



Criteria for Submissions

To be eligible for the competition, practices should be connected to, or advance, the system integration of renewables. Additionally, the practice should be a working model – beyond the prototype stage – with demonstrable and substantive results. At the very least, interim results should be included in your application to be shared with the jury.

We particularly welcome innovative practices aligned with pressing priorities in the energy transition and grid development. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Technological Innovation & System Integration:**
Practices that enhance grid and system security, support climate adaptation and resilience, improve system and spatial planning for infrastructure development (including methodologies mapping areas suitable for such developments) and offer flexibility solutions (including innovations in energy storage integration, AI-based forecasting, virtual power plants, or flexible grid design) are considered especially relevant to today's system-level challenges.
- **Environmental Protection:**
Projects that contribute to reducing or mitigating environmental impacts, restoring and/or enhancing ecosystems, enabling nature-positive grid development, improving multi-use approaches, implementing Nature-Inclusive Design solutions and/or innovations, and projects contributing to more optimised resource use, including improved circular economy approaches, are highly encouraged.
- **Communication & Engagement:**
We value innovative approaches and practices that strengthen relationships with communities and other stakeholders, and/or aim at delivering local benefits. This may be achieved through co-design processes, immersive storytelling (including AR/VR), or gamification techniques that make participation more accessible. Integrating cultural narratives, participatory art, and framing grid projects as local climate solutions are also examples of how communication can become a transformative and empowering part of grid development.

These focus areas are not mandatory but reflect strategic directions relevant to the sector and to RGI's ongoing work. They serve as inspiration for applicants seeking to highlight their innovative edge in areas of growing relevance.

1. Innovation

The jury will assess the degree of **originality, creativity, novelty** and **boldness** demonstrated in the approach. Innovation may be **technological, procedural, organisational, environmental** or **social**, according to the award category under which the practice is submitted. We welcome projects that:

- Introduce novel ideas, tools or processes not yet widely adopted in the grid sector.
- Explore new territory, challenge conventional models or take thoughtful risks in pursuit of transformation.
- Significantly advance existing approaches by incorporating new dimensions or apply existing methods in unexpected or transformative ways.

The innovation criterion also encompasses practices that have evolved over an extended period of time and/or are built upon knowledge derived from prevailing practices.

2. Outcomes & Impacts

The jury values a well-substantiated description of both the outcomes and impacts of a practice, including supporting numerical data, if available. While outcomes pertain to immediate **tangible results** and conclusions, impacts focus on the **transformational potential** of the project, encompassing long-term changes and effects, including their influence on similar or related practices. The jury will assess to which extent the initiative has:

- Delivered measurable improvements for energy systems, people, or the environment.
- Influenced behaviour, policy, infrastructure, or institutional practice.
- Demonstrated clear logic between goals, activities, and results.
- **Contributed to broader sustainability goals** (such as emissions reduction, circular economy, resource efficiency and optimisation, or biodiversity enhancement), and shown potential for long-lasting change through the creation of capacity or frameworks.

Projects that are still in early stages but show clear **strategic vision** and potential for major future impact will also be considered favourably.

3. Scope & Transferability

The jury examines the **scalability, adaptability** and **relevance** of the practice beyond its original context, also assessing whether a practice retains its value over time and extends beyond its initial implementation scope. Strong submissions will demonstrate:

- Potential for replication in other geographic, technical, or political/regulatory settings.
- Flexibility to adapt to different social, environmental, or cultural conditions.
- Intentional efforts to share knowledge, such as through open-access tools, manuals, or partnerships.
- Awareness of barriers to transferability and strategies to overcome them.

However, this does not imply that practices addressing **pertinent local issues** are discouraged from applying, as their limited initial scope does not necessarily indicate low transferability potential.

4. Collaborative Approach

In the context of this competition, a practice is often deemed more valuable if it has been developed and delivered in **genuine partnership** by a consortium of organisations, or across teams within a single organisation, and/or in **collaboration** with relevant stakeholders who contributed to the final outcome and are satisfied with it. High-scoring projects will:

- Demonstrate meaningful co-creation or shared decision-making with affected communities, institutions or sectors.
- Involve a wide range of actors (e.g., civil society, industry, academia, local authorities, marginalised or underrepresented groups).
- Promote equity and social inclusion as core elements of the collaborative process.
- Reflect transparency, mutual learning, and trust-building throughout the process.
- Include mechanisms for ongoing feedback, adaptation, and accountability.

Indicate that they sought advice from peers and experts or utilised resources like RGI's best practice database to gain insights into existing practices that can be built upon.

5. Evaluation

This final criterion assesses whether the practice underwent **critical evaluation** throughout its different stages of implementation (and, if applicable, after its completion) to enhance the practice itself and derive lessons for future projects. It also considers whether the target group and/or other stakeholders have positively evaluated the practice, i.e. via the provided **testimonials**.