

Conditions of participation for the dena Energy Award 2026 competition

Competition and categories

The German Energy Agency GmbH (dena) presents the “dena Energy Award – efficiency and climate action” (until 2025 Energy Efficiency Award) to particularly outstanding energy efficiency and climate protection projects of national and international private or public companies. In the project categories, projects are sought that have already been successfully implemented or are about to be commissioned. The award is presented in the following categories:

- ‘Move forward! Integrated strategies and measures for climate neutrality’
- ‘Go smart! Energy efficiency through technology and digitalisation’
- ‘Act together! Cooperation for effective energy efficiency and climate protection projects’

The competition entries are submitted by the participants in one of the competition categories. The dena reserves the right to change the category assigned by the participant if, in its view, this is justified or appropriate in terms of content. In addition, the following special prize will be awarded among all submissions to a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME):

- ‘Pioneer. Audience award for small and medium-sized enterprises’

The jury nominates suitable projects from all applications in the main categories; the winner of the special award is then determined by a public vote.

The international competition is supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE). The competition is free to enter.

Scheduled dates for the dena Energy Award 2026

The application deadline is 5 June 2026.

The announcement of the nominated projects will take place **at the end of September 2026**. The **award ceremony** will take place on **9 November 2026 in Berlin**.

Please note the latest **announcements** on the website [dena Energy Award](#).

Eligibility

All private or public companies from Germany, Europe and around the world can apply – regardless of their size or industry. Private or public companies that have implemented or designed measures to improve energy efficiency or climate protection in their operations and have achieved, or can credibly demonstrate, corresponding savings in energy consumption, energy costs and/or CO_{2e} emissions may participate in the competition.

Private enterprises are, in this context, enterprises that have a private-law organisational form and are majority privately owned.

Public enterprises are, in this context, enterprises that take the form of either a private-law or public-law organisation and are majority-owned by the state or by local authorities. This also includes entities with their own legal personality, such as corporations under public law, institutions or foundations.

Companies that have worked together on a **joint** project or concept can also apply jointly for the dena Energy Award. As a rule, these are cooperating companies in which the measures are implemented, as well as their involved cooperation partners such as consultants, planners or plant manufacturers.

Submissions from **small and medium-sized enterprises** and start-ups are expressly encouraged.

Submission procedure

Participation takes place by submitting a project or concept via the online application form on the website <https://bewerbung.dena-energy-award.de/>. After successful registration, applications can be created, saved, and submitted here. The online form must be fully completed and submitted by the application deadline. Please note that meaningful and complete data are of particular relevance for the jury's decision. The dena may request additional information and documents if these are required for the assessment.

Multiple applications are permitted. A prerequisite for submitting multiple applications is that the competition entries are substantively different projects. Companies that have previously submitted an application for the Energy Efficiency Award may apply again with the same project, provided that the submitted projects were not nominated. Please note that, in the case of a renewed application, the project-specific key figures and information must be as up to date as possible.

The most promising project submissions in each category are subjected by dena to a detailed review, given a preliminary technical evaluation, and editorially prepared for the jury. For the detailed review, the selected companies will be contacted by email or telephone after the application phase.

The German Energy Agency (dena) reserves the right to reject a submitted project or concept

even after all application documents have been submitted. This occurs if either the terms and conditions of participation have not been complied with or participation and/or the submitted application documents violate the laws of the Federal Republic of Germany. If a participant is excluded from the competition, the German Energy Agency (dena) shall inform the participant of this in writing.

Evaluation criteria and the jury

The professional evaluation of the submitted and approved applications is carried out on the basis of uniform evaluation criteria. Evaluation criteria are: Energy savings, greenhouse gas savings, economic efficiency and financing, innovation, transferability and representation.

From all the applications submitted, up to four projects will be nominated for each of the main categories, from which the prize winners will then be determined. The selection of the award winner for the special prize for a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) takes place as a public award within the framework of the dena Congress.

The selection of the nominations and the award winners is made by an independent jury. The jury consists of expert representatives from politics, business, science, the media, and dena. The jury members receive all submitted applications for review. They are obliged to comply with the legal provisions on data protection and to maintain confidentiality. The jury's decision is final. There is no legal entitlement to the award of a prize or prize money.

