

2026 Construction Excellence Awards

ENTRY DEADLINE: JANUARY 16, 2026

CALL FOR ENTRIES

The Ceilings and Interior Systems Construction Association (CISCA) invites applications for their **Construction Excellence Awards** competition.

Be sure to read this
material in its entirety.

Award winners will be recognized at the **CISCA Summit Awards Dinner** on Tuesday, April 21, 2026 in Grapevine, Texas. The awards ceremony features a multi-media presentation of all submissions and winning projects. Winners will be featured in the Acoustical Interior Construction magazine and on the CISCA website.

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES

Entries are due no later than **January 16, 2026**. A special entry fee is available for entries received by **January 5, 2026**. No late entries will be accepted.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- A CISCA member must submit all entries.
- All entries will be judged against others submitted in the same category.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

1. Contractor
2. Manufacturer
3. Distributor
4. Independent Rep

TYPES OF ENTRIES

Boutique

No membership category specified when entering in this category.

Unique interior projects less than 10,000 total square feet in size. For example, even if the submitter's installation was only 5,000 square feet, but the total project was 20,000 square feet, the project would not be eligible for the Boutique category.

International

No membership category specified when entering in this category.

Projects outside of North America, i.e., projects not in the United States, Canada or Mexico, should enter in the International category.

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS



Office – Renovation or construction of office space



Education – Renovation or construction of a school or college



Healthcare – Renovation or construction of a hospital or other healthcare facility



Retail – Renovation or construction of a retail space such as a store or mall



Civic – Renovation or construction of any public building, such as airport, casino, museum, library, church or entertainment facility



NOTE: the judges may disqualify entries submitted in the wrong category.

SUB-CATEGORIES

After selecting the category, the project will be submitted into one of two sub-categories (based on the size of the work done by the contractor, manufacturer, distributor or independent rep submitting the project).

- Larger than 50,000 square feet
- Smaller than 50,000 square feet



It is important to understand that the “Square Feet” is intended to mean **INSTALLED** Square Feet (not the total project size).

Example 1: Contractor has installed ACT ceilings, Wood ceilings, Metal ceilings, Felt ceilings etc. If the total installed product portfolio exceeds 50,000 sq. ft, then they qualify for the ‘Larger than 50,000 square feet’ category.

Example 2: Manufacturer is submitting for a Metal or Wood Ceiling installation. If the installed Square Footage of your product is less than 50,000 square feet, then you must submit in this category. This is regardless of if the contractor installed other products. It only takes into consideration what product is being submitted for the award.

Example 3: A contractor with multiple installed ceilings totaling less than 50,000 square feet in a project with a gross project size of 100,000 sq. ft would still only qualify for the ‘Smaller than 50,000 square feet’ category.





AWARD TYPE

If a project wins the Founder's Award, it will not receive a gold award. Winners will be asked to notify the other companies that worked on the project and advise them that the project won an award. Winners will be given the option of having our staff contact the other companies.

FOUNDER'S AWARD

Selected by the judges as the best overall submission from all the entries received. The three projects with the highest scores by the judges during the first round, regardless of who submitted the project or which category they were submitted into, are moved to round two of judging. The judges then vote for which of the three was the best submission.

Projects submitted into the Boutique and International categories are not eligible to receive the Founder's Award.

GOLD AWARD

The project that receives the highest judging total in each category.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- Projects must have been completed within the past 12 months from the due date and must not have been previously submitted by the submitting company.
- No maximum number of total entries from one company.
- A maximum of one entry in any one category and sub-category from one company.
- No project may be submitted in more than one category by the same company. Any project submitted in two different categories, i.e., manufacturer and independent rep or manufacturer and contractor, must have different pictures and written paragraphs. The same pictures and paragraphs may not be submitted in two categories. If this occurs, the submitting company/ies will be asked to either change the submitted material for one of the entries or withdraw one entry.
- The installing contractor, manufacturer, acoustician and architect must be listed on the entry and will be included in the video, magazine and other marketing avenues such as social media.
- Winning projects will receive one physical award. Additional awards may be purchased.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All required material should be submitted online.

! IMPORTANT: No names of companies or projects are to be used in photographs or essays as these are seen by the judges during the judging process.. The only place to include these names is in the short paragraph. See Specifics below.

The following material is required:

IMAGES

10 pictures in JPG format of 300 dpi or higher. Other formats such as TIF and PDF will not display correctly for the judges. Dark and low-resolution photos may not be able to be used in the magazine. Photos up to 100 MB can be used. Cell phone images should be sent and used the highest resolution possible.

Photos before the project began and during are helpful for judging (bonus judging points may be awarded if included)

SUBMISSION CATEGORY

Membership type, category and sub-category must be selected.

VIDEO

No longer than 5 minutes in length is optional (bonus judging points awarded if included and they will be played during dinner in Las Vegas)

NARRATIVE

Short Paragraph (75 word maximum)

This will be used in the program and magazine. You may use company and project names in this paragraph.

