

2026

ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE AWARDS



**2023 GRAND CONCEPTOR
AWARD WINNER
T. BAKER SMITH, LLC**





2026 Call For Entries

ACEC of Louisiana's 2026 Engineering Excellence Awards competition offers the only opportunity to showcase the best of Louisiana's engineering achievements to an audience of clients, peers, and decision-makers at all levels. The EEA ceremony celebrates, with pride and elegance, the outstanding achievements of the engineering profession.

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Louisiana's bi-annual Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA) competition recognizes engineering firms for projects that demonstrate an exceptional degree of innovation, complexity, achievement and value. We encourage you to submit an entry for a project worthy of prominence and recognition in which your firm was involved. **Deadline for submission is September 1st, 2026.**

Engineering firms are invited to enter their most innovative projects and studies for the state competition conducted by the American Council of Engineering Companies of Louisiana (ACECL). EEA entries will be 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; and Industrial and Manufacturing Processes and Facilities.

Project entries must be designed by engineers located in Louisiana. A distinguished panel of judges will evaluate and rank submissions for engineering excellence. These professionals may have backgrounds in engineering, construction, architecture, state and federal government, media, academia, and military. The panel will evaluate and select projects for Grand and Honor Awards. One Grand Conceptor Award will be selected from among the Grand Award winners as the overall best engineering project. All submitted projects will be rated on the basis of uniqueness and 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; and successful fulfillment of client/owner needs, including schedule and budget.

The ACECL's Engineering Excellence Awards Gala provides firms with statewide recognition and a venue to showcase their talent and expertise. The prestigious EEA Gala, to be held on **Wednesday, November 18, 2026**, celebrates the most outstanding project achievements of the engineering profession.



ELIGIBILITY, CRITERIA & AWARD LEVELS

ELIGIBILITY

Any firm engaged in the private practice of consulting engineering or surveying in the state of Louisiana is eligible to enter the awards program whether or not the firm is an ACEC of Louisiana member. Projects may have been executed anywhere in the world, but a substantial role must have been completed by personnel in a Louisiana office. A project may be entered only once in any category. There is no limit to how many different projects a firm may enter.

Studies, Research and Consulting (Category A) or Surveying and Mapping Technology projects (Category D) must have been publicly disclosed by the client between August 1, 2023 and August 31, 2026. Construction of projects (Categories B through L—with the exception of D) must have been substantially completed and ready for use between August 1, 2023 and August 31, 2026. However, projects ready for use between **August 1, 2023 and October 31, 2024** will not be eligible to be submitted for the national EEA competition.

See national guidelines by visiting <https://www.acec.org/awards/engineering-excellence-awards/>

ENTRY CRITERIA

ENTRY DEADLINE - Online entry submission must be completed by: **Tuesday, September 1, 2026 (midnight)**.

FEE - \$500 entry fee per project for ACEC of Louisiana members; \$1,000 entry fee per project for non-ACEC of Louisiana members.

AWARD DECISIONS ARE FINAL- Entries will be judged on the basis of overall engineering excellence. Entries will also be judged on the basis of the work performed by the entering firm only and according to the rating guidelines listed on page 5.

RESEARCH OR CONSULTING SERVICES- Entries in Category A (refer to page 7 for category listing) must be accompanied by a supplementary REPORT containing findings, graphs, drawings and other material as applicable.

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ELIGIBILITY, CRITERIA & AWARD LEVELS

AWARD LEVELS

Grand Winners. Winners will be selected from the eligible submissions by vote of the judges.

Honor Awards. Honor Awards will be given to those projects worthy of recognition by the judges.

Grand Conceptor Award. A Grand Conceptor Award will be selected from the eligible Grand Winners. This will not be announced until the Awards Ceremony.

Grand and Honor Award projects completed and ready for use between August 1, 2023 and October 31, 2024 are not eligible to progress to the National ACEC EEA Competition, at the firm's expense. ACEC National rules and submission criteria may differ from ACEC of Louisiana's.

