

# ISGAN Award of Excellence 2022

## Frequently Asked Questions<sup>1</sup>



### **Q1: What is ISGAN?**

ISGAN is the IEA Technology Collaboration Programme (TCP) on Smart Grids, though it is more commonly known as the International Smart Grid Action Network.

ISGAN is a voluntary, multilateral collaboration to advance the development and deployment of smarter, cleaner electricity grids around the world. ISGAN facilitates dynamic knowledge sharing, technical assistance, and project coordination in an effort to improve the understanding of smart grid technologies, practices, and systems, address gaps in knowledge and tools, and promote the adoption of related enabling government policies. ISGAN operates under the auspices of the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM) and is formally organized under a framework of the International Energy Agency (IEA). Currently, 27 countries from 5 continents and the European Commission officially participate. More information on ISGAN can be found at its website, [www.iea-isgan.org](http://www.iea-isgan.org).

### **Q2: What is the ISGAN Award of Excellence?**

The ISGAN Award of Excellence is a prize given to one or more smart grid projects each year at the conclusion of an annual international awards competition. The Award of Excellence marks the recipient projects as exemplars in the global smart grid community.

Through the Award of Excellence, ISGAN showcases excellence in innovation, integration and transformation of smart grid systems around the world. By identifying and celebrating the best practices, leadership, and innovation exemplified by the award-winning projects, ISGAN aims to expand exchange of information among national and international entities, promote replication or adaptation of proven concepts in other markets, countries, and regions, stimulate cooperative pursuit of high-value smart grid targets, and accelerate field testing or demonstration of leading-edge smart grid concepts and technologies.

Each year of the ISGAN Award of Excellence competition focuses on one or more topical themes chosen by ISGAN to highlight a critical aspect of smart grid projects, policies, and programs. The theme for the Award of Excellence 2022 is “Excellence in Smart Grid Workforce Development for an Inclusive Energy Transition”.

Winning projects will be recognized during a formal ceremony targeted for September 2022 at the Thirteenth Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM13), in 2022 as well as in ISGAN and CEM Empowering People Initiative programs, events, publications, and proceedings.

Winners will be granted a limited individual license to advertise and promote the award granted to the

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<sup>1</sup>Please see the Official Rules, available at [www.iea-isgan.org](http://www.iea-isgan.org), for the official details about the Award of Excellence competition. In the event that this Frequently Asked Questions document and the Official Rules do not agree, the text in the Official Rules applies.

project and a limited right to use and refer to ISGAN Award of Excellence mark (i.e., the logo) and the phrase “Winner of the ISGAN Award of Excellence”, subject to the Official Rules for this competition and any guidelines published by the Awards Administrator.

This is the 8th year of the ISGAN Award of Excellence, and the intent is to make strengthen its recognition and prestige across the global smart grid community.

### **Q3: What is the EPI?**

ISGAN is implementing the Award of Excellence competition in partnership with the CEM Empowering People Initiative (EPI). It is a new initiative that was successfully launched at CEM12 in June 2021. EPI is co-led by Canada, the European Commission, and the United States, with Denmark and Chile joining as participating countries. EPI’s partners include the World Bank Group, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the SDG7 Youth Constituency, the World Energy Council, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). This initiative seeks to highlight the socio-economic elements of the energy transition that relate to empowering people and promoting just and equitable transitions: skills, inclusivity and workforce development. Building a diverse and inclusive workforce of tomorrow is critical to accelerating the push to a carbon-neutral future – one that leaves no one behind.

### **Q4: What smart grid topic(s) does the Award of Excellence cover?**

Each year of the ISGAN award focuses on a different “theme” within the broader smart grid vision. For the 8<sup>th</sup> ISGAN Awards, two themes are selected:

- 1) “Excellence in Electric Vehicle Integration with Smart Grid” in recognition of the critical importance of integration of EV and Smart grid technologies for decarbonization of transport.
- 2) “Excellence in Smart Grid Workforce Development for an Inclusive Energy Transition” in recognition of the necessity of innovative workforce development for achieving a just and equitable transition to support smart grid deployment.

### **Q5: Who implements the awards process?**

The Korea Smart Grid Institute (KSGI) is the Administrator for the award competition. KSGI is the Co-Secretariat of ISGAN along with the Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT) and, in that role, acts on behalf of ISGAN.

