

TOP INNOVATIVE PRACTICE AWARDS ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS and AWARDS CRITERIA

AWARDING EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION

When it comes to improving safety and efficiency, you are innovative and resourceful – leaders in creating the high standards of the nuclear industry. Now all you need to do is tell us about it!

Since 1994, the Top Innovative Practice (TIP) Awards have rewarded the new and creative ideas and techniques developed by our industry's talented workforce. In seeking and sharing best practices, you help your company have a profound and direct impact on improving the safety and reliability of the nuclear energy industry.

Sponsored by the Nuclear Energy Institute in conjunction with nuclear steam supply system (NSSS) vendors Framatome, GE Vernova Hitachi Nuclear Energy, and Westinghouse, the TIP Awards are the nuclear industry's highest recognition of excellence.

ELIGIBILITY

The TIP awards are open to individuals and teams from all NEI member utilities that have created and implemented transferable new practices—or significantly improved processes and equipment—within the past three years. Entrant must be a member of NEI and a commercial reactor site license holder at either an operating or decommissioning site. There is no limit to the number of entries that may be submitted. Industry suppliers interested in entering are encouraged to do so through their utility clients.

2026 TIP ENTRY DEADLINE

All TIP entries must be submitted electronically via the member section of NEI's website using the instructions below. Entries will be accepted beginning January 19, 2026 through April 27, 2026.

AWARDS CRITERIA

To be considered for a TIP Award, the new process or practice can come from any area of utility operations including, but not limited to, improvements in plant operations, plant support, communications and outreach, or innovative business practices. The process or practice must have already been implemented and address one or more of the following criteria:

Innovation: The entry should illustrate how the improvement is unique. Explain how it offers a different approach to a new or existing challenge.

Safety: The entry should maintain or enhance nuclear safety, radiation protection safety and/or industrial safety, as applicable.

Cost-Savings Impact: The entry should include quantitative or qualitative data or information that demonstrates significant, tangible cost savings achieved or costs avoided.

Productivity/Efficiency: The entry should clearly describe the measurable increases in employee/organization productivity that was gained. If applicable, state how the improvement was collaborative across the organization.

Transferability: The entry should state how this new process or practice is transferable across the industry, within a fleet, or applicable to a generic plant design.

Communications: The entry should include a description of effective and innovative approaches to internal communications, external stakeholder communications, or change management.

Vision & Leadership: The entry should describe exceptional leadership in change management demonstrating effective organizational motivation and support that achieved measurable results.

AWARDS CATEGORIES

NEI Awards:

TIP Award winners will be selected by the TIP committee - an industry panel chaired by NEI, with representation from Framatome, GE Vernova Hitachi Nuclear Energy, Westinghouse, the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO) and the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI). The judges will review all entries and select the entries that best exemplify the award criteria.

NSSS Vendor Awards:

Framatome (BW); GE Vernova Hitachi Nuclear Energy (GE); Westinghouse Design (W)

The TIP committee will review all entries and select those that best meet the award criteria in support of the four plant design categories.

"Best of the Best" Award:

NEI will select the most impactful entry representing the highest level of innovation from among all of the NEI and vendor award winners.

AWARDS PRESENTATION

TIP Award winners will be recognized at the industry's annual meeting, the Nuclear Energy Conference & Expo (NECX). Winning teams have considerable responsibility: they budget and plan for travel and they budget for, design, and plan a short video describing their entry for presentation during the conference. They generally work with NEI to present their entry in the best light possible. The rewards are exceptional. Winning teams are recognized and celebrated

at the TIP Award ceremony and throughout the year through NEI's promotional activities.

PREVIOUS WINNERS and PREVIOUS ENTRIES

To review examples of previous TIP winning entries, log on to the [NEI Member TIP Awards Page](#). For videos go to [NEI's YouTube Video Page](#). In 2020 and 2021, the Awards were presented virtually. Recordings of the virtual award ceremonies are available on the [NEI Member TIP Awards Page](#).

HOW TO ENTER ONLINE

1. Login to the NEI Member home page (<http://www.nei.org>). If you do not have your login information, please follow the instructions on the login screen to retrieve it.
2. Once you are logged in as a member, proceed to <https://www.nei.org/member-center/member-awards/top-industry-practice-awards>.
3. Click "Enter Submission." The first time you do this, you will be presented with the entry form. Create a unique username for each entry and click "submit". If you are returning to work on an existing entry, use the "returning users" section and click "submit".
4. Fill in all of the required information for your TIP Entry. You can click the "save partial work" button and log in later to complete the entry. Clicking "submit" actually submits your entry, but even after clicking submit you can go back to edit and click "submit" again. The final deadline for entries is Monday, April 27, 2026, midnight Pacific Time.
5. Do not submit proprietary information in the entry. Provide a general description and results so that the entry may be posted on the NEI and INPO member web pages after the awards process is complete. All entries will be posted on these sites. Entries may be provided to industry trade press who attend NEA to facilitate their coverage of the awards.
6. You should receive a "success page" message when you click the "submit" button. You should also receive an email summarizing your entry information.

