



NISafetyE Safety Engineering Awards 2026

Terms of Reference for the Awards Judging Panel

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Document control	Details
Document owner	NISafetyE Safety Engineering Awards Central Planning Committee
Operational owner	Chairman, Awards Judging Panel
Applies to	Chairman, Secretary, Panel Members, Awards Secretariat and persons supporting the judging process
Related documents	Call for Nominations V2.0; Nomination Guidelines V2.0; Nomination Form V2.0; Evaluation Form V2.0; Judges Scoring Guidance V2.0; Judge Completion Checklist V2.0
Approval status	For approval by the authorised NISafetyE governance body
Review trigger	Change to award categories, judging methodology, panel mandate, applicable policy or material process requirement

1 Purpose

These Terms of Reference establish the mandate, composition, authority, responsibilities and operating rules of the NISafetyE Safety Engineering Awards 2026 Judging Panel. They are intended to ensure that nominations are evaluated independently, consistently, confidentially and on the strength of relevant and verifiable evidence.

The Panel shall apply the approved category-specific criteria and scoring methodology. It shall protect the integrity of the awards, provide reasoned recommendations, and maintain a sufficient record to demonstrate how each recommendation was reached.



2 Objectives

- Provide an impartial and technically credible assessment of every eligible nomination assigned to the Panel.
- Apply criteria appropriate to the selected award category rather than a single generic view of safety excellence.
- Ensure that scores and recommendations are supported by submitted or formally verified evidence.
- Enable fair comparison by considering nomination scope, risk exposure, operating context, baseline, normalised performance and material limitations.
- Identify nominees that meet the required standard of excellence and recommend no award where no nomination meets that standard.
- Maintain confidentiality, independence, consistency, accountability and an auditable decision record.

3 Scope of the Panel

The Panel's remit covers the technical evaluation of eligible nominations submitted under the 12 approved award categories listed below. The Panel's work begins when administratively screened nominations are assigned and ends when its final recommendations and supporting records are formally submitted.

Group	Award categories
A Government and Organisations	A1 Excellence in Safety Regulation and Regulatory Oversight A2 Excellence in Safety Advocacy and Collaboration A3 Excellence in Safety Emergency Preparedness Response and Recovery
B Industry	B1 Oil and Gas Safety Engineering Excellence B2 Manufacturing Safety Engineering Excellence B3 Construction Safety Engineering Excellence
C Individual Safety Engineers	C1 Innovation and Contribution to Safety Engineering C2 Distinguished Service and Advocacy C3 Impact Training and Mentoring
D Safety Engineering Professionals	D1 Leadership Commitment to Safety Engineering D2 Positive Influence in Advocacy Collaboration and Promotion of Safety Engineering D3 Professional Development of Safety Engineers and Safety Engineering Professionals



4 Status and Accountability

The Panel is an independent technical advisory body constituted for the 2026 awards. It is accountable to the NISafetyE Safety Engineering Awards Central Planning Committee, or another body formally designated by NISafetyE, for compliance with these Terms of Reference and the approved awards framework.

The Panel recommends recipients; it does not confer awards, alter eligibility rules, create new categories, solicit sponsorship, make financial commitments, or communicate results publicly unless specifically authorised in writing. The approving NISafetyE body retains responsibility for formal acceptance and announcement of award outcomes, subject to the integrity safeguards in this document.

5 Composition

The Panel shall consist of a Chairman, a Secretary and appointed Panel Members. The approved membership for the 2026 awards is:

Role	Member
Chairman	Engr. Dr. Kayode V. Fowode, CFIOSH, FNSE, FNISafetyE
Secretary	Engr. Dr. Omolola Adetona, FNSE, FNISafetyE
Panel Member	Engr. Azuka Emeasoba, FNSE, FNISafetyE
Panel Member	Engr. Prof. Omonigho Otanocha, FNSE, FNISafetyE
Panel Member	Engr. Prof. Rim Rukeh Akpofure, FNSE, FNISafetyE
Panel Member	Engr. Oluseun Faluyi, FNSE, FNISafetyE
Panel Member	Engr. Biodun Oyedepo, FNSE, FNISafetyE

Any amendment to membership shall be formally recorded. A replacement member shall meet the required competence and independence standards, sign the applicable declarations and receive the approved judging documents before participating.