Visit: <https://www.acec.org/awards/engineering-excellence-awards/>

Awards will be presented to the firm and owner/client at the Engineering Excellence Awards Ceremony to be held the evening of November 18, 2026 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

**Additional awards may be ordered at the winner's expense.

Dates to Remember:

July 1, 2026:
Call for Entries

September 1, 2026
Submission Due Date

October 1, 2026
Award Recipients Notified & Announced

November 18, 2026
EEA Awards Gala

RATING GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING:

Each entrant's contribution will be evaluated based on five key categories outlined in the project description text required in the electronic submittal.

1. Uniqueness and/or Innovative Applications 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 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?
- 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?

2026 Call For Entries



PREPARING YOUR ENTRY

This section describes all required submission materials for entering the 2026 ACECL 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 JPG's, photos or other images, PowerPoint, Adobe PDFs, etc.)
- 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. Please follow the guidelines.
- Ensure your submitted materials exclude references to other awards and do not include videos.
- ACECL also highly recommends joint-award submissions whenever multiple firms collaborate on the same project.
- The EEA competition is judged by an independent panel of experts whose selections are final.
- The official electronic entry, must be submitted through the online portal by **SEPTEMBER 1st, 2026!**

NOTE:

No QR Codes or embedded links are permitted in any portion of an award submission.

All materials submitted for judging in the competition become the property of ACECL and may be used in ACECL publications, in addition to all other internal or external promotional or educational purposes.

Submitted materials will NOT be returned.

SHIPPING:

Photographic display panels must be rolled and shipped in mailing tubes.

The Photographic Display Panel, Signed Submission Form and Check can be mailed to:

American Council of Engineering Companies of Louisiana

ATTN: Barker Dirmann

18212 E. Petroleum Drive, Building 7

Baton Rouge, LA 70809

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PROJECT CATEGORIES

CATEGORY A:

Studies, Research and Consulting Engineering 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
- Technical papers
- Public outreach/involvement
- Water conservation
- Security plans
- Project feasibility studies/economic/risk
- Value engineering

CATEGORY 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)

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
- Storm water management
- Erosion control

CATEGORY 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 eco-system restoration
- Locks/dams/water control structures
- Irrigation

CATEGORY H:

Transportation

- Highways
- Rail
- Airports
- Marine/ports
- Public transit
- Intermodal facilities

CATEGORY I:

Special Projects

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

CATEGORY 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.

CATEGORY K:

Energy

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

CATEGORY L:

Industrial and Manufacturing Processes and Facilities

- Petrochemical
- Biotech
- Manufacturing
- Heavy industry
- Industrial waste
- Materials handling
- Mining, metallurgy, mineralogy

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OFFICIAL ELECTRONIC ENTRY

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

1 ELECTRONIC PROJECT SUBMISSION FORM

Located on the ACECL website: <https://www.acecl.org>

Specifications: PDF format

Once the entrant has completed the project submission form, the form can be printed to be signed by all required parties. This form can then be uploaded as part of the electronic project submission.

NOTE: You must submit entry fee payment via check to ACECL with a copy of the project entry form post marked by September 1, 2026 at midnight to 18212 E. Petroleum Drive, Building 7, Baton Rouge, LA 70809 (\$500 for ACEC members; \$1,000 for non-ACEC members.)

Original completed entry form must be signed by both the entrant and the client/owner (senior executives/officials), stating that the submitted project was substantially completed and ready for use between August 1, 2023 and August 31, 2026. Electronic signatures are accepted.

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

The project name should not exceed 45 characters.

2 CLIENT/OWNER LETTER (one page max.)

Letter addressed to ACECL 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. The letter must be signed by the project's client. **Specifications:** PDF format.