### **Q6: Who should apply?**

The focus of this Competition is to recognize one or more projects that exhibit excellence in Smart Grid Workforce Development for an Inclusive Energy Transition. ISGAN and EPI are encouraging applications by entities, teams, and consortia that have projects that broadly advance the socio-economic objective(s) highlighted above to apply.

Examples of eligible entities include: utilities, grid operators, engineering firms, colleges/universities, researchers, communities, consumers, organizations, and technology providers who are working to enable the widespread adoption of smart grid technologies as part of a collective push towards net-zero. That said, any entity or team of entities may apply, but only one entry per project will be allowed.

It is not required that the project be fully completed at the time of award application. However, it is

expected that the project have demonstrable results, supported by evidence, for the selection jury to make a reasoned judgment about the strength of the project measured against the evaluation criteria. To ensure that the project results are current and relevant, only projects that were active during or after 2013 will be considered.

Any entity or team of entities may apply, but only one entry per project (per annual competition) will be allowed.

**Q7: How do I apply?**

Simply download and complete the Official Project Submission Form available at [www.iea-isgan.org/award2022](http://www.iea-isgan.org/award2022). Completed templates, along with any additional information or exhibits, must be submitted by **23:59 UTC, 8 April 2022** via email to [isgan-awards@smartgrid.or.kr](mailto:isgan-awards@smartgrid.or.kr).

**Q8: What are the minimum requirements for a nomination?**

- (1) The nominations package must focus mainly on how the project advances the socio-economic objective(s) described in Q6 above, although the overall project described should include other relevant aspects linked to smart grid deployment.
- (2) The project must have been active during or after 2013.
- (3) All sections of the nominations package, as described in the Official Rules available at [www.iea-isgan.org/award2022](http://www.iea-isgan.org/award2022), must be complete.
- (4) The primary nominations package must be in English, though attachments in other languages are permitted.
- (5) The entity submitting the nomination must include a signed statement or corresponding letter signifying acceptance of all provisions in the 'Official Rules'.
- (6) Any additional partner entities included in the nomination must include a signed statement or send a letter designating their representation to the submitting entity and signifying their acceptance of all provisions in the 'Official Rules'.
- (7) Only one nomination or entry per project is permitted.

The competition Administrator will review each submission to ensure it meets the minimum requirements as described above and in the Official Rules. Nominations packages that do not meet the minimum requirements will be rejected for evaluation.

Applicants are free to address the problems and resubmit their nominations package for re-consideration at any time up to the final deadline.

The Administrator may contact the Applicant to schedule web meetings or similar interactions to validate information and claims included in the Submission.

The described project is also expected to have demonstrable results, supported by evidence, for the expert review jury to make a reasoned judgment about the strength of the project measured against the evaluation criteria (described in Q9 below).

### **Q9: How will the nominated projects be judged?**

A jury of international experts will be convened to review the submitted materials. The jury will select one or more winning projects reflecting five criteria as follows:

- **Potential Social Impact (40 points)** – The potential impact of the project, including its approach, design, implementation, and similar elements, in particular, related to the magnitude of realized socio-economic benefits, including but not limited to: improving equity, diversity and inclusion in the sector, growing a skilled and diverse smart grid workforce and supporting the transition of workers impacted by the transition to a clean energy future.
- **Innovation (20 points)** - The degree to which one or more major project elements is new, novel, and potentially highly effective and/or transformative.
- **Potential for replication or adaptation (20 points)** - The degree and ease with which the project attributes can be replicated, adapted or scaled to other markets, environments, and/or countries taking into account key attributes such as the cost of implementation and regulatory considerations.
- **Consumer Service, Access & Affordability (10 points)** - The degree to which the consumer derives improved service, flexibility, efficiency, resiliency, access and/or affordability.
- **Economic rationale (10 points)** - The degree to which the project, or the concepts underlying the project, exhibit strong evidence of direct or indirect economic benefits such as (but not limited to) a compelling business case, avoided economic losses, improved recruitment and retention of skilled employees, and/or expansion of value-added services.

The likelihood of winning depends primarily on the number and quality of all submissions, as determined by the jury.

### **Q10: When and how will winners be announced?**

Winning project(s) will be individually contacted by the Award Administrator in March 2022. They will be publically announced in a press release and media notifications coinciding with the 13th Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM13). An awards ceremony will be held at the CEM13 to Publicly recognize the winning project(s).

