

Call for Entries: 2026 MACE Excellence Awards

The [MACE Excellence Awards](#) recognise and celebrate excellence in marketing, advancement and communication within the higher education sector. The awards provide institutions and practitioners with an opportunity to benchmark their work against the best in the sector, receive valuable evaluator feedback and showcase strategic, measurable and impactful projects.

MACE invites institutions to start preparing now for the 2026 Excellence Awards programme. One of the most important success factors in award-winning entries is early preparation. Strong entries are not compiled at the last minute - they are built through careful planning, proper measurement, collection of evidence, and clear documentation of objectives, strategy, implementation and results.

Institutions are strongly encouraged to identify potential projects early and begin gathering supporting material, including research, planning documents, photographs, analytics, testimonials, measurement data and examples of outputs. Teams should also allocate time to write and refine entries well before the submission deadlines.

Before selecting projects and categories, entrants should carefully study the **Preparing for Excellence** guide available on the [MACE website](#). The guide provides detailed information on:

- The different award divisions and categories
- The criteria used during evaluation
- The various awards that can be achieved
- How to structure a strong entry
- Technical requirements and submission guidelines

2026 Fees and Deadlines

Super Saver Deadline	Early Bird Deadline	Final Deadline
14 August 2026	28 August 2026	4 September 2026
R900 per entry	R1 000 per entry	R1 500 per entry

Do not wait until the final deadline to begin preparing your entries. The most successful entries are strategic, evidence-based and carefully prepared over time. Start planning now to give your projects the best possible opportunity to achieve excellence recognition at the 2026 MACE Excellence Awards.



Lacey Loader

Coordinator: MACE Excellence Awards

MACE Excellence Awards 2026

1. Terms, entry preparation and submission guide

This quick guide is intended to help entrants prepare high-quality submissions for the 2026 MACE Excellence Awards and to ensure that all entries comply with the programme requirements. It is based on the official MACE Call for Entries and Preparing for Excellence information. The Preparing for Excellence 2026 will be on the website during the second week of June. Until then, feel free to use the 2025 Guide.

NB: Entries must be submitted before 23:59 on the relevant deadline date to qualify for the applicable fee. No entries will be accepted after the final deadline.

2. Terms and conditions

Please read the following carefully before preparing your entry:

- Only paid-up Ordinary Institutional Members of MACE may enter the awards programme. Membership fees must already reflect in the MACE bank account when entries are submitted.
- Projects must have been implemented, published or broadcast between 1 March 2025 and 30 August 2026.
- Long-term campaigns may be entered, but the submission must focus on work completed during the qualifying period.
- Previous winning entries may not be resubmitted unless new elements were added as part of a multi-year campaign.
- Entries must use the official MACE entry form template. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.
- Incomplete entries will be disqualified. Both the work plan and work samples must be included.
- Entries that exceed the prescribed word count limits will be penalised and may ultimately be disqualified.
- Projects with more than 51% syndicated or reprinted material will be disqualified.
- Agencies may support projects, but the institution must demonstrate that it has completed at least 51% of the conceptual and creative work.
- The permission and declaration section of the entry form must be completed and signed.

3. Preparing a strong entry

The best entries are prepared well in advance. Entrants are encouraged to:

- Study the Preparing for Excellence Guide carefully before starting.
- Identify suitable projects early and gather supporting evidence throughout the year.
- Select the correct category and entry form.
- Focus on strategy, measurable results and demonstrated impact.
- Ensure that work samples clearly support the narrative in the work plan.
- Label all supporting material clearly and test all links before submission.
- Keep writing concise, focused and aligned with the evaluation criteria.

Remember: evaluators are looking not only for creativity, but also for clear objectives, strong planning, execution, measurement and evidence of results.

4. How to submit your entry

Please follow the process below carefully:

1. Complete the correct official MACE entry form.
2. Prepare your work plan and work samples.
3. Place all documents and supporting material in one WeTransfer folder.
4. Submit the folder via WeTransfer to: mari@businessdna.co.za.
5. Request an invoice from Mari Steenkamp after submitting your entry.
6. Submit proof of payment before the final payment deadline.

Important:

- Do not place a WeTransfer link inside your work plan document.
- Ensure that evaluators can easily access and understand all work samples.
- Check that all files open correctly before submitting.

5. Frequently asked questions

Can one project be entered into multiple categories?

Yes. Different elements of the same project may be entered into multiple categories where appropriate.

Will evaluators provide feedback?

Yes. Constructive evaluator feedback will be shared after the awards process has been completed.

What happens if I miss the Early Bird deadline?

Your entry will automatically move to the next deadline period, and the applicable fee will apply.

Where can I find the entry forms and guide?

The official entry forms and Preparing for Excellence Guide are available on the MACE website.

Who can I contact for assistance?

- General MACE Awards enquiries: Lacea Loader at lacea-loader@gmail.com
- Questions about categories or preparing entries: Dr Amanda Hamilton-Attwell at amanda@businessdna.co.za
- Administrative and submission enquiries: Mari Steenkamp at mari@businessdna.co.za

We encourage all institutions to start preparing early. Strong entries are built over time, and the most successful submissions are usually those where evidence, measurement and supporting material are collected throughout the project lifecycle. Good luck with your entries!



Dr Amanda Hamilton-Attwell ABC, CPRP, FCSCE, Fellow IABC
MACE Final Moderator