ACEC ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

# ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2027

## Submission Guide: National Track



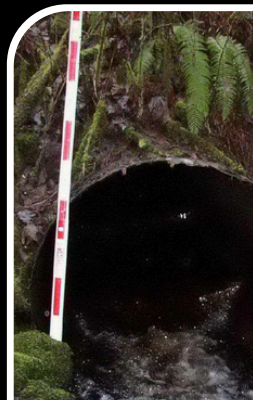


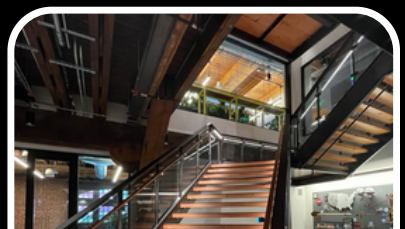










February 5, 2027

Westin Bellevue



ACEC ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

# OVERVIEW

The Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA( celebrate outstanding engineering achievements showcasing innovation and merit. For over 30 years, ACEC Washington has hosted this prestigious competition, with finalists advancing to compete nationally.

The 2026 program includes two tracks:

- **National Track:** Open to all projects worldwide.
- **Local Track** (Best in Washington State): Exclusively for Washington State projects, offering simplified and cost-effective entry requirements.

**How to Decide Between Submitting a National or Local Track Entry**

Both the National and Local tracks are open to projects based in Washington State. However, the track you choose determines the level of competition and recognition your project will receive.

1. **National Track**
   - Purpose: Compete for a chance to represent Washington at the national level.
   - Details:
     - Your project will be evaluated alongside others for one of 10 spots to advance to the ACEC National competition.
     - If selected, your project will compete against entries from all 50 states.
   -
2. **Local Track**
   - Purpose: Be recognized for your achievement exclusively within Washington State.
   - Details:
     - Your project will only be considered for awards presented at the EEA Gala in Washington State.
     - It will not proceed to the national competition.



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# KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- If your goal is to gain broader exposure and compete on a national stage, choose the ***National Track.***

- If you prefer to focus on local recognition and celebrate your project's impact in Washington, opt for the ***Local Track.***

**National and Local State Competitions**

The National and Local Tracks (WA) are judged separately using distinct criteria, but the same panel will review all submissions virtually from November 30 - December 4 2026. Winners will be announced in the EEA Gala on February 5, 2027.

- **National Track:** Finalists from ACEC Washington advance to compete nationally in Washington d.c. where top honors include the Grand Conceptor Award and up to 24 other awards (Grand or Honor). Winners are celebrated at a gala in Washington D.C. on April 20, 2027. National Track designs are entered into one of the 12 project categories.

- **Categories:** Entries are grouped into 12 categories: A: Studies, Research & Consulting Engineering Services, B: Building/Technology Systems, C: Structural Systems, D: Surveying & Mapping Technology, E: Environmental, F: Waste & Storm Water, G: Water Resources, H: Transportation, I: Special Projects, J: Small Projects, K: Energy, L: Industrial & Manufacturing Processes and Facilities

- **Local Track:** Finalist will receive their awards at the ACEC WA Engineering Excellence Awards Gala on February 5, 2027. All entries will recieve an award.



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# JUDGING CRITERIA

- Each entry will be evaluated based on the following five criteria, which are key elements of the project description.

If there are not enough entries to judge in the following categories, entries will be judged at-large or categories will be combined.

**Judging**

**National**

National Track will use weighted scoring system outlined below

- 20%: Uniqueness and/or Innovative Application of New or Existing Techniques
- 20%:Future Value to the Engineering Profession and Enhanced Public Awareness/Enthusiasm of the role of engineering
- 20%: Social, Economic, and Sustainable Development Considerations
- 20%: Complexity
- 20%:Successful Fulfillment of Client/Owner Needs

National finalists are judged on the basis of overall engineering excellence in each criteria. The judges may make at least one award in each of the categories having six or more entries and may, upon their discretion, make an award in a category having less than six entries.

The number of winners per category may be based on the number of entries. Entries are judged on the basis of the work performed by the entering firm only and according to the rating guidelines listed.

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# JUDGING CRITERIA

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**Rating Guidelines Definitions**

**1.Uniqueness and/or Innovative Application of New or Existing Techniques**

- Include as many measurable results as possible to tell the story of the project. For example, data points related to energy savings, number of people impacted by the project, etc.
- Does the entrant's contribution to the project demonstrate the use of a new science or a break through in the general knowledge of engineering?
- Does the entrant's contribution to the project represent a unique application of new or existing technology, techniques, materials or equipment?