6 Appointment Criteria and Competence

Panel members shall collectively provide appropriate experience in safety engineering, occupational health and safety, risk management, regulatory oversight, major-hazard and process safety, emergency management, industry operations, professional practice, education or competence development.

Each member shall be able to interpret technical evidence, apply the scoring methodology, distinguish leading and lagging indicators, assess attribution and limitations, and exercise independent professional judgement. Where specialist expertise is required, the Panel may request advice through the Secretariat in accordance with Section 15. A specialist adviser shall not score or vote unless formally appointed as a Panel Member.

7 Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Chairman

- Provide leadership and safeguard the independence, fairness and consistency of the judging process.
- Confirm that members understand the categories, criteria, scoring methodology, evidence rules, normalisation requirements and conflicts procedure.
- Approve nomination assignments with due regard to expertise, workload and declared conflicts.
- Chair Panel and moderation meetings, keep discussion focused on evidence and prevent inappropriate influence.
- Ensure that material scoring differences, verification issues, ties and close results are resolved through the approved process.
- Confirm that recommendations are supported by completed evaluation forms and an adequate decision record.
- Submit or authorise submission of the Panel's final recommendations to the designated NISafetyE body.
- The Chairman shall not use a casting preference to override evidence, individual scores or the approved process.

7.2 Secretary

- Issue meeting notices, agendas and approved judging materials and maintain the controlled record set.
- Maintain the nomination allocation register, member declarations, attendance, recusals, score returns and verification requests.
- Record minutes, moderation reasons, post-moderation scores, decisions and actions without attributing confidential debate unnecessarily.
- Calculate or verify score summaries and ensure invalid, missing or conflicted scores are excluded.
- Coordinate all authorised communication between the Panel, Awards Secretariat and relevant NISafetyE body.
- Securely compile the final report, recommendations and supporting records.



7.3 Panel Members

- Review the complete nomination and indexed evidence pack independently before scoring.
- Confirm eligibility, category fit, nomination scope, assessment period and conflict status before technical evaluation.
- Use only the scorecard for the selected category and score every applicable criterion using the common 0 to 5 scale.
- Record precise evidence references and concise reasons supporting each score.
- Calculate weighted scores correctly and complete the Judge Completion Checklist.
- Identify gaps, inconsistencies, exceptional claims requiring verification and material limitations.
- Submit initial scores before viewing other judges' scores or entering moderation.
- Participate constructively in moderation and document the reason for any material score revision.
- Maintain confidentiality and return or securely dispose of records as directed.

7.4 Awards Secretariat

The Awards Secretariat supports, but does not direct, technical judgement. It shall receive and register nominations, conduct the administrative review, issue complete controlled submissions to assigned judges, route clarification and verification requests, maintain secure records, and communicate authorised outcomes. It shall not amend a judge's score or add informal evidence to a nomination.

8 Authority and Limitations

Within its remit, the Panel may:

- Determine whether the submitted evidence demonstrates the category criteria.
- Request clarification or independent verification through the Awards Secretariat.
- Recommend a shortlist, recipient, reserve position or no award in a category.
- Recommend that a nomination be returned for administrative clarification where scope, category or completeness prevents fair assessment.
- Record reservations, conditions or due-diligence requirements attached to a recommendation.

The Panel shall not:

- Contact nominees, nominators, referees or other evidence sources directly.
- Consider reputation, seniority, membership, sponsorship, public profile, conference participation or personal relationships as evidence of merit.
- Change a nomination's category without formal administrative action and a consistent documented basis.
- Accept gifts, hospitality, inducements or private representations connected with the awards.
- Disclose scores, rankings, deliberations or provisional recommendations.
- Guarantee an award or communicate an outcome before formal authorisation.



