

– CALL FOR ENTRIES –

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Kentucky's (ACEC-KY) annual Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA) competition recognizes engineering firms and their projects that demonstrate an exceptional degree of innovation, complexity, achievement, and value.

ACHIEVING STATEWIDE RECOGNITION

The 2027 ACEC-KY EEA competition showcases the year's best engineering achievements. All project entries are recognized and will compete for the ultimate prize—**ACEC-KY's 2027 Grand Conceptor Award**. ACEC-KY EEA entries may also be eligible to compete in the 2027 ACEC National competition in Washington.

ENTRY INFORMATION

Firm Eligibility – Any firm engaged in the private practice of engineering or surveying in Kentucky is eligible to enter, regardless of ACEC-KY membership.

Project Eligibility – Projects entered must have been substantially completed and ready for use between November 1, 2024 and October 31, 2026. EEA entries are accepted into one of 5 project categories. See page 2 (General Criteria, item 4) for more details on project categories.

Entry Fee – \$595 for ACEC-KY member firms; \$950 for non-member firms.

Entry Details/Requirements – Each entry consists of three parts:

Part 1:

- Signed and completed project entry and consent form due by **October 30, 2026**.
- Entry fee, payable by check or with credit card by phone, due by **October 30, 2026**.

Part 2:

- Submission materials uploaded to custom link by **November 20, 2026**, at 5 PM ET. Link will be emailed to entry contact after Part 1 completion.

Part 3 (Optional):

- Photographic display panel delivered to ACEC-KY office by **March 19, 2027**.

KEY DATES

October 30, 2026 – Signed and completed project entry and consent form, and entry fee due. *(Part 1)*

November 20, 2026 – Project submission materials due by 5 PM ET. *(Part 2)*

January 6, 2027 – ACEC National EEA entry deadline for eligible entries. *Eligible entries will be notified.*

March 19, 2027 – Photographic Display Panel due; delivered to ACEC-KY office in Frankfort. *(Part 3)*

March 25, 2027 – ACEC-KY Engineering Excellence Awards Banquet – Location TBA.

April 20, 2027 – ACEC National Engineering Excellence Awards Dinner and Gala in Washington, D.C.



**ACEC-KY 2026 EEA Grand Conceptor
Award Winner**

Palmer Engineering

*US 460 Relocation Project – Moving
Mountains, Connecting Appalachia
(Client: KYTC D12)*

GENERAL CRITERIA

1. Engineering or surveying projects that have won awards in other state or national organizations' programs are welcome to compete in the ACEC-KY EEA competition.
2. Any engineering or surveying firm in Kentucky is eligible. The firm does not have to be a member of ACEC-KY. Also, any engineering firm that is located outside Kentucky—but with a project located in Kentucky—is eligible to participate.
3. Projects entered in the competition may have been executed anywhere in the world and managed by a Kentucky office. All projects entered must have been substantially completed and ready for use between November 1, 2024 and October 31, 2026.
4. **Project Categories** – A diverse panel of judges evaluate and rank submissions based on the rating guidelines for judging detailed below (pages 5 and 6). The panel selects the top award winner (Grand Award) in each category, along with Honor Award winners. The Grand Conceptor Award, ACEC-KY's top award, will be selected from among the five Grand Award winners in each category.

Additionally, all project entries are eligible for the People's Choice Award. Photographic project panels will be displayed during the EEA Banquet reception for attendees to place their votes, and the winner will be announced during the banquet.

Project entries compete in the following categories:

New This Year!

- **Transportation (Large)** – Project construction budget equals \$20 million or more.
 - **Transportation (All Other)** – Project construction budget under \$20 million.
 - **Water Resources/Waste & Storm Water (Large)** – Project construction budget equals \$10 million or more.
 - **Water Resources/Waste & Storm Water (All Other)** – Project construction budget under \$10 million.
 - **Special Projects / Other** – all other projects.
5. **Entry Process** – to enter a project, please follow the following steps:
 - **Part 1** – Completed project entry and consent form due by **October 30, 2026**, along with entry fee payment. The entry fee is payable by check or with credit card by phone (502-695-5680).
 - **Part 2** – Submission materials uploaded to custom link by **November 20, 2026**, at 5 PM ET. The custom link will be emailed to the project entry contact after Part 1 is completed. See pages 3 and 4 for detailed submission instructions.
 - **Part 3 (Optional)** – If produced, the photographic display panel must be delivered to the ACEC-KY office by 5 PM ET on Friday, **March 19, 2027**. Panels will be displayed during the reception at the EEA Banquet on March 25, 2027, and will be used by attendees to select the People's Choice Award winner. The winner of this award will be announced during the banquet. Please note, the physical display panel is not part of the judging criteria and is not required for entry; however, a panel must be provided by the deadline for a project to be eligible for the People's Choice Award.
 6. ACEC-KY is not responsible for any damages to, or loss of, an entrant's official electronic entry or photographic display panel.
 7. The ACEC-KY EEA Committee reserves the right to determine, and change, if necessary, the eligibility and category classification of any entry.