### **Q11: What benefit is there for winning applicants?**

Winning projects will be recognized internationally at a highly-publicized awards ceremony at the 13th Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM13). Entities participating in the winning projects will be invited to attend. Winners will be granted a limited individual license to advertise and promote the award granted to the project and a limited right to use and refer to ISGAN Award of Excellence mark (i.e., the logo) and the phrase “Winner of the ISGAN Award of Excellence,” subject to the Official Rules for this competition and any guidelines published by the Awards Administrator. Winning projects will be further recognized in ISGAN and EPI’s products, proceedings, and events over the ensuing months and promoted to ISGAN and EPI’s global audience. Moreover, the winners will be offered an opportunity for interviews and exposure via a promotional video which will be publicly distributed via a variety of networks, including

ISGAN's official YouTube channel<sup>2</sup> and website<sup>3</sup>.

**Q12: Will project information be made public for projects not selected as a winner?**

If the jury identifies projects that do not rise to the level of an ISGAN Award of Excellence winner but nonetheless exhibit good, innovative ideas, ISGAN and EPI may contact the applicants to obtain permission to use project information in case studies, peer-to-peer information sharing, and similar activities. However, any such use will be on a case-by-case basis with the prior permission of the award applicants.

**Q13: Is this competition limited to large-scale projects?**

No. Projects at pilot, demonstration and deployment scales are all eligible to apply. Based on the evaluation criteria, small, innovative projects that could yield larger impacts if implemented at scale are eligible and encouraged to apply. All projects will be evaluated using the same five criteria, described in Q9 above.

**Q14: The Official Project Submission Form does not request data on specific metrics. Should I include quantitative data in my submission?**

If you have such data available, **yes!** ISGAN recognizes that a diversity of metrics and performance measures are tracked in projects around the world, with significant differences across markets based, in part, on local regulatory, economic and technical conditions. Hence, this competition does not require the submission of data on any specified metrics. However, applicants are encouraged to include relevant data that supports claims relative to the strength of the project measured against the five evaluation criteria, described in Q9 above.

**Q15: I have more questions about this Award of Excellence competition. How do I get them answered?**

Please carefully review this FAQ and the Official Rules, available at [www.iea-igsaw.org/award2022](http://www.iea-igsaw.org/award2022). If neither the Official Rules nor this FAQ answer your question, then please contact the Award Administrator at [igsaw-awards@smartgrid.or.kr](mailto:igsaw-awards@smartgrid.or.kr). When appropriate, ISGAN will add the questions and answers to future versions of this FAQ or similar documents.

**Q16: Is it possible to apply twice with the same project over several years of the competition and both themes of this year? For example, if we apply this year and do not win, are we still eligible to apply again next year?**

Yes. Each annual round of the Award of Excellence competition is separate and distinct from the other rounds. Therefore, projects that apply in one year and are not selected for the award can still apply to future rounds of the competition. However, the content of each application must be tailored to the theme of the award for that particular year.

Within each annual round of the competition, any entity or team of entities may apply, but only one entry per project (per annual competition) will be allowed.

**Q17: With regard to Project Outcomes, is the response for this to be filled out on one page only (i.e., information on all four criteria on one page) or can we add one page per evaluation criteria (i.e., one page on potential impact, one page on system benefits, etc.)?**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCpCLaTYFVenCGioBIWdF4A>  
<sup>3</sup> <http://www.iea-igsaw.org/>

Please confine your response on Project Outcomes in the Official Project Submission Form to one page. If you need more space, we encourage you to use also the Supplemental Information form; see page 6 of that form, for example. All forms are available at [www.iea-isgan.org/award2022](http://www.iea-isgan.org/award2022).

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**About ISGAN:** Launched in 2010, the International Smart Grid Action Network is a Clean Energy Ministerial initiative and International Energy Agency Technology Collaboration Programme that brings together 27 countries from five continents and the European Commission to advance the global deployment of smarter, cleaner, more flexible electricity grids

**About EPI:** Launched in 2021, the CEM Empowering People Initiative seeks to highlight the socio-economic elements of the energy transition that relate to empowering people and promoting just and equitable transitions: skills, inclusivity and workforce development.