American engineering firms have entered their most innovative and complex projects and studies in competitions conducted by state member organizations (MOs). Qualifying projects at the state MO level are then eligible to participate in the ACEC national competition. Deadline for the national competition is Friday, January 8, 2021.

EEA entries are accepted into one of 12 project categories:

- Studies, Research and Consulting Engineering Services
- Building/Technology Systems
- Structural Systems
- Surveying and Mapping Technology
- Environmental
- Waste and Storm Water
- Water Resources
- Transportation
- Special Projects
- Small Projects
- Energy
- Industrial and Manufacturing Processes and Facilities

A distinguished panel of 25-30 judges possessing a vast array of built environment and technical expertise will be convened over three days to evaluate and rank submissions for engineering excellence. The panel then selects top award winners—16 Grand Awards and 20 Honor Awards. One Grand Conceptor Award will be selected from the Grand Award winners as the overall best engineering project.

Projects from all across the world are rated on the basis of: uniqueness and/or innovative application of new or existing techniques; future value to, and enhancing public awareness/enthusiasm for the engineering profession; social, economic, and sustainable development considerations; complexity; and successful fulfillment of client/owner’s needs, including schedule and budget.

Top Award Winners (Grand and Honor) must have a firm and/or client representative in attendance to receive on-stage recognition at the Gala.

All Grand and Honor Award winners will be required to resubmit their 30”x 30” display panel on a foam core board. This is to allow these panels to be displayed on Capitol Hill and other venues.

Every year, ACEC’s EEA Gala provides firms with national recognition and a venue to showcase their talent and expertise in a dramatic setting. The annual black-tie EEA Gala—to be held on Tuesday, April 27, 2021—celebrates, with pride and elegance, the most outstanding project achievements of the engineering profession.

All National Recognition Award Winners will be showcased during the EEA Gala awards program.
ELIGIBILITY
Any engineering or surveying firm is eligible to enter the awards program, regardless of whether the firm is a member of ACEC.

GENERAL CRITERIA
1 Both member and non-member firm entries must be submitted to the ACEC national competition through an ACEC state MO.

2 Each entry should be submitted to the state MO in accordance with local entry rules. Contact your state ACEC MO office for details. Entries submitted to the ACEC national competition must be electronically submitted in accordance with the rules and requirements outlined in this brochure.

3 Each state MO may submit 10 entries from its membership, plus one member entry for every five, above 10 that were submitted. A state MO may submit any non-member entries judged to be legitimate candidates for entry in the national competition. Such non-member submittals will count against the member submittal limitations outlined here.

4 Engineering or surveying projects that have won awards in other state or national organizations’ programs are welcome in the ACEC EEA competition.

5 Projects entered in the competition may have been executed anywhere in the world. Studies and Research (Category A) or Surveying and Mapping projects (Category D) must have been publicly disclosed by the client between Nov. 1, 2018 and Oct. 31, 2020. Construction of projects (Categories B through L with the exception of D) must have been ready for use between Nov. 1, 2018 and Oct. 31, 2020. See “Categories” section for the full listing of all eligible categories.

6 Entries in the national competition may be placed in any one of the 12 categories. The entering firm must select the one category that is most appropriate. A project may be entered only once by the entering firm in any category. The same project may be entered in a different category by a different entering firm. However, after a project has been entered in Category A, and the project has been constructed, the project may be entered by the same firm in a different category – B through L – in the year when eligible.

7 Each entry must consist of two components:

- Official electronic entry
- Photographic display panel

Non-compliance with the rules may disqualify an entry. Please read the requirements thoroughly.

Note: See “Preparing Your Entry” for the Engineering Excellence Awards.

8 ACEC will not be responsible for any damages to or loss of an entrant’s official electronic entry, photographic display panel, or anything else submitted by entrant.

9 The ACEC Engineering Excellence Awards committee reserves the right to determine, and change if necessary, the eligibility and category classification of any entry.

ACHIEVING NATIONAL RECOGNITION
ACEC’s 2021 Engineering Excellence Awards competition showcases the year’s best engineering achievements to a national audience of clients’ industry leaders and decision-makers. All National Recognition Award Winners are recognized, and the top 36 winning projects are highlighted at the annual EEA Gala, the premier black-tie event of the engineering industry. This event will be held on Tuesday, April 27, 2021, at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park in Washington, D.C.
**2021 CALL FOR ENTRIES**

**JUDGING**

Entries will be judged on the basis of:

- Overall engineering excellence
- The work performed by the entering firm only
- The rating guidelines listed

Winners and affiliated state MOs will be notified shortly after judging is completed.