9 Independence and Conflicts of Interest

Every Panel Member shall disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict before receiving or evaluating nominations and shall update the disclosure if circumstances change. A conflict may arise from employment, consultancy, direct professional involvement, financial interest, close personal relationship, organisational allegiance, recent dispute, prior advocacy for a nominee, or any circumstance that could reasonably call impartiality into question.

Where a conflict exists, the affected member shall not receive unnecessary nomination material and shall take no part in evaluation, scoring, verification, moderation or recommendation for that nomination. The Secretary shall record the conflict and recusal. The Chair's conflict shall be handled by the Secretary and an appointed unconflicted member shall chair the affected item.

NISafetyE and organisations directly responsible for administering or judging the awards are ineligible for any affected category. Familiarity with a nominee does not automatically create a conflict, but it must be declared and assessed transparently.

10 Confidentiality Data Protection and Records Security

- Nomination information, personal data, commercial information, scores, rankings, verification responses, deliberations and recommendations are confidential.
- Members shall use information solely for authorised awards duties and shall not copy, forward, upload, discuss or retain it outside approved arrangements.
- Personal devices and email accounts shall be used only where authorised and appropriately secured.
- Public or private comments about nominees and likely outcomes are prohibited before and after the awards, except for authorised published information.
- Suspected loss, unauthorised disclosure, alteration or cyber incident shall be reported immediately to the Chairman and Secretariat.
- At the end of the process, members shall return or securely delete working copies as directed, subject to the official retention record maintained by NISafetyE.

11 Evaluation Methodology

11.1 Preliminary Gate

Before scoring, each assigned judge shall confirm nominee type, category eligibility, nomination scope, assessment period, completeness, declarations, consent and conflict status. A materially incomplete or clearly misclassified nomination shall be referred to the Secretariat before scoring.

11.2 Evidence Based Assessment

Judges shall assess relevance, authenticity, recency, attribution, completeness, independence, consistency and proportionality. Evidence volume is not a substitute for evidence quality. Reputation and personal knowledge are excluded. Exceptional quantitative claims require a clear definition, calculation method, reporting boundary, baseline or comparator, relevant exposure data, limitations and credible verification.



11.3 Common Score Scale

Score	Descriptor	Application
0	Not demonstrated	No relevant evidence, criterion not addressed, or claim cannot be verified.
1	Very weak	Minimal or largely irrelevant evidence; achievement or impact is not established.
2	Limited	Some relevant evidence, but important gaps, weak attribution or limited results remain.
3	Competent	Adequate and credible evidence of satisfactory achievement and relevant results.
4	Strong	Clear, substantial and well-verified evidence of above-average achievement and measurable impact.
5	Outstanding	Exceptional, compelling and independently verifiable evidence of sustained or significant impact.

Weighted score = Raw score divided by 5 multiplied by criterion weight. Each criterion score shall be recorded to one decimal place. The weighted criterion scores shall be added to produce a total score out of 100.

11.4 Category Specific Assessment

Judges shall use only the approved scorecard for the selected category. Regulatory nominees shall be assessed on regulatory effectiveness and impact, not merely their legal establishment. Advocacy nominations shall demonstrate credible collaboration and outcomes, not reach alone. Industry nominees shall be assessed in their risk and operational context. Individual nominees shall be assessed on attributable contribution beyond routine duties.

11.5 Fair Comparison and Normalisation

An FPSO, producing field, processing facility, factory and construction project shall not be compared solely by raw totals. Judges shall consider the declared scope, workforce and contractor exposure, activity mix, operating phase, complexity, major-accident potential, leading indicators, serious-risk performance, rates and trends, baseline improvement, sustainability and independent verification.

An LTI-free milestone is significant evidence but is not sufficient on its own for an industry excellence award. For major-hazard operations, it shall be considered with process-safety events, loss of containment, barrier performance, asset integrity, emergency readiness, competence, leadership and incident learning.



12 Independent Scoring Process

1. The Secretariat assigns each eligible nomination to the required number of unconflicted judges.
2. Each judge reads the full submission once before assigning scores.
3. Each judge maps material claims to indexed evidence, records gaps and completes the category-specific evaluation form.
4. Each judge submits the completed initial evaluation and checklist by the notified deadline before seeing other judges' results.
5. The Secretary checks completeness and calculations without changing professional judgements.
6. Score summaries are released for moderation only after valid independent returns have been received.

