

2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards Contest Rules

PLEASE NOTE: Participants must be 18 years of age or older. Entries submitted by minors are ineligible for the Contest. It is your sole responsibility to review and understand your employer's policies regarding your eligibility to participate in trade promotions (including but not limited to the 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards program contest promotion (the "Contest")). If you are participating in any activities related to the Contest in violation of your employer's policies, you may be disqualified from entering or receiving awards. Microsoft disclaims any and all liability or responsibility for disputes arising between you and your employer related to this matter, and awards will only be awarded in compliance with your employer's policies.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES: Microsoft is committed to complying with government gift and ethics rules and therefore government employees are not eligible to participate in this Partner of the Year Awards Contest without advance written approval from Microsoft. Microsoft will consider entries from government and state-owned entities enrolled in the Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program on a case-by-case basis, provided an authorized representative from said entity(ies) must send an email to potyasup@microsoft.com.

This Contest is sponsored by Microsoft Corporation ("Microsoft") and is hosted in the United States, and entry information is collected on computers located in the United States. This Contest will be governed by the laws of the State of Washington, and you consent to the exclusive jurisdiction and venue of the courts of the State of Washington for any disputes arising out of this Contest.

These are the official rules ("Rules") that govern how the Contest will operate. If you do not agree with these Rules, please do not enter this Contest.

CONTEST DESCRIPTION:

The object of this Contest is to recognize a solution(s) that Microsoft determines (in our sole discretion) (i) has the most successful implementation; and (ii) drives significant impact. For purposes of this Contest, "Solution" means a product application or implementation of an application or service that: (i) uses the most recent versions of Microsoft technologies; and (ii) alleviates a customer concern or solves a related business problem.

Participants will be asked to describe their successful implementation of a Solution for a specific customer and show how the Solution added business value. For purposes of this Contest, each Solution you submit will be considered an "Entry". All Entries received by Microsoft will be assessed to determine the winner(s) of the award(s) as described herein.

IMPORTANT: If any customer has any proprietary rights in and to the Solution you submit, as a condition of you being named a winner in this Contest, that customer must be willing and able to grant to you and Microsoft all the necessary rights, licenses and permissions to feature and otherwise describe the Solution in a case study and to use the case study for promotional, editorial, demonstration or any other related purposes. If customer is not willing to and/or is unable to grant such permissions, then you may not enter the Solution in this Contest and any Entry for such Solution will be rejected.

WHAT ARE THE START AND END DATES?

Microsoft will begin accepting Solution Entries via the submission process described herein for the Contest beginning June 1, 2026, at 10:00 A.M. Pacific time, and cease accepting Entries for the Contest on July 7, 2026, at 6:00 P.M. Pacific time ("Entry Period"). We strongly encourage you to submit your Solution Entries well before the Entry Period deadline to ensure consideration of your Entry. Any Entries that have not been submitted by the Entry Period deadline will not be considered for the Contest. NO EXCEPTIONS. Please note that the date and times are subject to change, and Microsoft will make reasonable efforts to provide any updates accordingly.

AM I ELIGIBLE TO ENTER THE CONTEST?

Participant is eligible to enter this Contest if:

- **You** are 18 years of age or older;
- **You** remain in compliance with the Contest Rules set forth herein;
- **You are** an employee of a company actively enrolled in the Microsoft AI Cloud Partner Program, or as it was previously known, the Microsoft Partner Network (MPN) with a valid PartnerID;
- **Your** company is in good standing with Microsoft;
- **Your** company has achieved the eligibility criteria as outlined in the specific award guidelines.
- **Your company is NOT** located in any of the following geographies: Belarus, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Russia, Sudan, Syria, Venezuela and occupied regions of Ukraine (Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk); **and**
- **You are NOT** an immediate family (parent, sibling, spouse, or child) or household member of a Microsoft employee, an employee of a Microsoft subsidiary, or a person involved in any part of the administration and execution of this Contest.

This Contest is void outside the geographic areas described above and wherever else prohibited by law.

HOW DO I ENTER?

