

# ISGAN Award of Excellence 2023

## 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 2023 is “Excellence in Artificial Intelligence for Smart Grid”.

Winning projects will be recognized during a formal ceremony targeted for July 2023 at the Fourteenth Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM14), in 2023 as well as in ISGAN and GSEF programs, events, publications, and proceedings.

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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.

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 “ISGAN Award of Excellence Winner”, subject to the Official Rules for this competition and any guidelines published by the Awards Administrator. This is the 9th 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 GSEF?**

ISGAN is implementing the Award of Excellence competition in partnership with Global Smart Energy Federation (GSEF) and its Best Smart Grids Project Award. GSEF is a global stakeholder organization committed to creating smarter, cleaner electrical systems around the world and is comprised of national smart grid associations, forward-looking utilities, and think tanks from around the globe working in the energy transition and clean transportation.

GSEF brings together the intellectual capital of smart energy stakeholders from around the world to help member organizations initiate changes to their countries’ energy systems to enhance security, increase flexibility, reduce emissions, and maintain affordability, reliability, and accessibility to clean energy and promote clean transportation. In 2015, the GSEF awarded its first annual “Best Smartgrid Project Award”, which complements the ISGAN Award of Excellence and draws from the same pool of nominees as the ISGAN competition.

### **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 9<sup>th</sup> ISGAN Awards, , ISGAN and GSEF have chosen “Excellence in Artificial Intelligence for Smart Grid” as the theme of the 2023 Award of Excellence.

### **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 application of Artificial Intelligence tools successfully in the electricity sector and demonstrated results in any of the areas described below:

- AI for Energy Efficiency
- AI for Energy Theft Detection
- AI for Revenue Maximization
- AI for Accurate Demand Forecasting
- AI for Renewable Energy Generation Forecasting
- AI for Grid Asset Optimization
- AI for Renewable Energy Integration
- AI for Smart Charging of Electric Vehicles
- AI for Emission Reduction in an Electric Utility
- AI for Energy Trading

The project should be in operation for a minimum period of one year as on 21 January 2023. ISGAN is encouraging applications by electric utilities, power system operators, renewable energy generators, technology providers, universities, research labs, and other stakeholders in the electricity domain.

Applications from entities in developed, developing and emerging economies will be accepted and are encouraged regardless of grid scale and status of economic development. To be clear, although ISGAN operates under a framework of the IEA, the award is not restricted to activities hosted within or by IEA member nations. In fact, ISGAN is eager to recognize excellence in smart grid projects in developing and emerging economies.

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/award2023](http://www.iea-isgan.org/award2023). Completed templates, along with any additional information or exhibits, must be submitted by **23:59 UTC, March 17, 2023** 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 substantively on the theme, as described in Q6 above, although the overall project described can be focused on other aspects.
- (2) Submissions must align with the ISGAN mission “to accelerate progress on key aspects of smart grid policy, technology, and related standards.”
- (3) The project must have been active or completed during or after 2016.
- (4) All sections of the nominations package, as described in the Official Rules available at [www.iea-isgan.org/award2023](http://www.iea-isgan.org/award2023), must be complete.
- (5) The primary nominations package must be in English, though attachments in other languages are permitted.
- (6) The entity submitting the nomination must include a signed statement or corresponding letter signifying acceptance of all provisions in the ‘Official Rules’.
- (7) 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’.
- (8) 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 a teleconference call or similar interaction 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 impact (25 points)** - The potential impact of the project, including its approach, design, implementation, and benefits demonstrated, in particular related to the optimization of utility assets and operations or reduction in cost and network losses etc.
- **Economic rationale (25 points)** - The degree to which the project, or the benefits achieved by the project, exhibit strong evidence of direct or indirect economic benefits, such as (but not limited to) a compelling business case for the application of Artificial Intelligence based tools/solutions for enhancing the operational efficiency, improved asset utilization, financial performance or reduction in network losses or emissions etc.
- **Potential for replication or adaptation (25 points)** - The degree and ease with which the project attributes can be replicated, adapted or scaled up to other markets, environments, and/or countries to adopt the solution or tools to improve their electric utility businesses in terms of the costs of implementation and regulatory considerations.
- **Innovation (15 points)** - The degree to which one or more major project elements is new, novel, and potentially highly effective or transformative.
- **Other benefits (10 points)** - The degree to which the demonstrated functionalities and technologies, systems, and approaches add value and produce non-economic benefits, directly or indirectly, across one or more other dimensions not considered in the criteria above, including (but not limited to) social, environmental, safety, and community factors.

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

### **Q10: How is the evaluation criterion, “Innovation,” characterized with regard to this award and theme?**

A project can exhibit innovative characteristics at various levels, whether it be technological innovation, operational innovation, innovative policy or regulatory measures, or novel marketing, outreach or stakeholder engagement practices.

### **Q11: When and how will winners be announced?**

Winning project(s) will be individually contacted by the Award Administrator in May 2023. They will be publically announced in a press release and media notifications coinciding with the 14th Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM14). An awards ceremony will be held at the CEM14 to Publicly recognize the winning project(s). The representatives of the applying organization and heads of the project shall attend the awards ceremony to be held at the CEM14, India in July 2023.

### **Q12: What benefit is there for winning applicants?**

Winning projects will be recognized internationally at a highly-publicized awards ceremony at the 14th Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM14). 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 “ISGAN Award of Excellence Winner,” 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 GSEF products, proceedings, and events over the ensuing months and promoted to ISGAN and GSEF'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>.

**Q13: 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 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.

**Q14: 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.

**Q15: 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.

**Q16: 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-iscan.org/award2023](http://www.iea-iscan.org/award2023). If neither the Official Rules nor this FAQ answer your question, then please contact the Award Administrator at [iscan-awards@smartgrid.or.kr](mailto:iscan-awards@smartgrid.or.kr). When appropriate, ISGAN will add the questions and answers to future versions of this FAQ or similar documents.

**Q17: Is it possible to apply twice with the same project over several years of the competition? 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.

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