13 Meetings Quorum and Attendance

The Panel may meet physically or virtually. The Secretary shall issue reasonable notice, an agenda and the materials required for informed participation. Members are expected to attend all meetings relevant to their assignments and to advise the Chairman promptly where they are unavailable.

The quorum for a general Panel meeting shall be a simple majority of appointed members, including either the Chairman or an unconflicted member formally designated to chair. A nomination may be moderated only when at least three valid, unconflicted judge evaluations are available, unless the approving body has formally authorised another minimum before judging begins.

Recused members do not count towards the quorum for the affected nomination. Where quorum or the minimum number of valid scores is not met, the item shall be deferred or reassigned; it shall not be decided informally.

14 Moderation and Decision Making

Moderation aligns interpretation and tests evidence; it shall not erase legitimate professional judgement or replace independent scoring with group preference. A moderation discussion is required where:

- The highest and lowest valid totals differ by more than 15 points.
- Judges relied on materially different evidence or interpreted the scope differently.
- A decisive criterion differs by two or more raw-score points.
- Verification could alter the ranking, award-standard judgement or recommendation.
- A tie or close result requires further examination.

During moderation, discussion shall focus on the criterion, evidence, scope and reasoning. Judges may retain or revise their scores. Any material revision shall be explained and recorded. The final moderated score will normally be the mean of valid post-moderation totals, unless another method was formally approved before scoring began.

Recommendations should, where practicable, be reached by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, the Panel shall record the majority recommendation, the valid scores and any material minority view. The Chairman has no casting preference to override the evidence or scoring methodology.



15 Clarification Verification and Specialist Advice

All clarification and verification shall be coordinated by the Awards Secretariat to ensure equal treatment and a complete audit trail. Requests shall be specific, necessary and limited to checking or clarifying a claim already contained in the submission. They shall not give a nominee an unrestricted opportunity to reconstruct or materially improve the nomination after the deadline.

The Panel may request independent verification of exceptional claims, confirm document authenticity, reconcile inconsistent data or seek specialist technical advice. Any additional material considered shall be made available to all judges assigned to that nomination. A specialist adviser shall declare conflicts and confidentiality obligations and shall not take part in scoring or the final recommendation unless formally appointed to the Panel.

16 Score Interpretation and Award Standard

Total score	Indicative interpretation	Expected treatment
80 to 100	Exceptional award-level submission	Normally suitable for final consideration, subject to verification and moderation.
70 to 79.9	Strong and credible submission	Suitable for shortlist or final consideration; examine decisive evidence and competition.
60 to 69.9	Adequate but not distinguished	Reserve only where a compelling reason is documented.
Below 60	Insufficient award-level evidence	Normally not recommended.

The bands guide professional judgement and do not create an automatic entitlement to an award. The Panel may recommend no award where no nomination meets the required standard. Conversely, a high numerical score remains subject to evidence confidence, eligibility, conflict screening and any required verification.

17 Ties and Close Results

For tied or closely ranked nominations, the Panel shall not use reputation, organisational size or prominence as a tie-breaker. It shall first verify calculations and eligibility, then examine evidence confidence, scores on the most heavily weighted criteria, strength of independently verified outcomes, relevance to the category, sustainability and material limitations. If the result remains unresolved, the Panel shall document whether a joint recommendation, further verification or no decisive ranking is appropriate under the approved awards rules.



18 Reporting and Deliverables

The Panel shall provide the designated NISafetyE body with a controlled final submission containing, as applicable:

- A list of nominations received for technical assessment and their disposition.
- Completed category-specific evaluation forms and Judge Completion Checklists.
- The score summary showing valid initial and post-moderation scores.
- Records of conflicts, recusals, verification requests and material responses.
- Moderation minutes and reasons for material score changes.
- Recommended recipient, reserve or no-award decision for each category, with concise reasons.
- Outstanding due-diligence conditions and any process improvement recommendations.

