



ASSOCIATION OF CONSULTING  
ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
ONTARIO

# **ONTARIO ENGINEERING PROJECT AWARDS 2026 GUIDELINES**

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# About the OEPA

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The Ontario Engineering Project Awards (OEPA) is dedicated to celebrating excellence within the consulting engineering profession. We honour projects from all ACEC-Ontario member firms, regardless of size or budget. Whether your company has 5, 50, or 500 employees, and whether your project was valued at \$10,000 or \$100,000,000, if it's innovative or impactful, it deserves recognition.

ACEC-Ontario is committed to evolving the awards program and its categories, guided by feedback from jury and members. Our goal is to reduce barriers to entry and recognize a broader range of firms.

New this year, we have moved the submission process completely online, allowing you to upload your files and enter information directly on the platform, providing a seamless and user-friendly experience for our members.

The OEPA program celebrates the impact ACEC-Ontario member companies have on their clients and society, and honour those who have demonstrated outstanding efforts over the past two years and culminates in a gala event, where the industry comes together in ceremony to celebrate and network.

We invite our member firms to showcase their exceptional projects by entering the 2026 OEPA program. This is your opportunity to shine a spotlight on your hard work and innovation. Winners will be revealed at the prestigious OEPA Gala on May 7, 2026, where their projects will be highlighted in professional videos for company use. Additionally, winners will be publicly announced via press release and social media, amplifying their achievements to a broader audience.

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# What are the Benefits of Submitting a Project?

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Submitting your projects for the Ontario Engineering Project Awards (OEPA) offers a prime opportunity for your firm to gain recognition and credibility within the consulting engineering field. It highlights your firm's innovative solutions and successful outcomes to a wider professional audience, potentially attracting new clients and partners.

ACEC-Ontario promotes award winners through various channels, elevating your reputation and positioning your company as an industry leader. Feedback from our member firms underscores the comprehensive benefits of participating in the program, including:

- ☐ Building firm status within RFP submissions
- ☐ Enhancing brand visibility through media channels
- ☐ Securing valuable partnerships
- ☐ Fostering team spirit and pride at the event

Submit your projects and take advantage of this prestigious platform to showcase your firm's excellence and drive your success forward.

## Who We Are

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Founded in 1975, the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies – Ontario (ACEC-Ontario) is the organization that represents engineering companies across the province. We promote the business interests of our 140 member firms, who employ 29,000 Ontarians. The work of our members supports Ontario's economic growth and improves the quality of life of communities across the province.

We offer value through advocacy efforts, learning and networking opportunities, along with cost savings programs. Annually, we host the Ontario Engineering Project Awards, our flag-ship event, that celebrates the work of our member firms.

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# Award Categories

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The OEPA aspires to celebrate the consulting engineering profession by honouring all projects submitted to the program by ACEC-Ontario member firms. The OEPA categories were designed to recognize consulting engineering excellence and award ACEC-Ontario member companies who put forth the strongest efforts over the year. The breakdown of the categories is described below.

## ***The Willis Chipman Award***

The Willis Chipman award, named after the first engineer in Canada, who pioneered the industry in Ontario, grants the highest honour. It is awarded to the project that best demonstrates the value and importance of consulting engineering plays to improve the economic, social and environmental quality of life in Ontario. The Willis Chipman award is the most prestigious award and given independently, with no extra submission required.

## ***Sustainable Development Impact Award***

The Sustainable Award recognizes the project that best demonstrates the three pillars of sustainable development: society, environment, and economy. The project must support the goals of society and incorporate environmental sustainability elements, while strengthening economic development in Ontario or beyond. Like Willis Chipman, this award is given independently from the category in which it was submitted in, no extra submission is required.

*Examples of projects that would be eligible are EV infrastructure projects, conservation research and initiatives, water/wastewater conservation and innovation, public transport, etc.*

## ***Small Firm, Big Impact Award***

The Small Firm, Big Impact award, recognizes the significant impact and importance of the work our smaller companies do. There will be two categories presented for this award, firms with 1-49 total staff and firms with 50-99 total staff.

