Nicola Langridge is the 2025 Financial Planner of the Year

Posted on 4 November 2025 by Moonstone Information Refinery

Nicola Langridge (left in the picture), a wealth manager at Private Client Holdings in Cape Town, is the winner of the 2025 Financial Planner of the Year Award.

Langridge, who joined Private Client Holdings in 2016, was one of the three Certified Financial Planner® professionals who made it to the final round of the Financial Planning Institute of Southern Africa's prestigious competition.

The runners-up for the Planner of the Year Award were Hewett Wealth's Johannesburg executive head, Brendan Dunn, and Theoniel McDonald, the head of financial planning at Carmel Wealth and a senior financial planner at Wealth Associates. The names of winners of awards in various categories were announced on Monday night in Sandton at a gala dinner that rounded off the first day of the FPI's annual convention.

For the past 25 years, the FPI has presented the Planner of the Year Award to a CFP® who has shown outstanding achievement in the field and practice of financial planning. "All the nominees had to meet a set of rigorous criteria and thereafter had to showcase their talents and abilities exhibiting innovative ideas, excellent skills, and impeccable ethics when dealing with clients," the FPI said in a media release.

Pretoria-based Ascor Independent Wealth Managers received the award for Professional Practice of Year. The runners-up were Consolidated Wealth and Veritas Wealth. The FPI Professional Practice of the Year Award provides practices with an opportunity to demonstrate their innovation, professionalism, and commitment to their clients and to the profession as whole.

Langridge's 'golden why'

In a speech that was recorded after she made the list of finalists, Langridge said the competition process was tough but rewarding, "because it really reminds us why we do what we do for our clients".

Entering the competition is a “must” for every financial planner at some point in their career. “It gives you self-reflection and growth, but you do have to know when the right time is to enter this event. You have to have built up a level of experience where you really can give back to the profession, as you will be the ambassador for the FPI for that year to follow. You also need to have a strong team to back you throughout the year of the competition and the year to follow.”

Langridge said the power of self-reflection was what she gained most from the competition.

“It really makes you pause and look inward. It makes you evaluate your strengths, your weaknesses, your operations, and the impact that you have as a planner. It gave me clarity on who I am as a financial planner, what I give back to my clients and what I give back to the financial planning profession. It’s a journey of growth, as much as it is the competition.”

Motivational speaker and leadership consultant Simon Sinek has said that if you understand your “golden why”, then the how and the what become easy. “My golden why is definitely education and financial wellness. I believe that financial wellness is just as important as physical wellness. I believe that every client deserves to feel secure, joyful, and empowered by their relationship with money,” Langridge said.

“This award isn’t just about recognition of my accomplishments. It’s to create a platform to amplify my mission, to encourage more young professionals to join our industry, to uplift the conversation around holistic financial planning, and to continue to bridge the gap between technical advice and genuine care for our clients.”

FSPB honours CEO Bezuidenhout

The FPI’s chief executive, Lelané Bezuidenhout, received the Financial Planning Standard Board’s 2025 Noel Maye Award for making an outstanding contribution to the profession.

The FPSB announced in October that Bezuidenhout and Stephen O’Connor of New Zealand were the joint winners of the award, which recognises individuals who have made a lasting impact on the advancement of financial planning and CFP® certification worldwide through leadership, advocacy, and volunteer service.

The FPI said that under Bezuidenhout’s leadership, the organisation has reached significant milestone, including surpassing 5 000 CFP® professionals in South Africa, “a testament to her vision of elevating financial planning standards and consumer trust”.

Other FPI award winners

Kirsty Scully, a senior financial planner at Core Wealth, won the Harry Brews Award, which recognises an individual who makes a significant contribution to the financial planning profession through service to society, academia, training, government, media, and any other professional activities. Scully had served on the FPI’s board member for nine years – the last three-and-a-half as its chair – until she stepped down in June this year. Originally the Chairman’s Award (introduced 2010), the award was renamed in honour of Harry Brews, who greatly contributed to the financial planning profession and South Africa’s life insurance industry.

Katlego Mei, a financial planner at Galileo Capital, won the “It Starts with Me Award”, which recognises a CFP® professional who exemplifies the CFP® mark in their professional and personal brand, supports and promotes the profession, and actively participates in the community.

Stephanus de Witt won the Diversity and Inclusion Award. The award was established in 2017 to assist the FPI’s mission to raise awareness and create diverse community inclusivity. The award is given to the person who displays commitment to diversity and has had a significant impact on individuals, communities, or organisations promoting inclusivity and creativity within the financial planning profession.

Anza Masia won the CFP® Professional Competency Examination Award, which recognises the candidate who achieved the highest mark in the CFP® Professional Competency Examination – a tradition dating back to the Institute of Life and Pension Advisors. Since 2011, it specifically recognises the top candidate in the FPI exam.

Verusha Naidoo won the CFP® Financial Plan Assessment Award, which celebrates the individual who excelled in developing and submitting their financial plan as part of the newly launched Capstone course.

Sisonke Financial Solutions from Nelson Mandela University won the Student Financial Plan Competition. Second place went to Game Shakers University of Johannesburg, and 3D Wealth Management, also from Nelson Mandela University, came third.

This is the third year the FPI has hosted the Student Financial Plan Competition at universities across South Africa. The teams were judged over three rounds that included the submission and presentation of a financial plan and a round of quick-fire questions.

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