The formal report shall distinguish the Panel's technical recommendations from the final institutional approval and public announcement.

19 Records Retention and Audit Trail

The Secretary and Awards Secretariat shall maintain an orderly, access-controlled record sufficient to reconstruct the process. Records shall include the version of the criteria used, nomination assignments, declarations, evidence packs, evaluation forms, checklists, calculations, meeting records, verification correspondence and final recommendations. Retention and disposal shall follow applicable NISafetyE records, privacy and legal requirements. Unofficial duplicates and personal working copies shall be securely destroyed when instructed.

20 Conduct and Communications

- Members shall act with integrity, respect, diligence, impartiality and professional competence.
- Panel discussions shall remain professional and evidence-focused. Disagreement shall be recorded and resolved through the approved process.
- Media enquiries, public statements and communications with nominees shall be referred to the authorised NISafetyE contact.
- Lobbying, attempted influence, gifts, inducements or unauthorised approaches shall be reported immediately and documented.
- A member who cannot complete an assignment independently or by the deadline shall notify the Chairman and Secretary promptly.

21 Tenure Resignation and Removal

The Panel is constituted for the 2026 awards cycle and remains in office until its final recommendations and required records have been accepted, unless NISafetyE formally extends or closes the appointment earlier. A member may resign by written notice to the Chairman and designated NISafetyE body.

A member may be suspended or removed for material breach of confidentiality, undisclosed conflict, misconduct, persistent non-participation, failure to follow the approved methodology, attempted manipulation of outcomes or other conduct that threatens the integrity of the awards. The action and replacement arrangements shall be formally documented and managed fairly.



22 Review Amendment and Interpretation

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed when a material change affects the awards framework or where lessons from the 2026 cycle require improvement. Amendments must be approved through the authorised NISafetyE governance process and communicated to all affected persons. No retrospective amendment shall be used to advantage or disadvantage a nominee after scoring has commenced.

Questions of process interpretation shall be referred to the Chairman and Secretary and, where material, to the designated NISafetyE body. An interpretation shall be consistent with the published awards documents, applied equally and recorded.

23 Approval

Approval role	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by	Engr. Dr. Kayode V. Fowode, CFIOSH, FNSE, FNISafetyE		3-09-2026
Reviewed by	Engr. Dr. Lola Adetona, FNSE, FNISafetyE		04-09-2026
Approved by	Engr. Francis Etafo , FNSE, FNISafetyE		06-09-2026



Appendix A Panel Member Acceptance and Declaration

I confirm that I have received and read the Terms of Reference, approved award categories, Nomination Guidelines, Evaluation Form, Judges Scoring Guidance and Judge Completion Checklist. I agree to perform my duties independently, diligently, confidentially and in accordance with the approved process.

I further confirm that I shall:

- Declare actual, potential or perceived conflicts promptly and recuse where required.
- Use only submitted or formally verified evidence and exclude reputation, seniority, sponsorship, personal knowledge and improper representations.
- Protect nomination data, scores, deliberations and recommendations.
- Not contact nominees or nominators directly about an entry.
- Record evidence references and reasons for scores and complete all required forms.
- Report any attempted influence, information-security incident or process concern.
- Return or securely delete records when instructed.

Declaration detail	Entry
Panel member name	
Panel role	
General interests disclosed	
Nominee-specific conflicts	
Confidentiality undertaking accepted	Yes / No
Signature	
Date	



Appendix B Meeting and Decision Record Requirements

Record	Minimum content
Meeting notice and agenda	Date, time, venue or link, purpose, agenda items and documents circulated.
Attendance and quorum	Members present, apologies, chair, quorum confirmation and recusals by item.
Nomination item	Nomination reference, category, declared scope, number of valid scores and verification status.
Moderation record	Trigger, evidence issue, points discussed, judge decisions, score revisions and reasons.
Decision	Recommendation, score, reservations, conditions, minority view and responsible follow-up.
Action register	Action, owner, due date and completion status.
Approval and circulation	Chair/Secretary confirmation, issue date, controlled recipients and confidentiality classification.