



# Excellence Awards 2026



# Award nomination guide



**TM Forum's Excellence Awards identify and celebrate the fastest growing and most innovative companies in our rapidly evolving industry. Submit an entry outlining your transformation excellence business case, with your commercial partner or service provider internal project, before 16 January 2026.**

Official nominees will be announced on 13 February 2026, followed by finalists from all categories being announced on 27 March 2026. Finalists will then be encouraged to submit a 5-minute video with further project details; this will be optional, however videos submitted before 24 April 2026 will be included in evaluation and will be featured on the Excellence Awards website. A panel of esteemed industry judges will select Award

winners based on the quality of the entry against criteria laid out here and in the platform, the clarity on the explicit application of ODA to realize the business outcomes, and the measurable impact (business, operational, industry, society or environmental impacts).

**Winners will be announced during DTW Ignite, 23-25 June 2026.**

## Award categories

- **Excellence in transformation with ODA**  
For delivering measurable business impact, efficiency, agility, and business velocity by deploying ODA and AI at scale.
- **Excellence in customer & developer experience**  
For achieving breakthrough improvements in customer and developer experience, enabled by ODA and AI.
- **Excellence in people, profit and planet**  
For delivering innovation that drives economic performance while making positive social and environmental impact, aligned with the 3P's.
- **Excellence in AI & data for business impact**  
For creating significant business value through AI and data innovation – from agentic AI and LLMs to new approaches in intelligent operations and services.
- **Excellence in composable ecosystems for new revenues**  
For pioneering new business models and revenue streams by harnessing composable IT and ecosystem innovation.
- **Excellence in autonomous networks**  
For advancing network autonomy to unlock operational resilience, self-healing capabilities, and intelligent service innovation.
- **Excellence in regional impact**  
For outstanding innovation and transformation that creates a demonstrable regional impact. All entries to other categories will be considered for this award. No resubmission is required.

## Key dates

<b>6 October, 2025</b> Entry forms open	<b>13 February, 2026</b> Nominees announced
<b>16 January, 2026</b> Deadline for all entries	<b>27 March, 2026</b> Finalists announced
<b>6 February, 2026</b> Customer confirmation to publicity	<b>24 April, 2026</b> Deadline for finalist video submission

**Winners will be announced during DTW Ignite, 23-25 June 2026**

[Apply here](#) →

# Submission form



The submission form questions are the same for each category:

- 1. Provide an Executive Summary of your entry:**  
This should be simple statements on the companies / departments involved, achievements / primary outcomes, capturing the scope of the entry, the location(s), dates, where the project took place, the application of ODA in summary terms and the outcomes and achievements. Consider this as both context and summary of achievements. Please note, information provided in the Executive Summary should be pre-approved for public use and, therefore, may be used by TM Forum on its website if selected as a nominee or finalist.
- 2. Challenge:** Describe the challenge and why resolving this is important to the customer, business, industry, society or environment. Capture how the challenge was solved, from an operational, business and/or technology point of view. Consider people, process, information, technology, etc.
- 3. Innovation:** Capture the innovations used in solving the challenge, these could be new ways of working or technologies. Explain why is this innovative? What exactly is new and different? Did a TM Forum Catalyst project play a role in the development of the solution?
- 4. Impact:** Provide before-and-after KPIs and other proof points as evidence, and endorsements by the customers, including conformance. Provide the customer, business, operational, transformational, industry, environmental or society impacts, as deemed relevant. These should be measurable, and with one year of deployed proven market evidence.
- 5. Scale:** Capture the appropriate quantities as evidence of scale. Include for example, how many customers were impacted, how many internal processes were transformed, how much CO2 savings were there... etc. Note, the scale will be considered in the context of the potential scale of a given scenario.
- 6. Use of ODA (Open Digital Architecture):** What did you use and how did you use it? Where in the business was it used? Did you have challenges? How did you overcome those challenges? Did you extend it? Did you contribute those extensions / new learnings back to the industry? Did you use conformant APIs and / or components?
- 7. Upload a maximum of five supporting PowerPoint slides** that include relevant infographics, graphs, links, etc. *(Optional)*

**Note: All entries require one full year of proven deployed evidence. This needs to be explicit.**

## Scoring

The judges will be asked to score the entries based on the following criteria and weightings:

- **Significance of the challenge addressed** (weighted at 20%)
- **Innovation** (20%)
- **Impact** (20%)
- **Scale** (15%)
- **Use of ODA and contribution of learnings back to the industry** (25%)

## Selection of nominees and finalists

Official nominees will be announced on **13 February, 2026**. Those nominees scoring the highest, based on the judging criteria explained above, will be announced as finalists on **27 March, 2026**.

# What makes a great entry?



Suppliers / solution providers must enter jointly with a customer, who must be willing to be named publicly. However, you can submit CSP internal projects (*where the supplier is the same organization as the customer*) across all categories. You must provide confirmation of your customer's agreement to be named publicly by 6 February, 2026 (*before the Nominees are announced on 13 February, 2026*).

