



Idea of the Year 2026

The Basic Rules

- The competition will open to entries on **Monday 30th March 2026**
- The competition is **FREE** to enter for all ideasUK member organisations
- Entries must be submitted online by the closing date, which this year is **Friday 3rd July 2026**
- The maximum number of ideas any one company can enter into the competition is **TEN**
- The submission form is split into a series of questions, with a character limit per answer. Whilst attachments are allowed, they may only contain pictures / photographs or diagrams, which may be annotated. Any attachments with additional write-ups will not be included within the judging process
- When you upload your idea you will be asked to pick a 'category' that you feel best represents your idea. During the judging process the judges have the right to change the category, if they feel the idea will have an improved chance of success in an alternate category
- The evaluation criteria for all ideas are: Idea Impact, Economic Viability, Applicability and Innovation
- **Each idea may only be entered ONCE**
- If an idea has been entered into the competition previously it is **NOT** eligible to be entered again unless a significant change or update has been made in the last 12 months
- Your idea will only be visible to the judges, so your IP is protected
- **All outstanding invoices from ideasUK must be paid** for your idea to be eligible in the competition

Submitters Undertaking

The process of uploading an idea is the submitting organisation's agreement to the conditions of the competition and confirmation that:

- The idea has been implemented and delivered benefit, tangible or intangible, to the organisation within the last 2 years and not been entered into the competition previously
- **Should your idea be picked as a finalist, the submitter themselves (or at least one of the team), will be available to attend the full two days of the ideasUK Conference (11th & 12th November 2026).** During this time, they will attend a face-to-face judging session and the awards presentation. NB: ideasUK will withdraw the idea from the competition in the absence of a representative
- In exceptional circumstances and with prior agreement of ideasUK the judging session may be carried out via video call. There will be a charge to participate virtually.
- If an idea is selected as a finalist, the organisation will create a 60 second video to be shown during the awards ceremony. This video will be used to promote the idea during the ideasUK Conference and will be the base for the People's Award which is voted for in person by conference delegates.

ideasUK Undertaking

On receiving a completed idea nomination, ideasUK will undertake to:

- Arrange an initial judging of all ideas by an independent panel of Judges, who will review and shortlist the ideas, selecting finalists for each category
- Notify submitting organisations of the ideas shortlisted as finalists by **Wednesday 5th August 2026**
- Provide a 'Special Rate' for finalists to attend the conference
- Provide a face-to-face meeting of 15 minutes for each finalist with the independent judging panel during Conference (10 minutes for a presentation and 5 minutes for a Q&A)
- After the face-to-face judging, select winners in each category and the overall Idea of the Year winner will be chosen from the category winners
- Announce the winners at an Awards ceremony on **Thursday 12th November 2026**.
- Provide a 'winners' trophy for each award and recognise all finalists during the award ceremony

NB: The judges' decision is final and no correspondence regarding outcome will be entered into.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How many entries can my organisation make? A maximum of 10 entries per organisation can be submitted into the 2025 competition.

2. What do I have to do to enter? Complete the online submission form, ensuring all details relate to each section title. You can also add pictorial documents that relate directly to the idea i.e. photographs, diagrams etc.

3. Can I upload additional written documents? We have a strict character count in all sections of the idea upload and this these are not to be exceeded. If you upload documents with additional explanations they will not be read. Only pictures and diagrams that support the written application will be reviewed.

4. Is there a size limit for uploaded documents? The maximum size of any one document is 5MB, so you may need to convert documents to PDFs to upload.

5. When will we know if our entry has been successful? All shortlisted entries will be notified on Monday 3rd August 2026.

6. What happens if we've been shortlisted? If you have been shortlisted you will be invited to attend a face-to-face session with the judges, where you can present your ideas and answer any of their questions. This will take place during the ideasUK conference on 11 / 12 November in London. You will also be asked to upload a presentation in preparation of your face-to-face interview with the judges and create a video no longer than 60 seconds that will be shown during the awards ceremony.

7. When is the closing date? The closing date for online entries is Friday 3rd July 2026.

8. How will I know if I have won? We will announce the winners at an awards ceremony during the 2026 ideasUK conference on the afternoon of Thursday 12th November 2026.

9. Are there different award categories? Yes, there are 8 categories you can submit your entry under, if you feel your idea fits into more than one category choose the best fit and annotate within the body of your submission the other categories you would like it considered against.

10. Can I start my entry and then come back to complete it at a later date? Yes, at the bottom of the entry form you have the option to publish or save to draft, this will allow you to return to the form until you are ready to submit.