Go to the Contest web site at <https://aka.ms/POTYA> and complete and submit your Entry, as instructed.

Participants may submit more than one Entry in any category, or geography and you may be chosen as a finalist and/or winner in more than one category or geography. Microsoft will choose a finalist and/or winner per category, or geography at its sole discretion.

WHAT CONSTITUTES AN ELIGIBLE ENTRY?

To be eligible for the Contest an Entry must meet the following content / technical requirements:

- Entries must be submitted in the US English language. Please note that the solution may be developed in any language but the Entry itself must be submitted in the US English language.
- The Solution must have at least one commercial customer and the Solution must have demonstrated market success/growth within the most recent 12 consecutive months.
 1. The Solution must be developed using Microsoft technologies. Prior to submitting your Solution, you must have obtained any and all customer consents, approvals or licenses required for your Solution; and
- Entries must not otherwise violate the intellectual property rights of any other person or company by using their trademarks, music, logos, names, images or any other proprietary rights or intellectual property without their express written consent.
- Entries may not include Solutions jointly built with Microsoft employees or with Microsoft as the customer.

Entries may **NOT** contain any content that:

- is sexually explicit, unnecessarily violent or derogatory of any ethnic, racial, gender, religious, professional or age group; profane or pornographic;
- promotes alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, firearms/weapons (or the use of any of the foregoing) or a particular political agenda;
- is obscene or offensive;
- defames, misrepresents or contains disparaging remarks about other people or companies;
- communicates messages or images inconsistent with the positive images and/or good will to which we wish to associate; and/or
- violates any law and/or regulation.

Microsoft reserves the right to reject any Entry for any reason or no reason, in our sole discretion. Microsoft will automatically disqualify any Entry that is incomplete or illegible, or that we receive from you in excess of the Entry limit described in the FAQ. If you attempt to compromise the integrity or the legitimate operation of this Contest in ANY way, Microsoft may seek damages from you and your company to the fullest extent permitted by law. Further, we may ban you and your company from participating in any of our future Contests.

Please note, some Contest award categories may include more strict Entry requirements, including but not limited to, the earning of pre-requisite Microsoft Solutions Partner designations. A small set of awards have exceptions to the general eligibility requirements and will allow an Entry based on unique criteria for that industry or field. Participants can view complete awards descriptions and eligibility criteria in the 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards guidelines document posted on <https://aka.ms/POTYA>.

HOW WILL MY SOLUTION/ENTRY POTENTIALLY BE USED?

Other than what is set forth below, Microsoft is not claiming any ownership rights to your Solution. However, by submitting your Entry, you:

- Grant to Microsoft an irrevocable, royalty-free, worldwide right and license to: (i) use, review, assess, test and otherwise analyze your Solution and all your Entry content in connection with this Contest; and (ii) feature you, your company, your Solution and all Entry content in connection with marketing, sales, or promotional activities (including but not limited to internal and external meetings, conference presentations, tradeshow, marketing and advertising materials, and screen shots in press releases) in all media (now known or later developed).

Additionally, you:

- agree to sign any necessary documentation that may be required for Microsoft and our designees to make use of the rights you granted above;
- understand and acknowledge that Microsoft may have developed, licensed or commissioned solutions and materials similar or identical to your Solution and you waive any claims you may have resulting from any similarities to your Solution/Entry;
- understand that Microsoft cannot control the information you disclose to our representatives in the course of entering this Contest, or what our representatives will remember about your Solution/Entry. You also understand that Microsoft will not restrict work assignments of representatives who have access to your Entry;
- agree that use of information in Microsoft representatives' unaided memories in the development or deployment of our products or services does not create liability for us under these Contest Rules, or copyright or trade secret law;
- understand that you will not receive any compensation or credit for use of your Entry, other than what is described in these Contest Rules; and
- acknowledge that by submitting an Entry for this Contest, you may also be eligible for other awards facilitated by local country or region Microsoft programs. The Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards program is not affiliated with or responsible for local Microsoft country or regional award programs.