NOTE: If you are unable to provide a client/owner letter, please submit other documentation confirming that the client/owner has approved the project. (e.g., an email from the client/owner indicating their approval for the project.)

3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (one page max.)

Overview of 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. PDF format.

4 PROJECT DESCRIPTION (six pages max.) Tell the story of the project. Address items a, b, c, d and e as follows.

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. Do not reference other awards the project has won. Specifications: 8.5" x 11"; 1" side margins; single-spaced text; 12 pt. minimum size font; PDF format.

Text must include all 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 page 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.

d. BUDGET INFORMATION:

- Include total budgeted project construction cost and total actual project construction cost
- Include the entrants 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 submission form)

REMINDER: These costs are not engineering fees—they are the total of the construction costs 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

e. 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 ACECL publicity on the project.

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5 KEY PARTICIPANTS

List the key participants on the project including firm name, address, phone number, website, and e-mail 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. Six photos or graphics are required: three showing the completed project and three depicting the project development in progress. 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: As images will be projected on a large screen during the EEA Gala, it is very important to submit sharp, high-quality, high-resolution images.

7 PHOTOGRAPHIC DISPLAY PANEL

Panel Text and photos should demonstrate challenges, solutions, innovations, complexity and unique aspects of key project elements. The panel should be prepared with high-quality photos and graphics with minimal text. Note: See Photographic Panel Requirements on Page 10.

8 MEDIA LIST

E-mail addresses of local newspapers, TV, radio stations and other media outlets where your project can be highlighted. Specifications: Excel File.

9 POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

PowerPoint file, containing 8 slides including 1 title slide with ACECL 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 PowerPoint presentation template is downloadable from the ACECL website.

10 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.

SHIPPING:

Photographic display panels must be rolled and shipped in mailing tubes. The photographic Display, Signed Submission Form and Check can be mailed or hand-delivered to:

ATTN: Barker Dirmann
18212 E. Petroleum Dr., Building 7
Baton Rouge, LA 70809

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DISPLAY PANEL

Panel 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 with minimal text.

PHOTOGRAPHIC PANEL REQUIREMENTS:

1. PANEL SIZE:

30" x 30" square, with a matte finish, laminated front and back as follows:

- Front lamination thickness: 5 mil
- Back lamination thickness: 5 mil
- Panel stock thickness before lamination: no more than 5-6 mil
- Total panel (with lamination) thickness: 15-16 mil

NOTE: Framed or mounted panels will NOT be accepted.

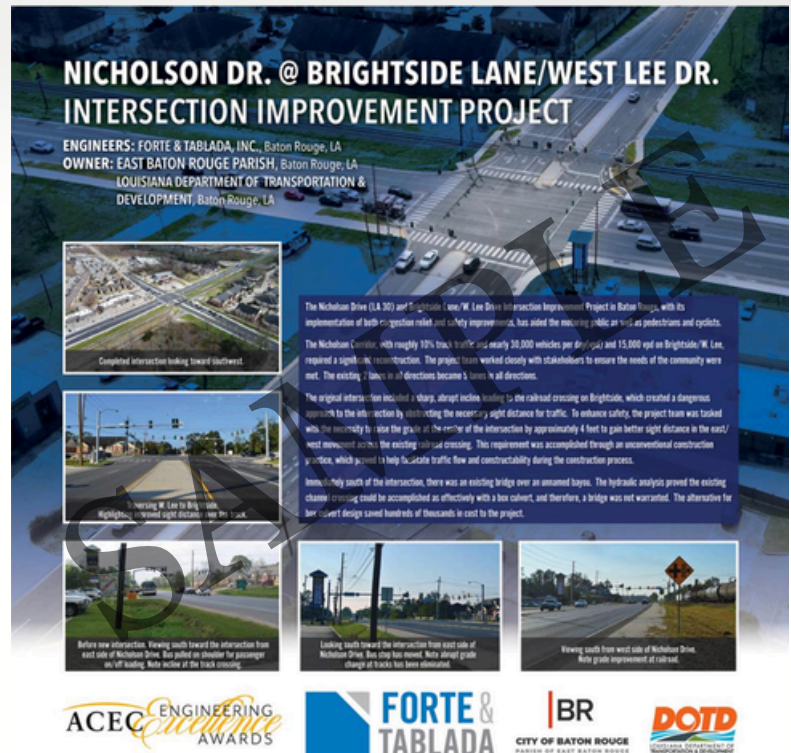
2. PHOTOS/GRAPHICS: Maximum of 6 photos and/or graphics shall be used on the panel. Each image shall be a minimum of 7" x 5" or 35 square inches in area. A background photo is not considered a photograph.

