

THE NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING ASSOCIATION AWARD 2026 SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

Welcome to the seventh annual NIPA Award – this document provides guidance on making an Award submission, the Award process and how Award case studies and photographs will be used after the Award presentation.

Please read this carefully before entering a submission for the 2026 Award.

AWARD SUBMISSION

As part of NIPA's continued drive to identify and showcase best practice, NIPA is continuing the success of the NIPA Award launching the 2026 Award for what is judged to be 'Best Project'. Submissions should include best practice examples of: early, meaningful and ongoing engagement and consultation with host communities and key stakeholders; pre-application, pre-examination and examination process leading to a determination within or close to statutory timescales; innovation deployed within a DCO; innovative and / or sensitive design; investment in the host community; understanding and approach to climate change, natural capital and the environment; regard to project delivery; and any other aspects of innovation and best practice associated with the NSIP and DCO concerned.

Submissions can come from anyone who is a member of NIPA.

Please note that:

- Any submission must apply only to those projects that completed their consenting journey through the DCO process, i.e. were granted their DCO, **between 1 October 2025 and 30 September 2026 (inclusive)**.
- If a DCO made within that timeframe was subsequently quashed, it is still eligible for submission and irrespective of whether or not the DCO has been made again on a subsequent re-determination by the relevant Secretary of State.
- You can submit more than one entry for the Award, provided that it covers a different project consented within the above period.
- In making an Award submission, you are agreeing that your submission(s), and / or part thereof, including hi-res photographs and other images, can be published by NIPA, shown at NIPA or other national infrastructure events and / or turned into a case study. Any case study may, in turn, be published online, used in NIPA reports, be promoted and circulated at NIPA and other national infrastructure events and during NIPA meetings with stakeholders.
- NIPA will take the details provided in submissions at face value. Please ensure that all submissions are accurate and please credit all of the entities involved.



National Infrastructure Planning Association

Project Award 2026

- If you make a submission to the NIPA Award you must ensure that you have authority from all relevant parties involved in your project, prior to submitting it to us.

Submissions must:

- Be written in an appropriate and suitable manner so they can easily be adapted to become case studies (on no more than 3 pages of A4 **in addition to the completed form** (although appendices with more detail are encouraged)). If making use of hyperlinks to the Planning Inspectorate project page or other external resources, please provide specific references that are relevant so this is clear and proportionate for the judges.
- Clearly demonstrate how the project showcases best practice and the benefits that this has brought to the consenting process and to the project, the applicant, key stakeholders and host communities. Submissions should include best practice examples of: early, meaningful and ongoing engagement and consultation with host communities and key stakeholders; pre-application, pre-examination and examination process leading to a determination within or close to statutory timescales; innovation deployed within a DCO; innovative and / or sensitive design; investment in the host community; understanding and approach to climate change, natural capital and the environment; regard to project delivery; and any other aspects of innovation and best practice.
- Provide logos of all the organisations / authorities involved.
- Provide at least two or three hi-res photos.
- Provide quotes from key stakeholders with whom you engaged.
- When submitting your submission please name the file as – 2026 NIPA Award. Name of your Organisation. Date (submitted in the format xxxxxx (e.g. 291026)).
- Name all organisations that have been involved.
- Only those submissions made using the completed NIPA Award Submission Form will be accepted.
- Be received at info@nipa-uk.org by **6.00pm on Friday 30 October 2026** as no extensions will be granted.

AWARD PROCESS AND TIMETABLE

The NIPA Award 2026 will be launched via a communication to Members and on the NIPA Website on **Monday 12 October 2026**.

All submissions must be made using the NIPA Award Submission Form by **6.00pm on Friday 30 October 2026**. All submissions will then be considered by a panel of independent judges. A shortlist will subsequently be published and the winner of the Award announced at the NIPA Annual Dinner on **Wednesday 02 December 2026**.