PREPARING YOUR ENTRY: *Detailed Entry and Submission Instructions*

This section describes all required submission materials for entering the 2027 ACEC-KY EEA competition. All materials must be submitted exactly as designated. Digital files must be PC compatible and appropriate to the information being submitted (i.e., Adobe PDF; Microsoft Word; high resolution JPEGs; Microsoft PowerPoint, etc.).

If the submission does not meet the requirements listed, it may be disqualified. Additionally, if any part of an entry does not meet the requirements listed, that portion of the entry may not be presented for judging. Please follow the guidelines.

No reference to other awards is permitted in your submittal materials.

PART 1: ENTRY and CONSENT FORM, and FEES

The Project Entry and Consent Form is available [here](#) and in promotional email blasts. All fields must be completed. Signatures by the submitting firm(s) and the client(s)/owner(s) are required. The firm, project, and client/owner's name should be entered exactly as they are to appear on an award.

Finalized forms should be emailed to KEC@kyengcenter.org with the subject "2027 ACEC-KY EEA Project Entry" no later than 5 PM ET on Friday, **October 30, 2026**.

Entry fees must be paid by check or with a credit card by calling ACEC-KY at (502) 695-5680 by Friday, **October 30, 2026**.

PART 2: PROJECT ENTRY SUBMISSION MATERIALS *(see immediately below for more details)*

Upload submission materials to a custom project link no later than 5 PM ET on Friday, **November 20, 2026**. The link will be emailed to the project entry contact upon completion of Part 1.

PART 3 (OPTIONAL): DELIVERY of PHOTOGRAPHIC DISPLAY PANEL

Deliver the Photographic Display Panel to ACEC-KY (160 Democrat Drive, Frankfort) by 5 PM ET on Friday, **March 19, 2027**. The physical display panel is not part of the judging criteria. The panel will be displayed during the ACEC-KY EEA Banquet on March 25, 2027 and will qualify the project for consideration of the People's Choice Award to be announced during the banquet.

Note – *While similar to many guidelines and submission requirements, ACEC-KY's 2027 Call for Entries is NOT fully consistent with ACEC National's requirements.*

SUBMISSION MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS

The following items must be uploaded to the custom project link that is emailed from ACEC-KY. Include each of the following items as the file type indicated, in the order and titled as shown. Please do not organize this information into individual file folders. No QR codes or embedded links are permitted in any portion of the project submission.

1. CLIENT/OWNER LETTER – *(one-page limit; PDF file)* Letter addressed to ACEC-KY describing the relationship of the client/owner and entrant in the development of the project and how it exceeded the client/owner's needs.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION – *(no page limit; PDF file)* Give an overview of the project that tells it's story in a way that addresses the following items using text, photos, graphics, or charts as needed.

- ROLE OF ENTRANT'S FIRM in the project.
- ROLE OF OTHER CONSULTANTS participating in the project.
- ENTRANT'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROJECT: A brief description of the entrant's contributions addressing each of the Rating Guidelines for Judging detailed below (pages 5 and 6).
- BUDGET INFORMATION: Include total budgeted project construction cost and total actual project construction cost. Include the entrant's portion of the total budgeted project construction cost and the total actual project construction cost. Also include scheduled and actual project completion dates.

Construction Costs – Report construction costs only; do NOT including engineering fees. Provide the total project budgeted and actual construction costs, the entrant's portion of the total project budgeted and actual construction costs, and the project's scheduled and actual completion dates.

The reported construction cost/amount will also be used to determine whether the project is classified in the "Large" or "All Other" project categories for Transportation and Water projects.

- SUMMARY *(limited to 500 words or less)*: Describe, in layman's terms, why this project is worthy of special recognition. Highlight the attributes that demonstrate the project's uniqueness and complexity, including innovative engineering solutions, challenges overcome, and overall social or community impact. **NOTE:** This summary may be used as the basis for publicity and promotional materials related to the project.