**2.Future Value to the Engineering Profession and Enhanced Public Awareness/Enthusiasm of the role of engineering**

- Will the entrant's contribution to the project redefine current engineering thinking?
- Does the entrant's project increase public awareness/ enthusiasm about the role of engineering in their everyday lives?

**3.Social, Economic, and Sustainable Development Considerations**

- Do the solutions identified produce secondary benefits of value to the community/environment?
- Does the entrant's approach provide society with social, economic, or sustainable development benefits?
- Does the entrant's contribution to the project improve the health, safety or welfare of the public or affected environment?

**4.Complexity**

- Did the entrant's efforts successfully address highly complex criteria or unique problems?
- Were extraordinary problems of site, location, hazardous conditions, project requirements, or similar elements present?
- Did the entrant's solutions require the use of out-of-the-ordinary technology or ingenuity for achievement of the project's goals?



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# JUDGING CRITERIA

**5.Successful Fulfillment of Client/Owner Needs**

- Did the entrant successfully engage the client/ owner in the overall project development process?
- Did the entrant introduce an economical and cost-effective solution?
- How did the final cost compare to the original budget estimate?
- How closely does the entrant's solution meet the total goals of the client/owner?
- Did the entrant meet the client's time schedule?

**Important Dates to Remember**

- Sep 5, 2026- We will start accepting Initial Entry Form and entry fees. Payment confirms your project submission.
- October 16, 2026 – Deadline to submit Initial Entry Form and entry fee.
- November 20 – Final day to upload all required materials to the submission portal.
- November 30 - December 4, 2026 – Judging period.
- December 7, 2026 – Award winners will be notified.
- January 6, 2027 – 10 selected winners deadline to submit materials for projects advancing to the National Track (ACEC National).

*Important Timeline Update for the 2027 Engineering Excellence Awards*

*Due to the 2027 ACEC National Engineering Excellence Awards Gala taking place earlier than usual in April, we have adjusted this year's submission timeline to ensure firms have adequate time to prepare their entries while allowing sufficient time for judging, production, and the national submission process.*

*Participants will have approximately 16 weeks to prepare their submissions and all required materials. To help avoid delays during the Thanksgiving holiday week, the submission deadline has been set for the week prior to Thanksgiving.*

*Please plan your submission schedule accordingly. No deadline extensions will be granted this year due to the compressed timeline between the submission deadline, judging, and the National competition requirements.*
*We appreciate your understanding and encourage firms to begin preparing their submissions early.*



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## General Criteria

The ACEC Engineering Excellence Awards are open to engineering and surveying projects from around the world. Firms in private consulting, whether or not they are ACEC members, are eligible to enter.

- **Eligibility Dates:**
  - **Research and Studies (Category A)** and **Surveying and Mapping (Category D)**: Must have been publicly disclosed between November 1, 2024, and October 31, 2026.
  - **Construction of Projects (Categories B–L, excluding D)**: Must have been ready for use between November 1, 2024, and October 31, 2026.

**Submission Process:**
Projects must be entered into one of 12 categories (e.g. Category A-L ). Each project can only be submitted in one category per year, but Category A projects may be re-entered in construction categories once built.

If the submission does not meet the requirements listed, it may be disqualified. If any part of an entry does not meet the requirements listed, that portion of the entry may not be presented for judging. No references to other awards are permitted in your submitted materials.

**Description of Project Categories**
Entries are grouped into 12 categories. Examples include:

- **A: Studies, Research & Consulting: Non-design Services**,

Non-design services, projects not involving the preparation of construction documents consisting of, but not limited to, the following types of projects:

  - New products materials and technologies
  - Expert testimony
  - Basic research and studies
  - Computer/software technology



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- Technical papers
- Public outreach/involvement
- Water conservation
- Security plans Project feasibility studies/economic/risk
- Value Engineering

- **B: Building/Technology Systems:**
  - Mechanical/electrical/plumbing
  - Computer/technology
  - Communications
  - Acoustics
  - Software systems
  - Sustainability or carbon neutrality
  - Efficiency certification standards, e.g. LEED
  - Energy efficiency – new and retrofit
  - Secure facilities (military, research, correctional)

- C: **Structural Systems**:
  - Foundations
  - Tunnels
  - Buildings
  - Seismic design
  - Towers
  - Bridges
  - Stadiums