Please note that following the end of this Contest, the details of your Entry may be posted on a Microsoft website for viewing by visitors to that website. Microsoft is not responsible for any unauthorized use of your Solution by visitors to this website. While we reserve these rights, we are not obligated to use your Solution/Entry for any purpose, even if it has been selected as a winning Entry.

If you do not want to grant Microsoft these rights to your Solution/Entry, please do not enter this Contest.

FINALIST AND WINNER DETERMINATION AND AWARDS

On or around the close of the Entry Period, a panel of Microsoft judges will review all eligible Entries received and select, at Microsoft's sole discretion, finalists and winners for the Contest awards. See the full list of 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards on the guidelines document posted on <https://aka.ms/POTYA>. Finalists and winners will be contacted via the e-mail address provided at time of Entry and must confirm their acceptance of the award, or designation as a finalist or

winner, by the deadline communicated by Microsoft. If we are unable to make contact with you, or you fail to agree to accept your award or designation, we will notify the next runner-up finalist or winner.

All finalists and winners are subject to the Waiver and Release, which will be incorporated by reference into these Contest Rules.

CONTEST AWARDS

The 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards are:

Category awards:

Up to one (1) winner will be named for each of the category awards.

Up to three (3) runner-up finalists will be named for each of the category awards.

Cloud & AI Platforms

- Migrate & Modernize Your Estate
- Innovate with Azure AI Apps and Agents
- Unified Data Platform

AI Business Solutions

- Agentic ERP
- Agentic Sales & CRM
- Agentic Services & Contact Center
- Agentic Business Operations with Business Central
- Cloud and AI Endpoints
- Copilot & Agents at Work
- Low Code Agentic Apps
- Secure AI Productivity

Security

- Data Security & Governance
- Secure Access
- Security

Industry

- Defense & Intelligence
- Education
- Energy & Resources
- Financial Services
- Gaming
- Government
- Healthcare & Life Sciences
- Manufacturing & Mobility
- Nonprofit
- Retail & Consumer Goods
- Telecommunications & Media

Partner Innovation

- Commercial Device Channel
- Device
- Distributor
- Global Advisory and Consulting Services
- Global ISV
- Global SI
- Global SI Growth Champion
- ISV Innovation
- Microsoft for Startups
- Scale Solutions
- Surface
- Telco
- Training Services

Business Transformation

- Agents
- Frontier Transformation
- Marketplace

Social Impact

- Community Response
- Inclusion Changemaker
- Sustainability Changemaker

Region Partner of the Year awards

Each region (Americas, EMEA, Asia) will designate up to one (1) winner to represent the following partner cohorts:

- System Integrators (SI)
 - Partners driving impact with Enterprise customers
 - Partners driving impact with SME&C customers
- ISV
- Channel
- Device

Country Partner of the Year awards

Up to one (1) winner and award will be named for each participating country.

2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Award benefits:

- Customizable digital assets that allow you to showcase your company as an esteemed Microsoft partner.
- Recognition collateral to help celebrate your success.

- Winners celebrated at Microsoft Ignite. Note, attendance at Microsoft Ignite is not a requirement or condition of winning an award.

WHAT OTHER CONDITIONS AM I AGREEING TO BY ENTERING?

By clicking the "Accept Rules" button in the 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards tool submission process for submitting an Entry, you hereby acknowledge and agree:

- To abide by and remain in compliance with these official Rules.
- To release and hold harmless Microsoft and its respective parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, employees, and agents from any and all liability or any injury, loss or damage of any kind arising from or in connection with this Contest, or any prize won.
- That Microsoft's decisions will be final and binding on all matters related to this Contest.
- That Microsoft may use your proper name and company name, online and in print, or in any other media, in connection with this Contest, without payment or compensation to you, except where prohibited by law.
- Winners and finalists should be prepared to provide additional materials required for editorial or promotional purposes and to help promote the 2026 Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards program. Additional materials may include, but are not limited to, screen images, photographs of the development team, company logo (both on disk and a high-resolution printout), and video source.

WHAT LAWS GOVERN THE WAY THIS CONTEST IS EXECUTED AND ADMINISTRATED?

