

BEACON AWARDS

2026 Submission Guidelines

What do I need to submit?

- A.** Submitter's contact information;
- B.** Name of lighting designer, architect, interior designer, industrial designer, or manufacturer responsible for the execution of the lighting or product submitted;
- C.** Project name, location, and date of completion;
- D.** Project summary (100-word maximum). Your summary should highlight the critical design, technical aspects, and innovations that make your design an example of excellence for the category submitted. This summary and your project photos/videos will determine if your project moves forward to the final round;
- E.** Project narrative (300-word maximum). Your narrative must be keyed to each photograph/video submitted (Image 1, Image 2, etc.) and should expand upon the project summary and support the design context being shown in each image.

How do I submit an entry?

Visit awards.dlfny.org.

Image and video requirements

Number of Images/Videos

Minimum 3, maximum 8.

Image Resolution (longer of the two sides)

Minimum 1800px, recommended 2500px.

Image File Size

Recommended minimum 5 MB per image, hard maximum 50 MB per image.

Other Notes

1. Entries will be disqualified if the design firm name or product manufacturer's name is visible in any images or video.
2. Images comprised of a drawing, photo, or other visual element arranged in a collage are allowed, and are considered to be one image.
3. Each video counts as one image.
4. Videos are only to be submitted to show a specific kinetic lighting effect or event.
5. Videos with voiceover or music will be disqualified.
6. Videos comprised of multiple images arranged in slideshow format will be disqualified.
7. All photos and videos must submit a release from the photographer/videographer and the project owner to allow DLFNY promotion of the winning projects on its website.

BEACON AWARDS

2026 Submission Guidelines

Entry Categories

Commercial Interiors

Interior and exterior spaces with an exceptional application of light or lighting effects that amplify the occupant's experience in spaces primarily used for commercial or institutional purposes. These spaces include but are not limited to:

- Offices
- Retail
- Civic Buildings
- Airports

Cultural Institution

Interior and Exterior spaces demonstrate exceptional lighting that use innovative lighting and technology solutions to enhance the visitor experience, highlight exhibits, and preserve the integrity of artifacts and architecture. The project should demonstrate a creative and effective use of lighting can transform the cultural environment to create memorable and impactful experience for the visitors. These spaces include but are not limited to:

- Museums
- Theaters
- Heritage Sites
- Historical Buildings

Residential

Interior and exterior spaces with an exceptional application of light or lighting effects that amplify the occupant's experience in spaces primarily used as a residential property. These spaces include but are not limited to:

- Primary Detached Residence
- Apartments
- Vacation Homes

Retail

Interior and exterior retail spaces that demonstrate exceptional lighting that enhances the shopping experience. The project should demonstrate a blend of creativity and technology to create a retail environment that is visually appealing and engaging, resulting in a memorable shopping experience for the consumer. These spaces include but are not limited to:

- Shopping Malls
- Retail Stores / Boutiques
- Supermarkets
- Spas

Hospitality

Interior and exterior spaces with exceptional applications of light or lighting effects that amplify the occupant's experience in spaces primarily used in transactional or service-oriented activities. These spaces include but are not limited to:

- Hotels & Spas
- Restaurants
- Casinos

BEACON AWARDS

2026 Submission Guidelines

Entry Categories

Exteriors & Landscape

Exterior spaces with an exceptional application of light or lighting effects that amplify the occupant's experience in spaces primarily used. These spaces include but are not limited to:

- Parks & Landscapes
- Urban Scape
- Non-Urban Scape

Product Design (Architectural)

All products submitted must be introduced to the market after March 01, 2024, that exemplify the highest form, function, and aesthetics in terms of innovative design, new technologies, material, construction, operation, utility, energy efficiency, and sensitivity to the environment. Product categories include but are not limited to:

- Architectural Recessed & Downlighting
- Linear Recessed & Suspended Luminaires
- Track & Accent Lighting
- Outdoor Luminaires

Product Design (Decorative)

All products submitted must be introduced to the market after March 01, 2024, that exemplify the highest form, function, and aesthetics in terms of innovative design, new technologies, material, construction, operation, utility, energy efficiency, and sensitivity to the environment. Product categories include but are not limited to:

- Chandeliers & Pendants
- Sconces & Surface Mounted Luminaires
- Portable Luminaires (Table Lamps, etc.)

