THE DEALCATALYST
U.S. CLO AWARDS

AS VOTED BY THE LSTA
MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

METHODOLOGY
2025

DealCatalyst U.S. CLO AWARDS 2025

1. Objective: Create a robust and accurate means of awarding organizations within the U.S. CLO space for their excellence throughout calendar year 2024.

2. Timeline and process outline: A two-stage approach to arriving at the winners of the third DealCatalyst U.S. CLO Awards as voted by the LSTA member organizations. Both stages will be exclusive to LSTA CLO member organizations + confirmed U.S. CLO investors.

Stage one will allow member organizations to submit up to three nominations per category, for deals which they believe to be the best for the calendar year 2024. There will be five categories:

1. Best Performing BSL CLO of the Year.
2. Most improved BSL CLO of the Year.
3. BSL CLO of the Year from a new issuer/platform.
4. New BSL CLO of the Year.
5. Private Credit CLO of the Year.

Respondents will use an online survey platform, accessed through an open link, to be able to nominate deals for consideration in this phase between approximately Wednesday the 27th of November 2024 and 31st of December 2024. Any deals which are completed at the very end of the calendar year, can be submitted for consideration on/before the 8th of January 2025 by e-mailing awards@dealcatalyst.io.

Stage two will allow member organizations to vote (from dropdown lists / pre-defined short-lists) across a selection of 22 categories. The categories will include the five categories from the nomination phase and 17 additional categories focusing on recognizing specific organizations.
Respondents will use an online survey platform, accessed through an open link, to be able to rank up to three organizations / deals in each of the categories. The voting phase will take place between approximately the 22nd of January and 21st of February 2025.

During the nomination phase, member organizations are encouraged to visit an open link on a survey platform which asks for their key information (name, job title, organization name, telephone number (optional) and e-mail address) so that their response can be validated. Respondents are then asked to provide the issuer/deal name, month and year (in some cases) of issuance and USD issuance amount, for up to three U.S. CLO deals either issued or with a payment made in calendar year 2024(depending on the category), which they would like to nominate to be short-listed for the final voting phase. Respondents are then offered the option to provide additional reasoning for their nomination, but this is not compulsory.

Respondents may vote for up to three deals in each of the categories, but they only need to complete the three elements of one deal in one category for their response to be valid.

Unlike the voting phase, each of the three deals nominated in any category are given equal standing in their consideration. Respondents are not asked to rank the three they are nominating.

Due to the distribution of the member organizations (by organization type) and to make the response data as representative as possible, the following weightings will be applied to each organization of the following types:

1. **CLO arrangers will be able to vote up to 6 times per organization.**
2. **CLO managers will be able to vote up to 3 times per organization.**
3. **Service providers (including credit rating agencies, accountancy and advisory firms) will be able to vote up to 2 times per organization.**
4. **Law firms / counsel will be able to vote up to 2 times per organization.**

If any organization should exceed the number of allowed votes, then all votes from that organization will be weighted down to give them the equivalent value of the limit to the number of votes. For example, three votes from the same law firm would each carry two thirds of the weight of a vote from a law firm only voting twice.

Once the above refinement has occurred the total number of times each deal is nominated will be used to rank them in each category. In the case of the private credit deal category, there will also be a validity check to make sure this deal qualifies under the criteria for private credit.

Respondents should only nominate deals in categories where they have a working knowledge and / or understanding of the deals in those categories as there is no obligation to vote in all categories.

Entire responses or nominated deals may be deemed to be invalid where they meet the following criteria:

1. Incentivized voting – where it appears that a certain organization is attempting to incentivize respondents to nominate their deals.
2. Slate voting – where the same deal is voted in all categories or across three positions in the same category.

If DealCatalyst encounters the above or any other attempt to manipulate the results of the nomination phase of the awards, they may invalidate a single nomination or an entire response.

Finally, a selection of short-lists will be created of around 10-15 deals for each category (where possible), based on the number of times a deal is nominated during the nomination phase.