This Contest will be governed by the laws of the State of Washington, and you consent to the exclusive jurisdiction and venue of the courts of the State of Washington for any disputes arising out of this Contest.

WHAT IF SOMETHING UNEXPECTED HAPPENS AND THE CONTEST CAN'T RUN AS PLANNED?

If an unforeseen or unexpected event happens that cannot be reasonably anticipated or controlled, (also referred to as force majeure) and that event affects the fairness and / or integrity of this Contest, Microsoft reserves the right to cancel, change or suspend this Contest. This right is reserved whether the event is due to human or technical error. If a solution cannot be found to restore the integrity of the Contest, Microsoft reserves the right to select winners from among all eligible Entries received before we had to cancel, change or suspend the Contest.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT WHO WON?

Participants can find out who won by visiting <https://aka.ms/POTYA> where the names of the Contest winners will remain posted for 12 months after the official public announcement in November 2026.

WHO IS SPONSORING THIS CONTEST?

Microsoft Corporation
One Microsoft Way
Redmond, WA 98052
USA

Questions? Please email the [Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards support team](#). Please allow two (2) business days for a response.

WAIVER AND RELEASE

Microsoft Corporation and its affiliates ("Microsoft") reserve the right, at Microsoft's sole discretion, to engage in activities with Participant and Participant's Company (including Company's employees and agents, collectively and individually referred to as "Company") relating to Company's entry and participation in Microsoft Partner of the Year Awards. By submitting an entry for the Contest, Company agrees to the terms of this section and the submitting party represents that you are authorized to consent on the Company's behalf.

1. Company agrees that Company's name, logos, trademarks, information, likeness, testimony, video, and images may be used, as set forth in Section 2 below, in the activities that are marked with an 'X' below:
 - X Written case study – a document/story describing your or your company's experience with use of Microsoft technologies
 - X Video case study – a video version of the case study describing your or company's experience with use of Microsoft technologies
 - X Press release – issued to press and media in order to make a newsworthy announcement relating to your experience with use of Microsoft technologies
 - X Testimonial advertisement – an advertisement describing your experience with use of Microsoft technologies
 - X Blogs
 - X Microsoft marketing and promotional materials and communications.
2. The following terms apply to all the activities listed in Section 1 above:
 - a) Microsoft may interview, tape, videotape, and record Company to gather information in creation of the activities described above.
 - b) Microsoft may display Company's name, company trademarks, service marks, logos, and other identifying information in the documentation in relation to the activities described above.
 - c) Prior to the first public release of any form of documentation, Microsoft will obtain Company approval of final content, which shall not be unreasonably withheld by Company and provided in the timeframe requested by Microsoft. Company agrees to review the final content for factual accuracy and to prevent the inadvertent release of any of Company's confidential information. Company agrees to provide Microsoft with any approval or comments in writing.
 - d) Except for any of Company trademarks, service marks, logos, and other Company created-identifying information, Microsoft will own the documentation, and grants Company a license to use and distribute the documentation for Company's own advertising and marketing efforts; provided Company obtains written pre-approval from Microsoft before any such use or distribution.
 - e) Company will obtain the permissions of any employees or third-party persons or properties that may appear in the documentation for use of the documentation as described herein.
 - f) Microsoft may contact Company for additional permissions related to the Contest.

Both Company and Microsoft will have the perpetual, irrevocable right to publish, use, reference, and display final, mutually pre-approved documentation, in whole or through unedited excerpts, in all forms of media now or hereafter known, and to sublicense the foregoing rights to third parties.

Both Company and Microsoft agree that content that is pre-approved will not subsequently be altered without prior written consent from both parties. Both parties also agree to stop distributing, publicly referencing, and displaying the documentation at any time upon written request from the other party. Company's agreement to participate in the Contest or the activities described in this section does not obligate Microsoft to create any materials or to offer any activities to Company.

Each party agrees to release the other party and its contractors, agents, and employees, from any claims relating to use of the material that the releasing party provides and which is included in the documentation, so long as such use is in accordance with the rights granted under this release. There will be no compensation for any use of

the documentation. Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the parties, this release will apply to all occurrences of the activities described in this section.