We understand that our member firms, which are smaller in size, may not have teams to support complex project submissions. With this in mind, we have created a simplified and condensed submission entry form covering the most important details: the project objective, how you addressed it, and the results. Please be sure to submit at least three project images. You may attach additional project information you would like the judges to review but it should be no longer than 2-3 pages.

### ***Internal Innovation Award***

Innovation doesn't always mean new technology—it can mean new ways of thinking, working, and growing together. This special award category celebrates the consulting engineering industry—its people and the meaningful impact their work has on the community. If your team or firm has gone above and beyond to foster a strong internal culture, support employee retention through thoughtful practices, or drive internal innovation, we encourage you to apply and inspire others in this competitive industry.

*Examples: Education debt repayment support program, flexible working arrangements dependent on member company staff needs.*

### ***People First Award***

Community engagement and philanthropy go hand in hand with the work of engineers whose impact extends beyond infrastructure into the lives of those around them. This award recognizes projects or firms that have made a meaningful difference at the local level. No initiative is too small as impact isn't always measurable, but it's always felt.

Eligible initiatives include any charity or community activity that benefits Ontarians—from fundraising efforts to hands-on involvement in environmental or social causes.

*Examples: a staff-led community games night supporting cancer patients, or a tree-planting event along a local watershed.*

### ***Awards of Distinction***

The Awards of Distinction may be presented to up to 10 outstanding projects. These can include, but are not limited to, initiatives in:

- **Industrial, commercial, institutional buildings/building science** includes all engineering projects related to industrial/commercial/institutional buildings electrical, mechanical, structural, foundations, acoustics, ergonomics, fire protection/prevention, preliminary/final design, repair/restoration, roofing and

waterproofing, walls and cladding, and heating systems including transportation terminals and service centers.

- **Environment** includes all engineering projects related to air quality management, environmental assessments, groundwater resources/hydrogeology, noise and vibration, solid/hazardous waste management, and surface water resources.
- **Municipal infrastructure** includes all engineering projects related to the conveyance of drinking water, sanitary and storm sewage, combined sewage, and related infrastructure including stormwater management, Low Impact Development techniques, and CSO storage and treatment.
- **Industry, energy and resources** include all engineering projects related to agriculture, fisheries, forestry, electrical power generation, geophysics, geotechnical, mining, metallurgy, oil and gas production/storage, petrochemical, solar energy, steam power generation and wind energy.
- **Project management** includes all engineering projects related to construction management, construction quality control, contract administration, management of design, procurement management, project control and risk management, related management services, and value engineering.
- **Studies and research** include all engineering projects related to planning and feasibility studies.
- **Transit / transportation** includes all traffic engineering and control, transportation planning, urban public transit, active transportation, airports, roads, bridges and highways, rail, pavement design and ports and harbors.
- **Housing, community and sustainability** includes all refurbishment of older housing and community buildings/structures. Evidence to advantages of refurbishments/enhanced technologies upgrades, rather than demolition or deterioration, proving to reduce carbon footprint or providing a social benefit to reducing energy use in the built environment exists.

### *Jury's Choice Awards*

Upon the jury's discretion, they may choose to introduce additional award categories if they find merit in recognizing a project that falls outside the listed categories but demonstrates exceptional impact. In past years, such special recognitions have included areas like humanitarian efforts, climate resilience, and carbon impact.

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# OEPA Selection Process

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Our Jury is comprised of seasoned qualified professionals representing leading associations, client groups and academia in the industry who are not currently engaged in the consulting practice. The jury volunteers their time and expertise to examine each project and determine the winners of each award category. Projects are reviewed independently and deliberated upon collectively.

Projects are evaluated based on the four criteria listed below. Details are provided under the Executive Summary of the Specifications section of this document.

- ☐ Project objectives, solutions, and achievements
- ☐ Level of complexity and project challenges
- ☐ Technical excellence and innovation
- ☐ Contribution to economic, social and/or environmental quality of life (as applicable)

The OEPA Jury is an independent group. They participate in the OEPA by lending their skills and knowledge to select the award winners, playing an important role in recognizing the significance of the consulting engineering profession.