Long Paragraph (up to 500 words)

This should clearly describe the challenges faced with the project. Tell the judges why this project should win. No names of companies or projects are to be used in this essay. **Points WILL be deducted for each name that is inserted in the essay or name of photos.** When thinking about what to include regarding job conditions, consider the challenges a job site might present to the contractor with regards to a difficult space to work within (lots of other tradesmen and

equipment working at the same time making installation more difficult); unusual heights and the complexity of installation due to these heights or other extreme unusual outside influences that challenged the installation process. Many times, the submittals include the statement “the job had a short time frame for installation” or something of that nature and depending on the project and products installed that may or may not be considered a “job condition”.

Short Picture Description

Give any needed explanation on the pictures without using names. Points WILL be deducted if the name of the project or product names are inserted.

Be mindful of the name you give your photos. The judges will see all submitted photos so do not use the name of the project or product for any photo submitted. **Points will be deducted if the name of the photo is the name of the project or company.**

! Do not use the name of the project or companies in the video as the judges will watch the video.

List other companies that worked on the project. **All companies listed as having worked on the project will be recognized in the video, program and magazine. CISCA staff will contact all non-members regarding membership so please be sure to include the name of the contact person and email address that worked on the project.**

FEES

\$575 fee if submitted by January 5.

\$875 fee if submitted between January 6 and January 16.





JUDGING CRITERIA

A panel of industry representatives will judge the entries.

PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY

PRESENTATION

The presentation will count for **20% of the total points**. The presentation includes the quality of the photos (the photos clear, bright and show the work, look professional) and descriptive quality (which should describe the work and material being shown on the photograph presented, without using company or specific product information).

The narrative should include a description of the installation process, job issues, any manufacturing issues, schedule issues or anything else that the judges should know.

The remaining **80% of the total points** will cover the technical quality of the job.

Technical Quality

Was this a standard installation or were special means and methods required? Was it unique?

Quality of the Job

Overall final appearance of the installed work for alignments, finish etc.

Complexity of the Job (Installation)

Was this a simple plug and play installation or was this a special process? Was field cutting required?

Complexity of the Job (Manufacturing Process)

Were the materials custom made or were they modified standard pieces? **NOTE:** Do not assume the judges are experts on manufacturing and its complexities. Provide detail about any customizations or challenges.

Job Conditions

Was installation height, schedule, temperatures (hot/cold) or complexities a factor in the installation?

Overall Finished Project

Your opinion on how the overall system looks.

! Do not use the name of the company, project or materials in the name of the photo, photo description or the document for the judges. If these are used, points will be deducted as follows:

Project name used	- 10%
Materials named	- 10%
Company name used	- 10%

There are also **10 bonus points** that can be received. Five bonus points may be awarded for a video included of the project, up to 5 minutes in length (do not use the name of the project or company in the video) and five bonus points may be awarded if there are pictures of the site before the project began and during construction.

OVERALL PRESENTATION AND APPEARANCE OF ENTRY

PHOTOGRAPHS

A minimum of 5 JPG (maximum of 10), 300 dpi photos must be included. Up to 10 unique additional photos may be included if they show the project before and during construction.

Provide a brief description of the photo in the caption section. **As the judges will see the names of the photos and video, be sure not to use the name of the project, name of the product or any company name in the name of the photo or the photo caption.** Photos should be good quality photos, which clearly show the judges the project. Photos do not have to be professionally done, but if they are, be sure to obtain reproduction rights from the photographer for CISCA's use without limitation. It would be helpful to the judges to have photographs of the project before and during the construction.

If using photos lower than 300 dpi, please be aware that they may not reproduce well in the program, magazine or on the website.

Some things to be mindful of:

Contrast

It is hard for the judges to review photos that are dark.

Orientation

Review the photos you upload to be sure they are displaying correctly. If they are on their side or upside down, you will need to rotate the original photo and upload them again. Photos which do not display as you intended are difficult to judge. If you see a scroll bar with the photo, check that it is a JPG and not a PDF or TIF. Photos which show a scroll bar will not display correctly for the judges.

Additional Photographs

Do not use a photo more than once in the entry. Judges will deduct points if you upload your photos in the 10 additional photo sections again. The 10 additional photos must be unique from the others submitted.

Video

The video should be contractor specific—showing progress or methods. It should not be a “stock” video or a CGI rendering or a video of the photos submitted. YouTube videos should not be used as



these are generally used for company promotional purposes and show the name of the project and company name. Any points given for having a video included will be deducted if this information is included.

NARRATIVE

A maximum of 500 words providing details about the size and scope of the project. See information above regarding the narrative.



NOTE: This narrative should not include the name of the project, the location of the project, specific product names, the name of the contractor, manufacturer, distributor, independent manufacturers rep, architect, other company that worked on the project or persons who worked on the project. If included, points will be deducted by the judges.

Staff will review submissions submitted on or prior to the due date of January 16, 2026 and advise the submitter if there are names of products or companies used in the names of pictures or written paragraph. They will also advise if any of the pictures do not display correctly for the judges. The submitter will be given until January 30 to correct any issues. Entries submitted after January 30 or any which have not been revised by the end of day January 30, will be submitted to the judges as they were submitted.

When submitting the project, you will be required to check a box that says that the submitter has permission from the installing contractor and/or owner of the property to submit the project.



Need help? See the How to Submit An Entry video at: youtu.be/_U8dFXn2Fil