3. PHOTOS OR GRAPHICS – *(high resolution JPEG file – RGB, 300 dpi, 15 mb max; separate Microsoft Word document for captions)* Six different photos or graphics (one per page) with captions describing the subject matter. Captions shall be provided in a separate Microsoft Word document and begin with: Photo 1, Photo 2, etc. Three of the photos/graphics must show the completed project and provide the highest level of visual impact for publicity. The remaining three must display the planning, startup, and/or construction phases of the project.

4. DISPLAY PANEL (Electronic) – *(high resolution JPEG file – RGB, 300 dpi, 15 mb max)* A digital copy of the photographic display panel. See below for Photographic Display Panel details (Item 11).

5. 100 WORD NARRATIVE – *(100-word limit, PDF file – 8 ½ x 11, 1-inch margins, 12-point font, double spaced)* Narrative of no more than 100 words for use during the audiovisual presentation at the EEA Banquet. No use of acronyms, abbreviations, or bullets please.

6. POWERPOINT PRESENTATION – *(PowerPoint file, 8 slides)* PowerPoint file, containing eight slides, including a title slide with the ACEC-KY EEA logo, firm name, project name, project location (city and state), followed by six slides that include photos 1 through 6 (same photos as Item #3 above) with captions, plus a final slide that contains the photographic display panel. The ACEC-KY EEA logo will be shared when Part 1 of the entry process is complete. This presentation will be used by the judges as part of their evaluation. Do not include sound, transition effects, animations, present timing, or slide show sequencing. A sample PowerPoint presentation from ACEC National is available [HERE](#).

7. PHOTOGRAPHIC DISPLAY PANEL (Physical Board / OPTIONAL) – If produced, the panel will be displayed during the reception at the ACEC-KY EEA Banquet on March 25, 2027 and will qualify the project for consideration of the People’s Choice Award to be announced during the banquet. The physical display panel is not part of the judging criteria. All panels should be delivered to the Kentucky Engineering Center (160 Democrat Dr, Frankfort, KY 40601) by 5 PM ET on Friday, **March 19, 2027**. Panel specifications include:

- a. **RECOMMENDED SIZE:** 30” x 30” square, with matte finish, laminated front mounted on sturdy material. **NOTE:** Foam board/foam core is acceptable for the state competition.
- b. **PHOTOS/GRAPHICS:** Maximum of 6 photos and/or graphics on the panel. A background photo is not considered a photo.
- c. **TEXT/FONTS:** Panel text should not exceed 250 words, not including captions.
- d. **REQUIRED ELEMENTS:** The front of the panel should include the ACEC-KY EEA logo, title and location of the project, client/owner’s name and location, and entering firm’s name and location. The logo can be downloaded [HERE](#).

RATING GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING

Entries will be judged based on:

- Overall engineering excellence
- The work performed by the submitting firm only
- The ratings guidelines listed below

Each entrant’s contribution will be evaluated based on the following five categories, which are key elements of the project description text required in the electronic submittal described below:

2. Uniqueness and/or Innovative Applications of New or Existing Techniques:

- Include as many measurable results as possible to tell the story of the project. For example, data points related to energy savings, number of people impacted by the project, etc.
- Does the entrant’s contribution to the project demonstrate the use of a new science or a breakthrough in the general knowledge of engineering?
- Does the entrant’s contribution to the project represent a unique application of new or existing technology, techniques, materials, or equipment?

3. Future Value to the Engineering Profession and Enhanced Public Awareness/Enthusiasm of the role of Engineering:

- Will the entrant’s contribution to the project redefine current engineering thinking?
- Does the entrant’s project increase public awareness/enthusiasm about the role of engineering in their everyday lives?

4. Social, Economic and Sustainable Development Considerations:

- Do the solutions identified produce secondary benefits of value to the community environment?
- Does the entrant’s approach provide society with social, economic, or sustainable development benefits?
- Does the entrant’s contribution to the project improve the health, safety, or welfare of the public or affected environment?

5. Complexity:

- Did the entrant's efforts successfully address highly complex criteria or unique problems?
- Were extraordinary problems of site, location, hazardous conditions, project requirements, or similar elements present?
- Did the entrant's solutions require the use of out-of-the-ordinary technology or ingenuity for achievement of the project's goals?

6. Successful Fulfillment of Client/Owner Needs:

- Did the entrant successfully engage the client/owner in the overall project development process?
- Did the entrant introduce an economical and cost-effective solution?
- How did the final cost compare to original budget estimate?
- How closely does the entrant's solution meet the total goals of the client/owner?
- Did the entrant meet the client's time schedule?

QUESTIONS?

For any questions regarding your submission or these instructions, please contact Russ Romine by email at russ@kyengcenter.org or by phone at (502) 695-5680.