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# Rules of Eligibility

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The OEPA has implemented rules of eligibility to create a fair and orderly program for its participants. Please ensure your entry meets the following requirements:

- ☐ Only ACEC-Ontario member companies are eligible to enter the OEPA program by entering a project submission their company has worked on.
  - Joint submissions between ACEC-Ontario member firms are acceptable.
  - Joint submissions involving non-ACEC-Ontario members are acceptable only if the ACEC-Ontario member companies(s) did more than 50 per cent of the work and submit it in their name.
  - Company size will be based on the combined number of employees for joint submissions.
- ☐ Company size is based on the number of employees in Ontario that was provided by your firm during your 2025-2026 renewal process.
- ☐ A member company may submit a maximum of five entries per year, including joint submissions.
- ☐ Project completion:
  - Projects entered must have been completed to the owner/client's satisfaction in the period from September 30, 2023, to September 30, 2025.
  - Completed design portions may be submitted, even if the project's still undergoing construction, if the owner/client of the project approves its submission.
  - Project was completed within budget.
- ☐ Projects outside of Ontario are eligible for the Awards of Distinction provided that they have been managed out of an office in Ontario.
- ☐ Only Ontario-based projects are eligible for the Willis Chipman Award.
- ☐ No additions or modifications to the entry are allowed after submission deadline.
- ☐ ACEC-ONTARIO maintains the right to reject submissions that are incomplete or do not meet the outlined specifications.

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# OEPA Submission Process

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This year, we have moved the submission process completely online, allowing you to upload your files and enter information directly on the platform. Below you will find the specifications for all award categories broken up by *Awards of Distinction*, *People First Award*, *Internal Innovation Award*, and *Small Firm Big Impact Award* requirements.

Please complete your submission by **4:00 PM on November 28, 2025**.

Submit your project here:

- 2026 Small Firm, Big Impact Award Project Submission - [Small Firm Big Impact Award - \(OEPA 2026\)](#)
- 2026 All Other Award Categories Project Submission - [All Awards except Small Firm Big Impact \(OEPA 2026\)](#)

## Specifications for Awards of Distinction Submissions

**Note: Please remember to save your form as you go to avoid losing any data.**

### Contact and Project Information

Project name, location, municipality, year completed, entering company (or companies), contact names, and 130-word summary. Use plain language and avoid technical jargon where possible. The summary may be used for publication and/or video production purposes. The summary should include:

- ☐ The owner/client and the owner/client's objective
- ☐ Your role in the project
- ☐ Project complexity and/or use of innovation
- ☐ The project's social, economic and/or environmental benefits

Example: The National Capital Commission retained ABC Consulting to develop an innovative signalization layout to provide pedestrians and cyclists a safe crossing to the Rideau Canal and downtown area. High speeds and large traffic volumes made crossing difficult and potentially dangerous without a creative crossing solution. The configuration

uses new features to improve the safety and connectivity of the crossing for active transportation users at this important node, creating an increase in cycling and pedestrian usage.

**Project Details (up to 4 pages) – To be uploaded as .pdf (Not required for Internal Innovation and People First Award)**

The project details report should be a detailed report expanding on the 130-word summary submitted and include the bolded headings below. The Jury will be scoring projects based on the detailed items below. Each criterion may not be applicable to every project and is a guideline for information that should be included where possible. Please note font size to be no less than 10.5 pt.

**☐ Project objectives, solutions and achievements**

- Owner/Client's objectives for the project
- Solutions that were applied to meet the objectives
- Project management used to complete the project
- Project impact on the community
- Outstanding engineering achievements

**☐ Level of complexity and project challenges**

- Site problems
- Scheduling difficulties
- Obstacles to be overcome

**☐ Technical excellence and innovation**

- Innovative approach to design
- Unique use of materials or combination and/or equipment
- Internal resources, experience and expertise

**☐ Contribution to economic, social and/or environmental quality of life**

- Beneficial effects the project had on the community
- Promotes sustainability
- Illustrates the engineer's role in society

Note: You may also add links to relevant studies or supporting materials for the jury's reference.

## **Specifications for Internal Innovation & People First Awards Submissions**

**Note: Please remember to save your form as you go to avoid losing any data.**

### **Contact and Project Information**

The project details document for Internal Innovation & People First Awards description can be 2-4 pages in length.

