



FRANCO-BRITISH INTERCULTURAL TROPHY – 26 SEPTEMBER

For the fifteenth year running, members of the Chamber voted for a company they deemed to be at the forefront of Franco-British business relations, and then gathered for a cocktail reception at the May Fair Hotel for the presentation of the trophy to the winner.

As a large international company, this year's sponsor, AXA, is itself a great proponent of cross-cultural relations and before the award was made, Jean Drouffe, Group Finance, Risk and Strategy Director at AXA UK, spoke about its 'Vive la Différence' campaign. It is about 'recognising the differences between British and French,' he said, 'but rather than saying that one is better than the other we wanted to benefit from each other's cultures.' To increase awareness of 'the French way' AXA organises for its staff an annual calendar of cultural and social events along the themes of food and wine, national celebrations and language.

The award went to French Radio London, and was handed over to CEO Pascal Grierson by David Herbinet who represented last year's winner Mazars.

INFO later spoke to Pascal Grierson about what winning the trophy means to French Radio London, and about what it has been doing to foster intercultural relations.

'I am deeply proud to have won this award - it is especially rewarding to join such a distinguished list of previous winners, particularly as we are only two years old. We are a small team and as a result everyone works exceptionally hard. Winning has also meant my team feels even more motivated to take FRL to even greater heights.

The essence of FRL is all about signposting, promoting and celebrating ways in which our two cultures interact, not only socially and professionally but commercially too. This ranges from bringing brands together for a common cause as we did with our live concert at Koko in Camden, creating promotions/competitions featuring UK brands (Barbican, Pure Radio receivers, Knight Frank) and communicating them to our French and Francophile audience, or vice versa, for example driving Renault's electric Twizy around London and promoting it to a predominately UK public. Fundamentally though, FRL's output is always designed to appeal to our combined audience of French, Francophone and Francophile listeners, embracing the Franglais where relevant! Our news, culture, sports, travel, interviews and ultimately our music policy, all serve to underline the deep relationship these two cultures share, have always shared, and will continue to share.'

Asked about the significance of an award like this for developing stronger ties between France and the UK, he said, 'The CCFGB plays a critical role in developing these ties. To have an award like this bestowed upon us, voted for by the members themselves (who are to a very large extent our core commercial audience) signifies a high level of confidence in FRL's ability to also contribute meaningfully to this development. As the holder of this award for the next 12 months, it is a unique privilege and opportunity for us to use it to enhance our role in Franco-British cross culture!'