**AWARDS**

All submissions are considered National Recognition Award Winners. The panel of judges will select 36 awards at their discretion – 16 Grand and 20 Honor Awards. A Grand Conceptor Award will be selected from the 16 Grand Award winners. The Grand Conceptor will be announced at the Gala as the top national winner selected by the judges, whose decisions on all awards are final. Awards will be presented to the clients/owners and entering firms submitting the winning entries.

**PUBLICITY**

The public relations and marketing value of participation in the national EEA program is substantial. All national winners will be highlighted in ACEC’s public relations program, which benefits all U.S. engineering firms. Working with participating firms and state MOs, ACEC staff will contact local media to announce winners and their awards. Through national and state efforts, display panels can be exhibited in such public venues as city and state administrative buildings, universities, shopping centers and office buildings. These activities enhance direct business development benefits for both local and national award winners. Further benefits are gained through feature stories presented in firm brochures, newsletters and other publications.

In addition, top Award winners will also be displayed on Capitol Hill and other venues.

**RATING GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING**

Each entrant’s contribution will be evaluated based on the following five categories, which are key elements of the project description text required in the electronic submittal described below.

1. Uniqueness and/or innovative applications of new or existing techniques
2. Future value to the engineering profession and enhanced public awareness/enthusiasm of the role of engineering
3. Social, economic and sustainable development considerations
4. Complexity
5. Successful fulfillment of client/owner needs

**RATING GUIDELINE DEFINITIONS**

1. **Uniqueness and/or Innovative Applications of New or Existing Techniques:**
   - Does the entrant’s contribution to the project demonstrate the use of a new science or a breakthrough 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?

**CALL FOR ENTRIES - CATEGORIES**

**CATEGORY A: Studies, Research and Consulting Engineering Services**

- Project feasibility studies/economic/risk
- Value engineering

**CATEGORY B: Building/Technology Systems**

- 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
  - Technical papers
  - Public outreach/involvement
  - Water conservation
  - Security plans

- Mechanical/electrical/plumbing
- Computer/technology
- Communications
- Acoustics
- Software systems
- Sustainability or carbon neutrality

**CATEGORY C: Structural Systems**

- Foundations
- Tunnels
- Buildings
- Seismic design
- Towers
- Bridges
- Stadiums

**CATEGORY D: Surveying and Mapping Technology**

- Geometrics, ALTA, land title and rights surveys
- Control, GPS, monitoring or construction surveying
- Survey mapping, GIS/LIS, photogrammetry

**CATEGORY E: Environmental**

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

**CATEGORY F: Waste and Storm Water**

- Wastewater collection/treatment and disposal
- Residuals management and reuse
- Graywater systems
- CSOs
- Mine tailings
- Agricultural
- Stormwater management
- Erosion control

**CATEGORY G: Water Resources**

- Hydraulics, hydrology
- Surface and groundwater supply development
- Treatment
- Transmission, distribution & storage
- Watershed management
- Water use reduction
- Flood risk management
- Climate adaptation
- Coastal and eco-system restoration
- Locks/dams/water control structures
- Irrigation
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?

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?

PREPARING YOUR ENTRY

This section describes all required submission materials for entering the 2021 ACEC EEA competition. All materials must be submitted exactly as designated below. Digital files must be PC-compatible and appropriate to the information being submitted (i.e., Microsoft Word for text, high resolution JPEGs, photos or other images, PowerPoint, Adobe PDFs, etc.).

If any part of an entry does not meet requirements listed, that portion of the entry may not be presented for judging. Please follow the guidelines.

No reference to other awards is permitted in your submitted materials.

In any given year, an entry may be submitted through only one state MO. 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.

DATES TO REMEMBER

January 8, 2021 — Submitted materials MUST BE RECEIVED by ACEC. Materials received after that date will NOT be accepted.

All materials submitted for judging in the national competition become the property of ACEC and may be used in ACEC publications and other ACEC communications. Panels may be used for displays or other promotional or educational purposes.

Submitted materials will NOT be returned.

January 20, 2021 — The entrant’s company representative, as listed on the entry form, must be available by phone.

February 19-21, 2021 — Judging takes place in Washington, D.C.

April 27, 2021 — EEA Dinner and Gala Awards Program in Washington, D.C.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The following two main components must be submitted with the national EEA competition entry:

I. Official electronic entry

II. Photographic display panel

**NOTE: No QR Codes or embedded links are permitted in any portion of an award submission**
2021 CALL FOR ENTRIES

I. OFFICIAL ELECTRONIC ENTRY
All project information shall be submitted electronically. Each document must be uploaded separately through ACEC's Awards Submittal Portal. The electronic entry must contain all of the following items:

1. ELECTRONIC PROJECT SUBMISSION FORM
   Located on the ACEC website — http://www.acec.org/eea2021/. Once the entrant has completed the project submission form, the form can be printed so it can be signed by all required parties. This form can then be uploaded as part of the electronic project submission. Specifications: PDF format.