You can submit multiple entries for consideration, but **we will select only one entry per company per category as Nominees. With the exception of the new Regional Impact award.** Top entries from all categories will be nominated by the judges for the Regional impact award. This new category is designed to recognize outstanding regional innovation and impact. Only customer companies may be submitted more than once per category. A company can win a maximum of two categories.

It is in your interest to collaborate across your organization to ensure you select the most appropriate categories and best entry per category for your company.

## The best entries will:

- **Have an exceptional and clear initiative with explicit impacts** that are relevant to other companies in our industry.
- **Will capture effectively** how they designed and executed the initiative.
- **Have an exceptional industry benefit claim** which is clear and precise, with strong business impact.
- **Be proven in industry** with at least one year of data to support the business impact claim.
- **Have clear innovations** that demonstrate the originality in people, process and / or technologies.
- **Have clear business outcomes** that are endorsed by the customer and have the customer at the center of the initiative.
- **Have clear and measurable impacts** across the areas that are relevant to the challenge, and be relevant to our industry. eg, customer, business, ... .see earlier list
- **Scale...** have clarity on the scale of the solution and this scale is impressive in the context of the initiative.
- **Use of ODA** capture clearly the application of ODA, where conformance technologies were used, what challenges were encountered, if extensions were used and if these were contributed back to the community.

## Tips and tricks for award submissions

- Read the judging criteria very carefully.
- Ensure that your entry is clearly written. That the claims are easy to understand, impressive and accurate.
- The judges favor results over intentions. Be very clear on the role of the customer in your entry.
- Be concise, factual and to the point. Avoid 'marketing speak' and focus on what makes your entry unique and worthy of winning an award.
- Make sure the entry form is completed in full and easily understood by somebody not involved in the project or initiative. Set the context clearly.
- Make sure your entry covers all the ingredients which helped you achieve your objectives.
- Respect the deadlines. Be aware of the key dates and ensure that you meet the deadlines. Give yourself enough time to approach the research and writing of your entry, taking into account time it may take to verify details with others.



**DO** submit by 16 January, 2026 at the latest; try to submit before the actual deadline to allow for a buffer in the event that additional information may be required to complete your entry.



**DON'T** leave it until the last minute to submit your entry; there may be additional information required to complete your entry once you have submitted online.

**Notes:** All entries are made through our online platform.

# Tips for writing successful award entries

## Tell a story.

Your submission is your opportunity to shine. Be clear about the timeline, the scope, the intention and the outcomes of the initiative. Tell your story in a way that others understand it, even if they are new to the project or initiative. People inherently love stories, so make them feel part of something great.



### Example

"In the wake of digital disruption from smaller operators who could offer new propositions faster, with a better customer experience, this company realized that to remain relevant and achieve growth, they needed to realign their services and IT operations. At that time their Net Promoter (NPS) score and their customer trust was at an all-time low (+11). The specific challenges addressed were:...."



### Example

"In 2025, this company overcame a multitude of challenges to achieve a successful customer experience transformation."

## Stay on topic.

Make sure you use clear expressions and focus on telling your story. Make sure the information provided is accurate and verifiable. Make it clear and focused at the start of your entry. Elaborate and explain both the challenge and the solution fully.



### Example

"This company decided to overhaul the digital experience across all channels and adopt new ways of working. They leveraged cloud and microservices-based architecture with a new IT operating model. Most importantly, the team adopted a culture of innovation that embraced modern practices like DevOps and continuous integration, continuous deployment and continuous testing..."



### Example

"Project X was this company's overarching strategic initiative and the Marketing Service Application (MSA) supports 69,765 nationwide activities, supporting 2,190,000 gross impressions. The company overhauled digital experience across all channels and adopted a multi-layer optimization model to build a life-cycle customer experience management system compliant to measure 18.6.5 and integrating XYZ server architecture...."

## Verify the facts.

Be honest with your achievements. Be sure to verify any facts (and quote any sources) you use in support of your entry.



### Example

- As per Frost and Sullivan, Digital Maturity of our business functions moved from evolving to driving stage with overall score of Digital capability maturity index increasing from 3.54 in 2022 to 4.07 2023 (on an overall scale of 5).
- We were classified as Digital Champions in McKenzie's Digital Quotient (DQ), scoring 58 which put the company in the top quartile for telecom service providers globally.



### Example

- Digital capability maturity index increased from 3.54 to 4.07
- We were classified as Digital Champions in 2025

# Tips for writing successful award entries



## Quantify the results.

One of the key criteria that the judges consider is your ability to provide measurable results. Quantifiable facts prove the value of your entry and help highlight the strength of your submission. Measurable results need to be fully verified and explained. Include as many as you are able but aim for a minimum of five results.



### Example

- **Mobile internet NPS improved by 7 points YoY, broadband NPS improved by 13.8 points YoY**
- **System costs reduced by US\$14.3 million per year, from US\$X to US\$X**
- **Accumulated net profits up 458% in first year from US\$X to US\$X**



### Example

- **Massive increase in customer satisfaction**
- **Reduction in system costs**
- **Increase in profits**

## Answer every question completely.

Be sure to answer every question in full. Do not skip any questions and check that you are including the appropriate level of detail being requested for each answer. If you do not understand what is being asked of you, ask one of the [awards team for help](#).



