facing role."

Talking about why eCase have chosen to create these awards, Richard Clarke said, "At eCase we are committed to helping Information Rights practitioners deliver an improved service and timely transparency. But, even more than this, and against our current economic backdrop, we helping to deliver significant, proven and documented efficiencies for our public sector customers. This is transforming their work and helping them deliver more with less. Whilst delivering continual and tangible value to our customers is a vital part of what we do, we also strongly believe in supporting the wider professional communities that we operate in. We do this by promoting best practice sharing, and giving

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practitioners the resources they need to improve, and that's what the eCase FOI Awards are all about."

He continued, "Whatever you, your team, or a colleague has done, however small, we want to hear from you, so we can help you share best practice and improve transparency for all."

The eCase FOI awards have 4 categories:

- Practitioner of the Year – awarded for outstanding achievement in the delivery or promotion of FOI best practice.
- Team of the Year - awarded for embodying the values of openness and transparency in their organisation, by significantly improving their service or delivering and exemplary service.
- Rising Star – Awarded to the practitioner who has made the most positive impact in their short time in their post or team.
- Initiative of the year - Awarded to the initiative that has had the greatest positive impact on the effective delivery of FOI.

Nominations are open from Midday today, Tuesday 1st November until 11pm on Thursday 15th December 2022. To make a nomination or register interest in the eCase FOI23 conference, please visit ecasefoiawards.co.uk

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Notes to Editors

Full details of the eCase FOI Awards, the categories, the judges and nomination criteria may be found at eCaseFOIAwards.co.uk

Press contact

For all press enquiries, for further information about eCase, the eCase FOI Awards or the eCase FOI23 Conference, please contact Catriona Anderson catriona.anderson@fivium.co.uk

Details of the judging organisations may be found here:

- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
- Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC)
- National Association of Data Protection and Freedom of Information Officers (NADPO)
- Information and Records Management Society (IRMS)
- Campaign for Freedom of Information in Scotland (CFoIS)
- Campaign for Freedom of Information

About eCase

eCase is the correspondence case management service that the UK public sector relies on. It is the proven, most scalable and most comprehensive service of its type available.

This is why organisations such as DWP, HMRC, MOD, FCDO, Defra as well as local authorities, such as Hampshire County Council, Herefordshire Council & North Lincolnshire Council, and multiple police forces have all chosen eCase for managing FOIs, EIRs, SAR, Complaints, Parliamentary Questions and Ministerial Correspondence.

eCase has been widely adopted across the public sector. This is due, in part, to its modern, intuitive, easy-to-use interface as well as Fivium's proven approach to ensuring successful implementation and benefit realisation. It is a highly flexible platform, which can be easily adapted to any organisational structure and processes, whilst ensuring that its users stay fully compliant with FOI and Data Protection legislation.

eCase is helping organisations large and small deliver significant efficiency gains and proven, documented value:

- Herefordshire Council is seeing efficiency gains of nearly 70%.
- MOD realising efficiency gains equivalent to 70,000 hours a year in for managing Subject Access Requests.
- North Lincolnshire Council is taking 61% less time on reporting, equivalent to16 hours a month and up to 268 minutes for each case processed.
- DWP is logging cases 3x faster and processing cases in half the time.

For more information about eCase please visit ecase.co.uk

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