

## Methodology 2019

### Introduction

The sixth edition of the *French American Business Awards* will take place on **Thursday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019 from 6:00pm to 11:30pm** in San Francisco at the Hotel Nikko, 222 Mason St, San Francisco, California 94102.

During an upscale dinner celebration, the best French & American entrepreneurs and corporate executives based in the San Francisco Bay Area will be honored for their excellent annual results and lasting performance in management and leadership. **Ten categories** of awards will be appraised by **over 100 expert jury members**.

***The French American Business Awards* are organized by the French American Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco.**

## **Award categories**

- 1. French Spirit Investor Awards (US Investment in France)**
- 2. Special Leadership Award (to be announced)**
- 3. Wine Country Awards: Personality of the Year**
- 4. Wine Country Awards: Company of the Year**
- 5. Trends 2019: Leaders in AI Innovation Awards**
- 6. Young Tech Entrepreneur Award**
- 7. Startup of the Year: VC Jury Award**
- 8. Startup of the Year: People's Choice Award**
- 9. Recent French Investments in the Bay Area**
- 10. Special Food Industry Award (to be announced)**

## Nomination methodology

### A thorough process to acknowledge French and American leaders in the Bay Area.

#### A. Selection

First, a market study is conducted by the FACCSF, gathering a long list of potential nominees. Experts are interviewed during this study and other references such as international professional guides, studies, surveys and rankings are used to enhance this selection (e.g., Crunchbase, Forbes, Deloitte Technology Fast 500 Ranking, TechCrunch...).

Then, an Advisory Board, selected by the FACCSF, settles on a pool of 40 to 50 firms and personalities. Advisory board members also have the opportunity to make recommendations.

Firms must either:

- Have a French or dual citizen cofounder\*
- Have a French representative as CEO\*
- Be a local subsidiary of a French company\*

\* except for the “French Spirit Investor Award - US Investment in France” category.

No officers of the FACCSF or their affiliated company can be nominated in any categories (officers include President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary).

#### B. Nomination criteria

##### General features:

The nominees are selected by the Advisory Board members for their performance over the last 3 years, with a closer focus on the past year, through the following **qualitative & quantitative-based** criteria:

##### **Qualitative criteria (50% of notation) taken into account, in equal importance:**

- Innovation
- Leadership and Management
- Quality and diversity of operations
- Social Responsibility
- Involvement in the French Community or France’s influence in the Bay Area and beyond

##### **Quantitative criteria (50% of notation) taken into account, in equal importance:**

- Activity and revenue growth
- Staff growth
- Net income

- Funds raised

### Specific features:

#### **Startup of the Year categories**

Startups will be able to compete in one or two categories at the FABA Startups Showcase & Pitching Event:

- People's Choice Award – public vote (All business sectors and industries are eligible, including tech)
- VC Jury's Prize – Jury meeting composed of VC, **only open to startups evolving in the tech industry.**

These categories solely concerns **early-stage companies**:

- Funding received is limited to seed round
- Have 2 years or less of existence / or product or service in the market (or BETA) for less than 2 years
- All business sectors and industries are eligible for the People's Choice Award
- Company must be based in the Bay Area or in France with a current development in the Bay Area
- Company based in France with a future project of development in the Bay Area will also be considered (relevant elements detailing a clear project in the short term, stating the strategy and the resources deployed will have to be submitted)

Competition is opened to any company by submission of an application form (available on the event website). Startup may submit their form from March 6<sup>th</sup> to April 23<sup>rd</sup>. All companies returning a complete application form will be considered.

Companies will have the opportunity to present their project during a special pitching session held early May. Companies nominated for any of the other award categories cannot compete for the "Startup of the year" category.

#### **Wine Country Awards**

This generic category celebrates the achievements and success of French actors evolving in Wine business and Agribusiness, in sectors and industries such as vineyards, cooperage, manufacturers, importers...

- **The personality of the year award – Wine Country** will celebrate French Leaders who have excelled in the Wine Country industries as innovators, leaders and managers and have achieved remarkable success in 2018.
- **The company of the year award – Wine Country** will be awarded to a company evolving in the Wine business or Agribusiness that have shown a growth in revenue, staff or that have launched a new product in 2018.

#### **Trends 2019: Leaders in AI Innovation Awards**

This category will celebrate French leaders who have excelled as innovators using AI to enhance a hardware product or service across all industries. This award will recognize French executives or entrepreneurs who are using AI to bring forward intelligent solutions to improve and assist human action in order to provide

exceptional results. Products and services can address (not limited to): medical diagnosis, remote sensing, electronic trading, transportation, tutoring, speech, visual recognition...