If the sample of the responses in the nomination phase is not considered representative, as certain organization types are over/under-represented, then DealCatalyst may weigh the responses from that organization type up or down to counter-act any sample bias. If this occurs, it will be referred to, in detail, in the post-poll methodology.

In addition to those deals being submitted, in the performance-related categories, DealCatalyst reserves the right to add deals to the list of consideration, if they have not been nominated but they are among the top performers in the data received on performance.

As was the case for the previous two years, the advisory board will be called upon to assist with the short-listing process by helping to separate deals with similar numbers of points / votes.

As per last year, in the case of the "Best Performing BSL CLO of the Year" and (for the first time this year) the "Most Improved CLO of the Year" categories, DealCatalyst will assess the performance of any deals being considered for short-listing by the advisory board. Any deals which are below a certain level of performance criteria will be removed from consideration by the advisory board. DealCatalyst will utilize the performance data of well-respected U.S. CLO data providers for this process and this will impact the deals being considered for shortlist.

MEMEBER VOTING PHASE

During the voting phase, member organizations are encouraged to visit an open link on a survey platform which asks for their key information (name, job title, organization name, telephone number (optional) and e-mail address) so that their response can be validated. Respondents will then proceed to rank up to three possible winners by selecting the name of the organization and/or deal they believe to be the best, second best and third best.

Respondents are not required to vote in all categories and respondents are not required to provide 3 deals/organizations in any category.

A response will be considered valid, as soon as the key information is verified, and a single organization / deal has been voted for by the respondent in one category. The only exception, would be where DealCatalyst deems the vote to be invalidated for the reasons listed later in this section of the methodology.

Unlike the nomination phase, the position of the organization / deal in the voting stage as best, second best or third best is important. Points will be allocated as follows to organizations / deals which are voted for:

First place = 3 points.
Second place = 2 points.
Third place = 1 point.

Due to the distribution of the member organizations (by organization type) and to make the response data as representative as possible, the following weightings will be applied to each organization of the following types:

1. **CLO arrangers will be able to vote up to 6 times per organization.**
2. **CLO managers will be able to vote up to 3 times per organization.**
3. **Service providers (including credit rating agencies, accountancy and advisory firms) will be able to vote up to 2 times per organization.**
4. **Law firms / counsel will be able to vote up to 2 times per organization.**

If any organization should exceed the number of allowed votes, then all votes from that organization will be weighted down to give them the equivalent value of the limit to the number of votes. For example, three votes from the same law firm would each carry two thirds of the weight of a vote from a law firm only voting twice.

Once the above refinement has occurred the total number of times each organization / deal has been voted in each category, will be multiplied by the points allocated for the position which the organization / deal appears in (3 points for first, 2 points for second and 1 point for third) giving each organization / deal in each category a points total. These points will be used to determine a ranking of organizations / deals.

Respondents should only vote for organizations / deals in categories where they have a working knowledge and / or understanding of the organizations / deals in those categories as there is no obligation to vote in all categories. Entire responses or votes for organizations / deals may be deemed to be invalid where they meet the following criteria:

1. Co-ordinated voting – where more than one response is received from an organization, and they match one another in more than 50% of either submission.
2. Incentivized voting – where it appears that a certain organization is attempting to incentivize respondents to vote for them.
3. Slate voting – where the same organization / deal is voted in all categories or across three positions in the same category.

If DealCatalyst encounters the above or any other attempt to manipulate the results of the nomination phase of the awards, they may invalidate a single vote or an entire response.

If the sample of the responses in the voting phase is not considered representative, as certain organization types are over/under-represented, then DealCatalyst may weight the responses from that organization type up or down to counter-act any sample bias. If this occurs, it will be referred to, in detail, in the post-poll methodology.

In a change to the methodology this year, in the case of the "Best Performing BSL CLO of the Year" and the "Most improved BSL CLO of the Year" categories, DealCatalyst will assess the performance of all deals in the shortlists and use the most up to date performance data as an additional contributing factor to the score of the deals for these categories.
These performance metrics will contribute to the final score and overall winner for these categories, not just the vote and weighting by organization / type.