NOTE: You must submit entry fee payment with the electronic Project Submission Form. ($1,200 for ACEC members; $3,600 for non-ACEC members.) All payments must be made online. Refer to your MO for state competition fees.

Original completed entry form must be signed by both the entrant and the client/owner (senior executives/officials), stating that the submitted project was ready for use between Nov. 1, 2017 and Oct. 31, 2020. Electronic signatures are accepted.

The following project information must be uploaded individually and included with your Engineering Excellence Awards submittal:

2. CLIENT/OWNER LETTER (one page max.)
   Letter addressed to ACEC National describing the relationship of the client/owner and entrant in the development of the project, the project is ready to use, and how the entrant’s contribution exceeded the client/owner’s needs. Specifications: PDF format.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (one page max.)
   Overview of the project. Describe the problem and solution. Project title and entry category must appear at the top of the page. Specifications: 8.5” x 11”; 1” side margins; single-spaced text; 12 pt. minimum size font; PDF format.

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION (six pages max.)
   Tell the story of the project. Address items a, b, c, and d as listed below. Project title, entry category, and page number must appear at the top of each page. Entrants may use text, photos, graphics, or charts as needed. Specifications: 8.5” x 11”; 1” side margins; single-spaced text; 12 pt. minimum size font; PDF format.

Text must include all of the following information, including budget information and Summary:

a. ROLE OF ENTRANT’S FIRM in the project.

b. ROLE OF OTHER CONSULTANTS participating in the project.

c. ENTRANT’S CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROJECT:
   A brief description of the entrant’s contribution addressing each of the following Rating Guidelines (refer to “Rating Guideline Definitions” on pages 4 and 5 for detailed rating and judging information):

   - Uniqueness and/or innovative application of new or existing techniques.
   - Future value to the engineering profession and enhanced public awareness/enthusiasm of the role of engineering.
   - Social, economic, and sustainable development considerations.
   - Complexity.
   - Successful fulfillment of client/owner needs.

Include total project construction budget cost, total project construction actual cost, entrant’s portion of the total project construction budget cost, entrant’s portion of the total project construction actual cost, and project scheduled and actual dates of completion (as indicated on the Electronic Project Submission Form). Reminder: These costs are not Engineering Fees.

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 may provide the basis for all ACEC publicity on the project.

5. KEY PARTICIPANTS
   List the key participants on the project including 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: 8.5” x 11”; Excel file.

6. PHOTOS OR GRAPHICS
   Six different photos or graphics (one per page) with captions describing the subject matter (refer to “Image Guidelines” below). Captions shall begin with: Photo 1, Photo 2, etc. Specifications: JPEG 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 slides other than the cover slide.

IMAGE GUIDELINES:
Because the images will be projected on a large screen during the EEA gala, it is very important to submit sharp, high-quality, high-resolution images.

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.

7. PHOTOGRAPHIC DISPLAY PANEL
   Small-size copy of the photographic display panel. Specifications: JPEG file; RGB format; High Resolution (300 dpi).

8. MEDIA LIST
   E-mail addresses of local newspapers, TV, radio stations and other media outlets where your project can be highlighted. If the state MO or entrant prefers to handle all local and national publicity for the project, include a statement to that effect. Specifications: Excel file; 8.5” x 11” or 11” x 17”.

ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS
PRESS RELEASE (two pages max.)
Press release that clearly and concisely describes the project and the entrant’s participation, based on information presented in the Project Description. Also describe the value of the project to the community including information such as the number of people served, cost savings, etc. Do not reference other awards the project has won. Specifications: double-spaced; 8.5” x 11”; PDF format.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION
PowerPoint file, containing 8 slides including a title slide with ACEC and EEA logos, firm name, project name, project location: city and state, followed by 6 slides that include images 1 through 6 (same images as Item 6 above), plus the last slide that contains the photographic display panel. This presentation will be used by the judges as part of their evaluation. Do not include sound, transition effects, animation, preset timing, or slide show sequencing. A sample PowerPoint presentation is downloadable from the ACEC website.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
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.

PHOTOGRAPHIC DISPLAY PANEL
IMPORTANT: Display Panel is a key part of the project submittal and the text and photos should demonstrate the challenges, solutions, innovation, complexity and unique aspects of key project elements. The panel should be prepared with high-quality photos and graphics and with text as described below.