- D: **Surveying & Mapping Technology**:
  - Geometrics, ALTA, land title and rights surveys
  - Control, GPS, monitoring or construction surveying
  - Survey mapping, GIS/LIS, photogrammetry



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- E: **Environmental**:
  - Hazardous waste
  - Solid waste
  - Restoration/reclamation/remediation
  - Air quality
  - Noise
  - Recycling
  - Waste pond management
  - Carbon sequestration and trading
  - Mitigation

- F: **Waste & Storm Water:**
  - Wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal
  - Residuals management and reuse
  - Graywater systems
  - CSOs
  - Mine tailings
  - Agricultural
  - Storm water management
  - Erosion control

- G: **Water Resources:**
  - Hydraulics, hydrology
  - Surface and groundwater supply development
  - Treatment
  - Transmission, distribution and storage
  - Watershed management
  - Water use reduction
  - Flood risk management
  - Climate adaptation
  - Coastal and ecosystem restoration
  - Locks/dams/water control structures
  - Irrigation



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- H: **Transportation**:
  - Highways
  - Rail
  - Airports
  - Marine/ports
  - Public transit
  - Intermodal facilities

- **I: Special Projects:**
  - Safety and security
  - Corrosion protection/cathodic protection
  - Program and construction management
  - Land development
  - Trenchless technologies/directional boring
  - Recreational facilities
  - Subsurface engineering

- J: **Small Projects**:
  - Total project construction budget does not exceed $5 million. At the entrant's discretion, except for entries in Category A, projects under $ 5 million are not limited to this category

- K**: Energy:**
  - Transmission and distribution
  - Power generation
  - Renewable energy
  - Cogeneration
  - Energy storage technologies
  - Energy usage reduction programs
  - Demand side management





- L: **Industrial & Manufacturing pRocess and Facilities**
  - Petrochemical
  - Biotech
  - Manufacturing
  - Heavy industry
  - Industrial waste
  - Materials handling
  - Mining, metallurgy, mineralogy

Submission Requirements, Key Deadlines and Fees

This section describes all required submission materials for entering the 2026 ACEC Engineering Excellence Awards competition. All materials must be submitted exactly as designated below.

To ensure your entry is eligible for judging, all submission requirements must be met. Incomplete or non-compliant entries may be disqualified, or parts may be excluded from evaluation. **We recommend submitting early to allow time for any needed corrections.**

**No references to other awards permitted in your submitted materials.**

In any given year, an entry may be submitted through only one Member Organization. If a project was entered in more than one MO competition, it is the responsibility of the affected MOs to decide which one will enter the project in the national competition.




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**1.Call for Entries:** Download the Entry Form

- National Track Entry Form

Once completed send form to pbeachnau@acec-wa.org latest by October 16, 2026. Please ensure to rename your file with project name and firm **e.g. Lynwood Link Extension_Jacobs_ Entry Form.** Please note that your Entry Form + Payment is the confirmation of your submission.

**2.Entry Fee:** To pay please go to the Call For Entries- Engineering Excellence Awards website.
ACEC Members $679
Non-ACEC Members $1825
***Important:*** *Please note that this year we won't be accepting checks only card payments through website. The payment is confirmation of your submission.*

**3.Start Application:** Go to the Washington EEA Portal and start your submission.

**Note** that if the website is giving you an error or you have been ask for an MO, you are in the wrong website. **Delete all your history and clear all caches and go to the following wesbite: https://eea.acec.org/washington**
Once you are done filling out the form click the red green upload icon to start uploading your documents, see list below.
***Deadline to submit all documents is November 20th, 2026.***

- **Project Overview:** Description of your project in 180 words, **this will be included in the gala program booklet**. Specifications: PDF format- File Name (Project Name and Firm and type of document) e.g. Lynwood Link Extension_Jacobs_ Project Overview.

- **Entry Form:** Upload your completed Entry Form —National Track Entry Form— to the submission portal.