3. 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.

4. REQUIRED ELEMENTS: The front of the panel shall also include the ACEC and EEA logos (download from ACECL 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).

5. 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.

6. 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.
See ACECL EEA website for example of photographic panel.



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SAMPLE ENTRY FORM

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 \$500 per entry for ACECL members (\$1,000 for non-ACECL members). This Form and payment via check must be submitted by midnight September 1, 2026 to 18212 E. Petroleum Drive, Building #7, Baton Rouge, LA 70809

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

☐ J. Small Projects

☐ B. Building/Technology Systems

☐ E. Environmental

☐ H. Transportation

☐ K. Energy

☐ C. Structural Systems

☐ F. Waste and Storm Water

☐ I. Special Projects

☐ L. Industrial and Manufacturing Process/Facilities

Project Location: City _____ State _____

What was the Entrant's Role in the project? _____

ABOUT THE PROJECT'S SCHEDULE AND BUDGET

Budgeted and/or actual costs may not apply to some studies in Category A and some projects in Category D. With the exception of Category A and some Category D projects, **costs reflected below are always construction costs and are NOT engineering fees**. If your firm was responsible for the entire engineering-design of the project, then the *Entrant's Portion of the Total Construction Budget* amount and the *Entrant's Portion of the Total Construction Actual Cost* amount will be the same as the Total Construction Budget amount and Total Construction Actual Cost amount.

If your firm was not responsible for the entire engineering-design of the project, then the *Entrant's Portion of the Total Construction Budget* amount and the *Entrant's Portion of the Total Construction Actual Cost* amount should be the part of total project construction cost your firm was responsible for. (i.e. a mechanical engineering firm was responsible for \$12M of a total Construction budget of \$40M. \$12M is the *Entrant's Portion of the Total Construction Budget*. \$40M is the *Total Construction Budget*.)

Completion/Use Dates: Scheduled _____

Actual _____

Category A & D Costs: Budgeted \$ _____

Actual \$ _____

Construction Costs: Total Construction Budget \$ _____

Total Construction Actual \$ _____

Entrant's portion of Total Construction Budget \$ _____

Entrant's portion of Total Construction Actual \$ _____

☐ Check box if project was awarded through QBS process. (Note: This is not engineering fees)

ABOUT THE FIRM(S) SUBMITTING THE PROJECT

Entering Firm(s) _____

Firm CEO _____

Firm Representative _____ ☐ Please check this box if this person is to receive ALL EEA correspondence.

Must be available by phone (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 (_____) _____ E-mail _____

I hereby authorize submission of this project into the American Council of Engineering Companies of Louisiana's 2024 Engineering Excellence Awards competition.

Senior Executive/Principal _____ ☐ Please check this box if this person is to receive ALL EEA correspondence.

Signature _____ Date _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____

Marketing Coordinator _____ ☐ Please check this box if this person is to receive ALL EEA correspondence.

Signature _____ Date _____

Email _____

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 ACECL 2026 Engineering Excellence Awards competition, and authorize publication of images and details of the project. I confirm that the project was ready for use between August 1, 2023 and August 31, 2026.

Client/Owner Representative _____

Title _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Address (no P.O. Box) _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____