Photographic panel requirements:
1. PANEL SIZE: 30” x 30” square, with a matte finish, laminated front and back as follows:
   a. Front lamination thickness: 5 mil
   b. Back lamination thickness: 5 mil
   c. Panel stock thickness before lamination: no more than 5-6 mil
   d. Total panel (with lamination) thickness: 15-16 mil NOTE: Framed or mounted panels will NOT be accepted. Do NOT mount panel on foam-core board or any other solid surface.
2. VELCRO ATTACHMENTS: Four, 9-inch long strips of VELCRO (the hook side only) must be placed vertically on the back, near each corner of the panel.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. REQUIRED ELEMENTS: The front of the panel shall also include the ACEC and EEA logos (download from ACEC website), 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).
6. CORNER SPACE: Leave a 2” x 2” space in the upper right-hand corner of the panel that is free of text or images. Do not leave the “blank” space as a white square; the background scheme should continue, but will be partially covered by the review committee’s coding label.
7. BACK OF PANEL LABEL: Add a label to the back of the panel with the name of the entrant’s firm, the firm address, the project name, and the entry category.
NOTE: If production/printing services for your photographic display panel are not available in your community, contact Daisy Nappier at ACEC for sources.

SHIPPING
Photographic display panels must be rolled and shipped in mailing tubes. All materials including the electronic submission must be received by January 8, 2021.
Ship Photographic display panel to:
American Council of Engineering Companies
Attn: Daisy Nappier
1015 15th Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005-2605
Furnish all information requested below for each entry (signatures by the submitting firm(s) and the client(s)/owner(s) are required). Firm, project, and client/owner’s name should be typed or printed as they are to appear on the award. Please limit the project name to 45 characters. A fee of $1,200 per entry for ACEC members ($3,600 for non-ACEC members). All payments must be submitted online. Online Payment Method: Visa, Master Card, American Express or Discover.

ABOUT THE PROJECT
Project Name __________________________________________________________ (limit to 45 characters)

Judge this entry in the following category (check one):

☐ A. Studies, Research, and Consulting Engineering Services
☐ D. Surveying and Mapping Technology
☐ G. Water Resources
☐ K. Energy

☐ B. Building/Technology Systems
☐ E. Environmental
☐ H. Transportation
☐ L. Industrial and Manufacturing Processes and Facilities

☐ C. Structural Systems
☐ F. Waste and Storm Water
☐ I. Special Projects
☐ J. Small Projects

Completion/Use Dates: Scheduled __________________________ Actual _______________________________________________

Category A & D Costs: Budgeted $ __________________________ Actual $ _____________________________________________

Construction Costs: Total Construction Budget $ _______________ Total Construction Actual $ _____________________________

Entrant’s Portion of the Total Construction Budget $ _______________ Entrant’s portion of Total Construction Actual $ _______________

Check box if project was awarded through QBS process.

ABOUT THE FIRM(S) SUBMITTING THE PROJECT
Entering Firm(s) __________________________________________________________
Firm CEO __________________________________________________________
Firm Representative _______________________________________________________________________________________________

Must be available by phone on Wednesday, January 20, 2021 (phone calls will only be made if there are clarifications or additional information required for your submittal).

Address (no P.O. Box) __________________________________________ City ______________________ State ________ Zip ________

Phone (_____) __________________________________________ Cell (_____) __________________________________________ Fax (_____) __________________________________________

E-mail __________________________________________________________

I hereby authorize submission of this project into the American Council of Engineering Companies’ 2021 Engineering Excellence Awards competition.

Senior Executive/Principal __________________________ Title __________________________

Signature __________________________________________________________ Date _________________________________

Address (no P.O. Box) __________________________________________ City ______________________ State ________ Zip ________

Phone (_____) __________________________________________ Fax (_____) __________________________________________

E-mail __________________________________________________________

ABOUT THE CLIENT/OWNER(S) OF THE PROJECT
Client/Owner(s) __________________________________________________________

I believe the work of the engineer meets the intended uses and expectations for the project and hereby grant permission to enter this project in the ACEC 2021 Engineering Excellence Awards competition, and authorize publication of images and details of the project. I confirm that the project was ready for use between November 1, 2017 and October 31, 2019.

Client/Owner Representative __________________________________________________________

Signature __________________________________________________________ Date _________________________________

Address (no P.O. Box) __________________________________________ City ______________________ State ________ Zip ________

Phone (_____) __________________________________________ Fax (_____) __________________________________________

E-mail __________________________________________________________