Presentation of awards to the winners and prize money

The award winners will be honoured during the dena Congress in Berlin. The companies nominated for the special award for a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) are invited to present their projects live at the dena Congress. The audience will then decide in a vote which project will receive the special prize.

The names of the winners will be announced. Along with that, they will also receive a certificate, a trophy and rights to use a prestigious label. The winning projects are honoured with an award-winner film that publicly showcases the merit of the project. The award-winning films will be published on the award's website and social media channels and presented at selected trade fairs, joint stands, and events of dena.

The nominees for the special award for small and medium-sized enterprises will each receive a prize of 1,000 euros, and the winner will receive 3,000 euros. The prize money is earmarked for a specific purpose. It is to be used exclusively for investments to increase energy efficiency, measures for the use of renewable energies in operations, or for communicating these measures. The prize money is considered state aid and is therefore paid out as so-called de minimis aid. A prerequisite for receiving the prize money is the fulfilment of the state aid requirements as set out in the so-called 'de minimis rule'. Before the prize money is paid out, the de minimis aid received during the previous three years must be declared.

Confidentiality

All submitted documents/information will be treated confidentially, unless otherwise stipulated in these conditions of participation. The documents will be made accessible exclusively to dena employees, commissioned service providers, and members of the jury. The jury members, as well as all others involved in the selection process, are expressly bound to this confidentiality.

Communications, rights of use

An important objective of the dena Energy Awards is to communicate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of energy efficiency and climate protection measures, as well as their transferability to other companies. For these reasons, dena presents the competition entries, and in particular the winning projects, to the public as part of active media work. In the manner of presentation, dena is free in its design. If the text and image material are not available in the required form, quantity or quality, dena has the right to refrain from a presentation.

In general, communication includes the following:

- Specific individual aspects, key data and energy efficiency/climate protection measures from the nominated and prize-winning projects
- Anonymised individual aspects, key figures, as well as energy efficiency and climate protection measures from the applications
- Forms of presentation such as press releases, specialist articles, fact sheets and online articles

Granting rights of use

The participant hereby irrevocably grants dena the simple, transferable, and unlimited rights of use—unrestricted in content, territory, and time—and covering all types of use, for the utilisation of the submitted data, images, graphics, and texts.

The participant consents to the processing and modification, as well as the publication and utilisation, including of the processed and modified works, by dena or by third parties commissioned by dena.

The participant assures that they are free to dispose of the rights of use to the work and that no third-party rights, in particular trademark, copyright, personality or other related protection rights, conflict with the free use of the work by dena. He also assures that, if third-party copyrights exist in the work, that third party has fully waived their right to be named as the author pursuant to § 13 sentence 2 UrhG. As a precaution, the participant shall indemnify dena upon first request against all claims by third parties arising from any of their own rights to the work or from personal rights. This also includes the costs of an appropriate legal defence by dena against third parties. In all other respects, liability is governed by the statutory provisions.

The rights of use shall be granted without compensation.

The dena reserves the right to make video recordings and take photos of competition entries or of the award ceremony at the dena Congress. The participant undertakes to obtain the consent of their employees participating in the award ceremony.

The participant agrees that the video recordings and images in which they appear may be used by dena for communication purposes (print, digital, online, on CD-ROM, etc.) and marketing activities. He agrees that the award ceremony may be documented by media companies for reporting purposes (TV, print, internet).

Cooperation of the entrants

The participant agrees to support the dena Energy Award as part of their application, in particular to provide dena with the necessary information and images in a timely manner and to designate a competent contact person.

The award ceremony for the winners of the dena Energy Award 2026 will take place as part of a formal presentation at the dena Congress on 9 November 2026 in Berlin. The award winners undertake to accept the award in person on this day through a representative of the company.

The participant agrees to enable the production of an award-winner film about their project/concept in their company in the event of being named a prize-winner. People from the company, such as management or energy managers/officers, should take part in the film. The filming of the project categories will take place after the jury's decision in the period September/October 2026.

Furthermore, the entrant declares that they are prepared to report about their participation in the competition and, if they are nominated or awarded a prize, about the dena Energy Award.

We are delighted by your interest in the dena Energy Award and wish you every success with your application.

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If you have any questions, please contact:

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dena

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