In this document, please describe the impact of this initiative on your organization and/or the broader community. What outcomes were achieved, and how were they measured or observed?

#### **Internal Innovation:**

- What specific internal challenge did the innovation address?
- How did it improve processes, culture, or efficiency? (e.g. faster work, better teamwork, improved service)
- Who was involved in making this happen?
- How did you measure the success?
- What lessons were learned, and has this been scaled or repeated?
  
- **People First Award:**
- What was the goal of the project?
- Who in the community did it help?
- How did your staff get involved?
- What did you achieve? (e.g. funds raised, hours volunteered, number of people helped)
- Did the project lead to any long-term benefits or partnerships?

### **Project Images/Video**

All images must be uploaded in acceptable formats.jpg, .png., gif. We require at least three (3) project images per project but there is no maximum to how many images a company may submit. The online submission tool will not accept videos. If you wish to submit project videos please use WeTransfer to send to Priyanka Anand at panand@acecontario.ca.

Electronic images/video must comply with the following specifications:

- ☐ Only JPEG, .PNG, .GIF images will be accepted.
- ☐ Images must be provided in high resolution and at the original size.
- ☐ All image file names are composed of a number followed by a title e.g. "01title.jpg", "02title.jpg", "03title.jpg". Do not use punctuation or symbols.
- ☐ Action shots are encouraged.
- ☐ Videos of under 3 minutes are also encouraged in mp4 format.

**To be considered for the Internal Innovation & People First Awards, your application should include:**

- ☐ Click on the online application form [here](#).
- ☐ Fill in your contact and project information
- ☐ Provide a project description (maximum 130 words). An example of how a project description should be is on Page 11 in this document.
- ☐ Upload Project Details (up to 4 pages) in .pdf form
- ☐ Upload at least 3 project images (.png, .jpg, or .gif formats)
- ☐ Upload a high-resolution vector logo (.ai or .eps) and a white-background logo in .jpeg format
- ☐ If you would like to share project videos, please email them to Priyanka Anand via we transfer to [panand@acecontario.ca](mailto:panand@acecontario.ca) and confirm via email.
- ☐ Submit the form. You should receive a confirmation email to your email id.

## **Specifications for Small Firm, Big Impact Award Submissions**

**Note: Please remember to save your form as you go to avoid losing any data.**

### **Small Firm, Big Impact Award Contact and Project Information**

Project name, location, municipality, year completed, entering company (or companies), contact names, and 130-word summary. Use plain language and avoid technical jargon where possible. The summary may be used for publication and/or video production purposes. The summary should include:

- ☐ The owner/client and the owner/client's objective
- ☐ Your role in the project
- ☐ Project complexity and/or use of innovation
- ☐ The project's social, economic and/or environmental benefits

**Please follow the steps below.**

Please complete your submission by **4:00 PM on November 28, 2025**.

All images must be uploaded in acceptable formats.jpg, .png., gif. We require at least three (3) project images per project but there is no maximum to how many images a

company may submit. The online submission tool will not accept videos. If you wish to submit project videos please use WeTransfer to send to Priyanka Anand at [panand@acecontario.ca](mailto:panand@acecontario.ca)

- ☐ Click on the online application form [here](#).
- ☐ Fill in your contact and project information
- ☐ Provide a project description (maximum 130 words). An example of how a project description should be is on Page 10 in this document.
- ☐ Clearly outline the objective, solution, and result
- ☐ Upload any supporting documents (maximum 2–3 pages in .pdf format)
- ☐ Upload at least 3 project images (.png, .jpg, or .gif formats)
- ☐ Upload a high-resolution vector logo (.ai or .eps) and a white-background logo in .jpeg format
- ☐ Submit the form

## **Disclaimer**

ACEC-Ontario may utilize all submitted materials for the purposes of promoting the award program; publicizing winning entries and other participants; promoting and enhancing the image and prestige of ACEC-Ontario members and the consulting engineering sector as whole; and otherwise advocating on behalf of ACEC-Ontario and its members. By submitting required materials, you agree to these conditions.

Award winners will be notified prior to the OEPA gala. Winners will not be notified about which award they have been recognized for in advance, only that they will be receiving an award. Winners are asked NOT to disclose details until they are presented with their award on the night of the gala.