### **French Spirit Investors Awards**

This category will reward US investors established in the Bay Area and having successfully invested:

- in companies based in the Bay Area with a French founder / co-founder / CEO
- and/or in French startups based in France

The recent investments as well as the interest for France's tech ecosystem will be taken into account.

### **Young Tech Entrepreneur**

This category will celebrate a young French entrepreneur living the Bay Area, aged 35 or less, being CEO and/or founder of a company of a least three years of age, and leading a company evolving within the technology ecosystem of the Bay Area. The nominee:

- has been recognized as a builder of an innovative, ground-breaking and game-changing technology,
- has demonstrated exemplary leadership traits by starting and or operating a business, turning technologies into viable products, transforming markets and creating change,
- has motivated employees and team members and has tangible track record to show it, and he or she has demonstrated success at implementing or promoting technology, developing and deploying innovative products, creative processes or new business models
- has deliberately acted to support and develop:
  - the next generation of French entrepreneurs
  - the French-American business community in general.

### **Recent French Investments in the Bay Area**

This prize will reward French companies that have invested and settled in the Bay Area in late 2017 or 2018.

Companies must have at least one or several of the following criteria:

- opened an office or retail store in the Bay Area
- opened an innovation lab or R&D center
- created jobs in the Bay Area
- launched a new product or service on the US Market
- partnered with local companies/startup
- invested in US startups

Particular attention will be paid to the origins of the company and how it started out here, and indications of how it has been pursued so far, what differentiates the company's products or services from their competitors, managerial and financial performance, notable achievements to date, and potential for growth/expansion.

A nominee can be selected to compete in several categories, provided the criteria of these categories are met\*.

\*exception: companies nominated for any of the other award categories cannot compete for the “Startup of the year” categories.

After the Advisory board meetings in March 2019, an application form is sent to each nominee. Nominees have 4 weeks to fill it out.

### C. Jury & deliberation process

Over 100 jury members, selected for their market knowledge and expertise in various fields of activities, will join the 9 jury panels (TBC) to elect the best companies and personalities of the Bay and vote for the shortlisted firms in each category. This extremely **rigorous and confidential** judging process, based on the information provided by nominees in their application form, ensures that the ***French American Business Awards*** objectively reflect the market.

Composition of the jury: each jury will be composed of high-level experts in the relevant field of activity. Experts who are also board members of the FACCSF can be part of the jury, but will be limited to a slim minority.

Before any deliberations, the Organizer will remind orally to the Advisory Board members and the Jury members that they must declare any conflict of interest\* before the votes.

\*Advisory board member or Jury member’s personal financial relationship with a nominee and/or direct affiliation with a nominee.

During the Jury deliberations, for each company/personality:

1. 1<sup>st</sup> round of votes: each jury member allocates a provisional grade (from 1 to 5);
2. The jury member who has allocated the highest grade and the jury member who has allocated the lowest grade explain their choices to the rest of the jury members in 2 minutes;
3. 2nd round of votes: each jury member vote a second time to allocate the definitive grade (from 1 to 5).

The company awarded with the highest number of points wins the Award.

#### **French Spirit Investors deliberation process:**

For this category, the Advisory Board will agree on a ranking of VC personalities that will be contacted to join the ceremony and take part in a fireside chat about Investment in French companies. The personality who will come on stage during the ceremony will receive a special prize in this category. There will not be any Jury deliberation for the category.

#### **Startup of the Year deliberation process:**

Three companies will be selected during the “Startup Pitching Session”:

- 2 startups will be selected by the audience to be finalists of the People's Choice Award at the FABA Ceremony held on May 23<sup>rd</sup> where they will be able to pitch their product / service in front of the audience.
- 1 startup will be awarded the VC Jury's Prize by a pool of 10 VC experts in tech

## Awards Ceremony

During an upscale Gala Dinner, the names of the laureates are revealed and they are rewarded with the **Gold Award**. Representatives of companies awarded as the **Special Distinction award**, **Startup People's Choice Award** and **Startup Jury's Choice Award** also come on stage to receive their trophy.

## The Organizer

The **French-American Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco** (FACCSF) is a non-profit, non-governmental, member-driven organization, created in 1978. The FACCSF is part of a network of 20 French-American Chambers in the United States, and a proud member of CCI France International, with 112 Chambers of Commerce in 82 countries.

FACCSF's mission:

- Engage and foster the French-American business community,
- Support companies in their settlement and development in the Bay Area, in Northern California

FACCSF focuses on providing the highest level of services to its 15,000 members, including 300 benefactor members through:

- +100 events: networking, conferences, workshops, annual gala
- A wide range of corporate services: trade mission, recruitment, training programs, marketing support
- 6 Committees, where members exchange ideas with other high-level professionals in a wide variety of fields