### Example

**"The team used the TM Forum Business Architecture Value Stream Framework and Capability Framework to scope, define and plan the initiative. This allowed the team to identify the relevant areas of business impacted, resulting in rapid identification of the systems, processes, APIs, data models that required change. This enabled direct strategy and technology alignment, and full traceability throughout the initiative."**



### Example

**"Open APIs, Business architecture frameworks, value stream framework and capability framework were used."**

## Use evidence and supporting material to highlight your story.

If you have a video, a press release, testimonials, or other supporting material, be sure to include links to this within your entry. Note, these should not be marketing materials, but specific business and technical materials to aid the detailed understanding of the challenge and solution. This helps to add color and external advocacy to your story.



### Example

**"Read more about our clients' successes in this [press release](#) and watch this [video interview](#) with Fred Mercury, CTO of Queen Systems...."**



### Example

**"The response from our customers has been overwhelmingly positive."**

## Ensure sign-off from all parties involved early on.

If you are submitting a joint entry, ensure that your commercial partner is aware of what is required of them in the entire process. For example, if you would like them to agree to work on a video should you progress to the finalist stage, gain prior approval for this to avoid any miscommunication or wasted effort.

For more information or help with your entry please contact [excellenceawards@tmforum.org](mailto:excellenceawards@tmforum.org) with any questions you may have regarding the TM Forum Excellence Awards.

# FAQs for award submissions



## What's the history of the Awards?

Since 2007, TM Forum's Awards have recognized the world's leading companies for their innovative achievements.

## What are the benefits of entering the Awards?

Claim your organization's position as a regional or global leader and benefit from being selected as a Nominee, Finalist or Winner of the TM Forum Excellence Awards. All qualified entries will be featured on the TM Forum Excellence Award webpage and the DTW Ignite website, along with other digital channels including press releases, TM Forum newsletters and TM Forum's news channels.

## Do I need to be a Member to enter the Awards?

Submitting companies and customers must be TM Forum Members. To confirm that your company is a TM Forum Member, please see the Member list [here](#).

## How do I enter the Awards?

Entries must be submitted via the online entry form (*available from 6 October 2025*). Each entrant will need to create a Profile. Once your Profile has been created, the Submission tab will appear at the top of the entry form homepage.

## Will I be sent an acknowledgment and/or receipt for my entry?

Once you have completed your entry form(s), you will receive confirmation via e-mail. Please e-mail [excellenceawards@tmforum.org](mailto:excellenceawards@tmforum.org) if you have any questions concerning your entry.

## How are the Nominees per category chosen?

Entries are initially assessed based on the judging criteria, and high-quality entries are declared official Nominees. Please note that a maximum of one entry per submitting company will be nominated in each category, with the exception of the Regional Impact category.

## Can I submit multiple entries?

You can submit multiple entries for consideration, but we will only select one entry per company per category as Nominees. Only customer companies may be submitted more than once per category. It is in your interest to collaborate across your organization to ensure you select the best entry per category for your company.

## Does the submission need to demonstrate use of TM Forum standards?

The judges will specifically look for use of TM Forum's Open Digital Architecture assets (*i.e. standards and best practices developed by our collaboration projects*), and/or evidence that TM Forum resources and activities such as research, Catalysts and communities were used to assist the project.

## Will TM Forum write case studies for all the Finalists?

Finalists will be encouraged to submit a short (*max 5-minute*) video with further details of their project. This will be optional, but videos submitted before 24 April 2026 will be included in the evaluation and will be featured on the Excellence Awards website. Winners will also be invited to work with TM Forum on written case studies for publication on our website.

## If my entry was previously a TM Forum Catalyst or Innovation Hub project, should I capture this?

Yes, it is interesting and relevant to the judges to see the progression from a Catalyst or Innovation Hub project into real industry deployments, with measurable industry impacts. However, there should be a clear distinction between a Catalyst and an Excellence Award entry, which should be fully industry deployed with proven impacts.

## Must I name the end customer for my project submission?

Yes. Suppliers/solution providers must enter jointly with an end customer, who must be willing to be named publicly. Confirmation of the customer's agreement to be named publicly must be provided by 3 February 2026, before the Nominees are announced. All parties that are named in the award submission MUST agree to be featured publicly in announcements of Nominees and Finalists and Winners. Internal projects (*where the supplier is the same organization as the end customer*) may be accepted in appropriate categories.

## Who decides the winners?

The finalists and winners in all categories will be decided by an impartial group of expert judges. The decision of the judges is final. No discussion will be entered into regarding the selection process or final decisions.

## Who are the judges?

Judges comprising senior industry executives from around the world assess the entries based on material submitted and determine the winners of each award.

## How does the judging process work?

Details of the judging panel meetings will not be disclosed. Information regarding the participating judges will not be released until the Award ceremony takes place during DTW Ignite 2026.

## How will the Awards be promoted?

Award winners will be presented their award during DTW Ignite 2026. Company logos will be prominently displayed. TM Forum will issue a press release naming the winners and winners are encouraged to do the same.

## What is the entry fee?

There is no entry fee.