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- **Client/Owner Letter**: 1.(One Page Max): Letter addressed to ACEC describing the relationship of the client/owner and the entrant in the development of the project and how it exceeded the client/owner needs. Specifications: PDF format

- **Executive Summary:** (1 page max): Overview of the project. Describe the problem and solution; project title and entry category must appear at the top of the page. Does not exceed one page. Please note that this document besides being part of the judging process it will also appear in the Seattle DJC (PDF format) Specifications: 8.5" x 11"; 1" side margins; single spaced text; 12 pt. minimum size font; PDF Format.- File Name (Project Name and Firm) e.g. Lynwood Link Extension_Jacobs_ Executive Summary
  *Click here to see an example*

- **Project Description:** (6 Pages max): Tell the story about your project, photos, graphs or charts as needed. Address a-e items of the following list. Specifications: 8.5" x 11"; 1" side margins; single-spaced text; 12 pt. minimum size font; PDF format. File Name (Project Name and Firm) e.g. Lynwood Link Extension_Jacobs_Project Description
  a.Role of entrant's firm in the project
  b.Role of other consultants participating in the project
  c.Entrants' contribution to the project a brief description addressing each of the following rating guidelines:

  i.Uniqueness and/or Innovative Application of New or Existing Techniques
  ii.Future Value to the engineering profession and enhanced public awarness
  iii.Social, Economic, and sustainable development considerations
  iv.Complexity
  v.Successful fullfilmenth of client/owner needs




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# NATIONAL TRACK

**d. Summary** -Describe in layman's terms why this project is worthy of special recognition (word count between 100 - 500 words). Explain all factors that exhibit the project's uniqueness and complexity such as innovative engineering, challenges faced, and overall social impact. Note: This summary will provide the basis for all ACEC publicity on the project

**e.Budget Information** – Include total budgeted project construction cost and total actual project construction cost. Include entrant's portion of the total budgeted project construction cost and of the total actual project construction cost. Scheduled and actual project completion dates) as indicated on the electronic project form).
REMINDER: These costs are not engineering fees-they are the total of the construction cost both budgeted and actual for the work the firm provided.

**EXAMPLE**: If the total project budgeted construction cost is $400,000,000.00 and the firm did 100% of the work, then the entrants portion of the total budgeted project construction cost is $400,000,000.00. The same logic applies for actual costs.

| (Budgeted and/or actual cost may not apply to some studies in Category A and some projects in Category D) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Completion/Use Dates:** | Scheduled: 5/29/24 | | Actual: 5/29/24 | |
| **Construction Costs:** | Total Construction Budgeted: | 27 million | Total Construction Actual: | 27 million |
| | Entrant's Portion of Total Construction Budgeted: | 27 million | Entrant's Portion of Total Construction Actual: | 27 million |
| **Was Qualification-based Selection (QBS) design procurement used?** No | | | | |

*Click here to see example*




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- **Key Participants: :** List the key participants on the project including the firm name, address, phone number, website, and email address of each participant. Include contractors, subcontractors, other engineers, architects, and designers significantly involved in the project. Specifications: Excel file, 8.5” x11” format, 12 pt. minimum size font.

- **Photographs:** Six different photographs of graphics with the caption describing the subject matter. Captions shall beging with Photo 1, Photo 2 etc. Name your photos as follows: Photo 1 (description) e.g Photo 1_ Construction Planning, Photo 5 _Finished Project. Three photos showing the completed project and three depicting the project development in progress.
- Specifications: JPG file, RGB format, High Resolution (300 dpi). Photo Captions: Once photos are uploaded, type in the captions in the small box under each photo on the online submittal site. No text is permitted on the photos other than the cover slide.

- **Note:** Because photographs will be projected on a large screen during the EEA Gala, it is very important to submit high-quality, high-resolution images. Do not include any text on the photos. To ensure quality zoom in your photo at 100% and make sure image is not pixelated. **Three of the photographs must show the completed project and provide the highest level of visual impact for publicity. Three of the photographs must display the planning, startup, and/or construction phases of the project.**
- Please include the credit for photos or graphics to your photographers or creator, if necessary.




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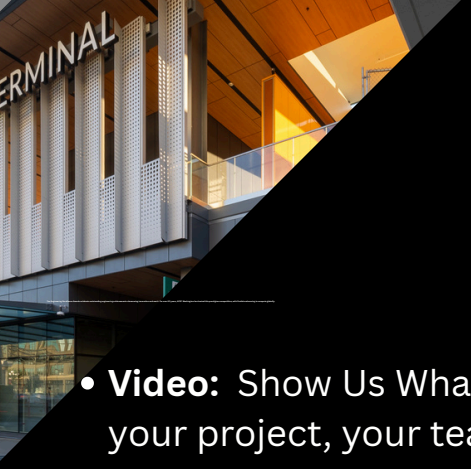
- **Photographic Display Panel:** Create a panel that includes text and photos. The panel should demonstrate the challenges, solutions, innovation and unique aspects of key project elements. The panel should be prepared with high-quality photos and graphics with minimal text. Specifications: PDF file; RGB format; High Resolution (300 dpi) size 30"x30" Must include Firm name, Client, Project Name, Project Location, and Project Category. Include the Firm, Client, EEA logos.