Experiential

This category honors exceptional achievements in experiential lighting design, encompassing both interior and exterior projects. It celebrates those who push the boundaries of creativity and technology to craft immersive, dynamic lighting experiences that captivate and engage audiences. Projects in this category should showcase outstanding skills in transforming spaces through innovative use of light, enhancing the emotional and sensory impact of environments, and elevating the visitor experience. Whether through non-urban scapes, light and art installations, or temporary installations, nominees in this category set new standards in the industry, leaving a lasting impression on all who experience their work.

New York Project

This category is open to any project type (commercial, residential, exterior, etc.) that is located within the New York Metropolitan Area that illustrates an exceptional application of light or lighting effects that amplify the occupant's experience. This award category is open to all designers whose offices operate both inside and outside of the New York Metropolitan Area.



2026 Submission Guidelines

Submission Best Practices

Successful submissions will deliver a compelling story describing why and how your design meets the category criteria and should be recognized as a Beacon.

1. Write from a judge's perspective. How do you grab their attention and hold it?
2. Narrow your focus. What are the one or two aspects of your design that elevate your project or product above the others?
3. Be concise and impactful when describing your project's or product's winning attributes. Every word should be purposeful in telling your story, with writing as concise as possible.
4. Consider technical challenges or other goals that influenced your design. How did you meet or overcome them?
5. Visuals are essential. Make sure photographs are hi-res and augment your story.
6. More images than necessary, or images with poor image quality, can negatively impact judges' perception of your entry.
7. Written descriptions and images should work together to illustrate the merits of your design.
8. Ensure that written descriptions are cued to your images. Make sure that every image has corresponding text.
9. Ensure that all lights are on in your project images. Minimize daylight unless submitting a daylighting design solution. Exterior lighting photos should be shot at or after sundown.
10. If your project has interior and exterior applications, or is overly complex with an ability to fit into multiple categories, it is best to create several submissions.
11. If a category for your project is not available, consider whether the project may be classified in a different available category. For example, in the absence of a "cultural" category, cultural institutions may be submitted as an "institutional" project.



2026 Submission Guidelines

Eligibility Details

1. All Lighting Designers, Lighting Consultants, Architects, Interior Designers, and Industrial Designers, whose office(s) is located within the greater New York Metropolitan Area (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut – max 50 mile radius from Manhattan).
2. All Lighting Designers, Lighting Consultants, Architects, Interior Designers, and Industrial Designers located outside of the Greater New York Metropolitan Area whose project(s) is located within the Greater New York Metropolitan Area (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut – max 50 mile radius from Manhattan).
3. All Lighting Manufactures doing business in the Greater New York Metropolitan Area (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut). All project entries must be actual and physically installed; no virtual projects will be accepted.
4. Projects can be located anywhere in the world for applicants from the Greater New York Metropolitan Area (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut) design community.
5. All project entries must be actual and physically installed and completed within twenty-four months of the submission deadline
6. All project entries must be submitted in at least one of the categories identified for consideration in this year's awards program.
7. Individual projects may be entered in multiple categories but will only be selected as a winner in one category each award's year.
8. Each entry requires a separate entry fee.
9. Projects that have previously won a Beacon Award will not be accepted unless submitted in a different category.
10. All entries must meet the requirements of their submitted category regardless of size, budget, style or building type
11. Submissions by Lighting Designers, Lighting Consultants, Architects, Interior Designers, Industrial Designers, and Manufactures servicing as jurors for the current year awards are ineligible.
12. Project photos that have been digitally enhanced or that incorporate fill light that was not part of the original design scheme are not eligible