**Please direct any questions or concerns to
Ashley Pomper, arp@nei.org.**

SAMPLE TEMPLATE ENTRY and MORE INFORMATION

THIS IS NOT THE TIP ENTRY FORM. This is an optional tool to create the nomination *prior* to submitting it online. This "Entry Template" is a Word file that follows the web-based "Online Entry Submission". You may want to use this template to create your entry. Once you are satisfied it is complete, cut and paste the text into the "Online Entry Submission." This method will allow you to create, collaborate and adjust your entry prior to submitting it.

TIP ENTRY TEMPLATE STARTS HERE (Use as a guideline only)

CONTACT INFORMATION: Identify the contact person for follow-up information concerning entry details. This is the person who will answer specific questions about the entry/project.

Entry Contact Name:
Job Title:
Telephone:
Email:

TIP WINNER COORDINATOR: Identify the person who will coordinate with NEI, should the entry win an award. The scope of this involvement includes helping arrange for a winner's exhibit booth, and logistics for the NEA presentation such as submitting materials for use at the awards ceremony and providing the names of those who will be in attendance and receiving awards (even if this is the same person named above).

Coordinator Name:
Telephone:
Email:

TIP ENTRY TITLE:

COMPANY NAME:

PLANT NAME:

BINNING: To be considered for a TIP Award, the new process or practice can come from ANY area of utility operations. All of the TIP judges review all of the entries. The purpose of "binning" is to make sure judges review the entries in which they have a particular area of expertise. You will be asked to select a "bin" for your entry:

Communications and Outreach
Decommissioning
Equipment Reliability/Engineering
Maintenance

Materials, Management Processes and Support Services

Nuclear Fuel
Plant Operations
Plant Support
Training
Other _____

NSSS VENDOR CATEGORY: If you want the entry to be considered for a NSSS award, please check all that apply:

- Framatome-BW
- General Electric-GE
- Westinghouse Design-W
- Westinghouse Combustion Engineering Design-CE
- Other (specify) _____

TEAM MEMBERS AND JOB TITLES (The online entry form allows for five team members. If you have additional team members, please list them in your entry statement:

- a. Lead Team Member, Job Title:
- b. Second Team Member, Job Title:
- c. Third Team Member, Job Title:
- d. Fourth Team Member, Job Title:
- e. Fifth Team Member, Job Title:

ENTRY STATEMENT: *Fully describe, in sufficient detail, how the entry meets the applicable awards criteria listed below. Outstanding attributes of the nomination should be included. Complete entries should address as many of the following criteria that apply to the entry.*

- a. **Innovation:** The entry should illustrate how the improvement is unique. Explain how it offers a different approach to a new or existing challenge.
- b. **Safety:** The entry should maintain or enhance nuclear safety, radiation protection safety and/or industrial safety, as applicable.

Consider including some of the following in your explanation: Risk: CDF/LERF, use of risk analysis, industrial safety measures, accident rate improvements, lost time accidents (hours), human performance.

- c. **Cost-Savings Impact:** The entry should include quantitative or qualitative data or information that demonstrates significant, tangible cost savings achieved or costs avoided.

Consider including some of the following measures in your explanation: any outage duration/cost savings, contractual savings, radioactive waste cost savings, replacement power cost, man hours, or other operational, material costs, etc. Cost avoidance can also be included.

- d. **Productivity/Efficiency:** The entry should clearly define the measurable increases in employee/organization productivity that was gained. If applicable, state how the improvement was collaborative across the organization.

Consider including some of the following attributes in your explanation: cycle time, work order process reduction, design process improvements, number of handoffs reduced; turnaround time on work, process efficiency gains, outage time reduced, personnel productivity, surveillance reductions, HP survey reductions.

- e. **Transferability:** The entry should state how this new process or practice is transferable across the industry, within a fleet, or applicable to a generic plant design.
- f. **Communications:** The entry should include a description of a program that demonstrates effective internal or external outreach or change management. For instance:
- indicate how the program promoted the value of nuclear energy, advanced greater understanding and confidence in plant operations and safety or influenced policymakers;
 - Describe how internal and or external change management strategies were impactful for the successful implementation of the entry.
 - Use of novel approaches (e.g. digital communications) to effectively communicate with desired audiences.
- g. **Vision & Leadership:** The entry should describe exceptional leadership in change management demonstrating effective organizational motivation and support that achieved measurable results.

GRAPHICS: Up to five pictures items may be uploaded with the entry in a *.jpg*, *.png*, or *.gif* file.

ENTRY TIPS: NEI is looking for very high-quality entries both in substance and style. Only small graphics files can be submitted with your entry. Graphics should support your entry in a visual way. The judges can consider videos, podcasts, websites, attachments such as PDFs, spreadsheets, etc. if they are submitted as web links in the body of the entry. For example, short videos are encouraged, but they should be submitted as YouTube links or hosted on your corporate website, or something else easily accessible. Entries should be concise. Though not required, the recommended length of a TIP entry is no more than seven pages (single spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins) not including graphics.

Questions? Contact:

Ashley Pomper
Nuclear Energy Institute
arp@nei.org