- **Photos/graphics:** Maximum of 6 photos and/ or graphics shall be used on the panel. Each image shall be a minimum of 7” x 5” or 35 square inches in area. A background photo is not considered a photograph. Images on the board should be 300 dpi so that we are confident in the quality. If you are unsure, test it in Acrobat and zoom them at 100% to make sure it’s not pixelated.
- **Text/fonts:** Panel text may not exceed 250 words total, not including captions. Font sizes: 32 pt. minimum font for text or descriptions; 28 pt. minimum font for captions and graphics.
- **Required elements:** The front of the photographic digital panel file shall also include the EEA new logo (download it here) title and location of the project or study, client/ owner’s name and location, and entering firm’s name and location (minimum 32 pt. font size). location (minimum 32 pt. font size).
- **Panel specifications for printer:** Size 30X30 Foam Core Posters = 4/0 on 3/16" white foam core, UV printed matte finish.
- **Please send your PDF file to Woodinville Print** wayne@woodinvilleprint.com In **Subject line please add : Display Board ACEC EEA + Project Name + Firm** please cc Pamela Beachnau pbeachnau@acec-wa.org

- **Display board artwork must be submitted to Woodinville Print by January 15.If your artwork is not submitted by the deadline, you will be responsible for printing your display board and bringing it to the Engineering Excellence Awards Gala.**

***Click here to see an example***

***Note:*** ***if you are one of the projects that get selected to move to the National competition they will need a digital panel file. Read the National submission Guidlines for more information.***



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- **Video:** Show Us What Makes You Shine! Submit a 30–45 second video highlighting your project, your team, or the impact of your work.
  Your video may be:
  - Featured on ACEC Washington's social media channels.
  - Showcased on the big screen during the Engineering Excellence Awards Gala for Gold and Platinum Award winners.

It's a powerful chance to share your story

**Video Guidelines:**

- Your video should include:
- Project Name
- Firm Name
- Client Name
- Describe what makes your project unique or challenging

Feel free to include project images, footage, or dynamic graphics that highlight the impact of your work. This is your time to make your project shine!

**Technical Specs:**

- Maximum length: 45 seconds
- File format: MP4 (.mp4)
- Orientation: Horizontal (landscape)
- Resolution: 1080p (1920 × 1080) minimum
- File Size: Under 100 MB
- Naming: [FirmName]_EEA2025_ProjectName.mp4
- If your video includes narration or interviews, ensure voices are clear, easy to understand, and louder than any background music.
- Keep background music at a low volume so it enhances, rather than overpowers, the narration
- Include captions or subtitles when possible to improve accessibility and ensure your message can be understood in any environment.

If you'd prefer not to be on camera, you can use an AI platform to create your video using visuals and a voiceover.

Final video should be submitted to the following link: Video Submission
File Name (Project Name and Firm) e.g. Lynwood Link Extension_Jacobs
**Video deadline January 15, 2027**




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# NATIONAL TRACK

**4.Supplemental Report** (Category A: Studies, Research and Consulting Only): Include a supplementary report containing the findings portrayed with text, graphs, or photos, as needed. Note: This report is ONLY required for Category A submittals

**Reminder**

All entries must comply with submission rules. Non-compliant submissions may be disqualified.

The ACEC Engineering Excellence Awards Committee reserves the right to determine project eligibility and category placement.

**National Phase 2: What to Know**

Only 10 projects will be selected by the judges to advance to the ACEC National Competition.

If your project is chosen, you'll be notified by email no later than December 7, 2026.

Next Steps if Selected:

– Follow the ACEC National Submission Guidelines

– Submit all materials to National by January 6, 2027

– Review the latest Checklist here

– Note: There have been updates to submission requirements — submission changes

**Questions or Need Help?**

Reach out to Pamela Beachnau at pbeachnau@acec-wa.org for any assistance.

📹 Need a refresher?

📄 Step-by-step guide:

Follow our detailed submission walkthrough and the process for submitting files.

💬 Still have questions?

Check out the Q&A section here.