



2026 NEWIEE Gala Awardee Criteria and Nomination Information

The NEWIEE Awards honor and celebrate the achievements of women+ leaders in the energy and environmental fields, as well as those uplifting underrepresented voices. Our 15th annual awards gala will take place on Thursday, May 7, 2026, and we anticipate close to 700 people. In 2026 we will honor leaders in our community with awards in the categories listed below. This document provides criteria and nomination guidelines for our awards. Please reach out to us at NEWIEE@newiee.org with any questions about the nomination process.

2026 Award Categories

DEI Founders' Award: The DEI Founders' Award honors the founders of our organization, a group of women who came together in 2008 to exchange ideas and experiences with others in energy and environmental professions. This award, created in 2023, recognizes the spirit of the NEWIEE founders - uplifting underrepresented voices and creating a space for like-minded individuals to come together. We honor both an individual and an organization.

Leadership Award: The Leadership Award recognizes a woman+ leader who demonstrates excellence and leadership in their career and showcases industry impact, while creating pathways for others to advance in energy and environmental fields. This leader demonstrates professional excellence while actively championing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging through mentorship, sponsorship, policy advocacy, or organizational change. Their leadership amplifies underrepresented voices and creates lasting impact beyond their individual achievements. Ideal nominees demonstrate:

- Professional excellence with proven industry impact
- Active mentorship, sponsorship, or creation of advancement opportunities for women+ and underrepresented groups
- Leadership within their organization or sector
- Influence at local, regional, or national level

Rising Star Award: Created in 2016 to honor Allison Smith, the Rising Star Award celebrates a woman+ with less than ten years of professional experience who demonstrates exceptional promise and commitment to building a more inclusive energy and environmental sector. This emerging leader shows professional growth while actively lifting others, challenging inequitable practices, or creating innovative solutions that benefit underrepresented communities. Ideal nominees demonstrate:

- Less than 10 years of energy/environment industry experience
- Strong professional trajectory and growing influence
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging
- Innovation or fresh approaches to sector challenges
- Peer leadership or community building among emerging professionals



[The complete list of past awardees can be found here.](#)

SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

NEWIEE's Board of Directors serves as the selection Committee for the Rising Star and Leadership Award. NEWIEE's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee serves as the nomination review committee for the DEI Founders' Awards. Chapter Leads and Committee Chairs are invited to participate in scoring nominees as part of the initial review process.

Award winners and their nominator will be contacted in late February/early March 2026 to confirm they are able to attend the Awards Gala to receive their award. Awardees will be announced to the public shortly thereafter. Each awardee will be highlighted on our website, newsletter and social media and offered two complimentary tickets to the event.

Thank you for taking the time to nominate one of your colleagues! Please review the nomination criteria below and ensure your submission shows how the nominee meets the criteria. In addition to answering the questions in the submission form, you will have the opportunity to submit up to three supporting materials for your nominee such as articles, blog posts, biography, or letters of support.

NOMINATION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

Nominees must be based in New England and primarily work out of an office in New England. Past NEWIEE awardees and members of NEWIEE's Board of Directors are not eligible. NEWIEE Gala Award nominations should support criteria listed below:

Empower Women+ in Energy and Environment

- Demonstrates leadership that creates pathways for others
- Advocates for women+ advancement in the sector
- Mentors or sponsors emerging professionals

Deepen Engagement and Community Impact

- Contributes to industry discourse and/or policy development
- Builds bridges across organizations or sectors
- Engages underrepresented communities in energy/environment work

Build Sustainable and Inclusive Organizations

- Champions diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging practices within their organization
- Creates systemic change, not just individual achievement
- Models inclusive leadership behaviors



APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

About You (the Nominator):

Name
Email
Phone number
Company/Organization
Relationship to Nominee

About the Individual Nominee:

Name
Email
Phone number
Job Title
Company/Organization
Company/Organization Address

QUESTIONS FOR LEADERSHIP, RISING STAR, DEI FOUNDERS' INDIVIDUAL:

20,000 Character Limit

1. Share how the nominee has contributed to Empowering Women+ in Energy and Environment
2. Share how the nominee has deepened engagement and community impact in Energy and Environment.
3. Share how the nominee has helped build sustainable and inclusive organizations and/or teams.
4. Please describe any other exceptional qualities, activities or achievements that we should consider in evaluating this nominee.

If you are nominating for the DEI Founders Award – Individual award, please prepare answers to the following questions.

1. How has the nominee made an impact on the careers of others, particularly underrepresented individuals? For example, significant contributions in thought leadership, recruitment, development, mentoring, strategy development, initiatives, or organizations focused on DEI.
2. How does this nominee honor our founders in their uplifting of underrepresented voices and creating a space for like-minded individuals to come together?

If you are nominating for the Leadership Award, please prepare answers to the following questions:

1. How has this woman shown distinction and brilliance as a leader in their professional capacity?

If you are nominating for the Rising Star Award (less than ten years of industry experience), please prepare answers to the following question:

1. Why do you think this nominee shows extraordinary promise, and why can we expect extraordinary leadership and impact from her in the future?

DEI ORGANIZATION NOMINATION:

You will be asked to specify if you are nominating the organization at a regional level, or if this nomination is for a specific branch/location/department of the organization.

Eligibility

- The organizational DEI Founders Award is open to organizations of all sizes.
- The organization must have a presence, including their DEI efforts, in the New England region.



- The nominee must have a DEI related business resource group (BRG) or employee resource group (ERG) or similar; and a minimum of 30% female or diverse (such a LGBTQ+, BIPOC, disabled) individuals serving on the company Board and/or as executive leadership.
- Organizations that are associated with the NEWIEE DEI Committee are eligible for the award; however, they may not be nominated by the individual that sits on the DEI Committee.

Nomination Questions:

1. Please describe the organization in general (mission, purpose).
2. Does the nominee have a formal commitment to or a public statement about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)? Please provide links to or attach supporting materials.
3. Please describe the nominee's efforts to recruit, hire, develop, promote, and retain diverse talent. Please provide links to or attach supporting materials.
4. Does the nominee disclose the women-to-men pay ratio or the non-white-to-white pay ratio?
5. Is the nominee demonstrably inclusive from a cultural standpoint such as celebrating a variety of holidays (Diwali, Kwanzaa, Ramadan), or having easily-accessible recordings for each employee that pronounce their names correctly, and ensuring that new hires feel comfortable using their own names?
6. What steps has the nominee taken to increase diversity of applicants?
7. What programs or initiatives does the nominee have to support LGBTQ+ employees and differently abled employees?
8. How many employees were hired by the nominee in last 12 months? How many of those were from historically underrepresented groups?
9. How many employees were promoted by the nominee in last 12 months? How many of those were from historically underrepresented groups?

Please complete the below table as part of your nomination. Please answer to the best of your ability. If the information is unknown, please respond with N/A.

Metric	Value	Comments/Notes (Optional)
Number of employees		
Number of offices in the New England region		
Board/Upper-Level Management Composition		
Percent female		
Percent black/African American		
Percent Asian American		



Percent Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander		
Percent Latino/a		
Percent American Indian or Alaskan Native		
Percent LGBTQ+		
Percent with Disabilities		
Percent white		
Employee Composition		
Percent female		
Percent black/African American		
Percent Asian American		
Percent Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander		
Percent Latino/a		
Percent American Indian or Alaskan Native		
Percent LGBTQ+		
Percent with Disabilities		
Percent white		