



2026 NAUMD AWARDS INFORMATION

The NAUMD Awards recognize excellence in uniform programs across various sectors, celebrating the collaboration between public safety departments, image apparel companies, and innovative designers. The program is divided into three main awards categories, each with distinct criteria and submission guidelines.

To submit for an award, please visit:

<https://naumd.com/awards/submit/>

This year's judges for the awards are:

Michael Schwarz, Uniform & Fashion Designer, Stan Herman Studio

Dr. Heather Akou, Professor of Fashion Design, Indiana University

Devina Lalla, Professor of Fashion, Savannah College of Art and Design®

David Lurio, retired industry veteran, public safety manufacturing

2026 NAUMD Award Schedule

- March 12, 2026 - Submission Deadline
- March 25, 2026 - Winners Notified
- May 5, 2026 - Awards Banquet at 2025 NAUMD Convention

Below are the details for each award:



Best Dressed Public Safety Awards®

Overview

The Best Dressed Public Safety Awards® celebrate uniform programs within public safety departments, including police, fire, sheriff, correctional, EMS, security, and other public safety organizations. The award honors the uniform standards, functionality, and innovation within these departments, as well as the distributors and manufacturers involved in the program.

Eligibility

- Open to all public safety departments with a NAUMD member involved as a supplier.
- Submissions must include photographs or drawings of the uniform program, showcasing both individual and group photos.
- Resubmissions are allowed if the program has not previously won in the same category.
- A program can be entered in multiple categories but is eligible to win only one.
- Employees must currently wear programs.

Judging Criteria

Submissions are judged on a 100-point scale, with points distributed across three categories:

- **Overall Appearance** (50 points): Evaluated based on the provided photographs, considering the uniformity across different roles within the department.
- **Technology/Innovation** (25 points): Assesses the incorporation of new technologies or innovations in the uniform design.
- **Problem Solving/Improvements** (25 points): Considers how the uniform program addresses specific challenges or improves functionality for the wearer.





Submission Details

- Submissions are accepted until March 12, 2026.
- Multiple winners are allowed in each category, with 10 to 15 awards typically given annually based on the judges' consensus.
- Winners are announced at the NAUMD Annual Convention and Exposition.

Award Categories and Examples

- **Correctional:** Uniforms for various roles within correctional systems, including guards, management, and prisoner population.
- **Emergency Services:** Uniforms for emergency response teams, such as fire departments, EMS, and environmental safety crews.
- **Government (Federal & State):** Uniforms for government agencies, including border patrols, coast guards, and conservation wardens.
- **Police & Sheriff Departments:** Uniforms for roles within police and sheriff departments, including bike patrol, tactical units, and honor guard.
- **Security:** Uniforms for security roles, including corporate, private, and school security.



Image of the Year Awards®

Overview

Since 1978, the Image Apparel Institute's Image of the Year Awards® has recognized outstanding workplace apparel programs. This award highlights the originality, branding, functionality, and innovation in uniform programs across various industries.

Eligibility

- Open to all companies with a NAUMD member involved as a supplier.
- Submissions must include photographs or drawings of the uniform program, showcasing both individual and group photos.
- Resubmissions are allowed if the program has not previously won in the same category.
- A program can be entered in multiple categories but is eligible to win only one.
- Employees must currently wear programs.

Judging Criteria

Submissions are judged on a 100-point scale, with points distributed across three categories:

- **Appearance/Design/Research** (50 points): Assessed based on the overall design and any research conducted during the creation process.
- **Technology/Innovation** (25 points): Evaluates the integration of new technologies or innovative elements.
- **Problem Solving/Improvements** (25 points): Considers the program's ability to address specific challenges or enhance the wearer's experience.



Submission Details

- Submissions are accepted until March 12, 2026.
- Multiple winners are allowed in each category, with 10 to 15 awards typically given annually based on the judges' consensus.
- Winners are announced at the NAUMD Annual Convention and Exposition.

Award Categories and Examples

- **Construction & Environmental Maintenance:** Uniforms for construction, property management, and environmental services.
- **Entertainment:** Uniforms for entertainment venues, including amusement parks, casinos, and stadiums.
- **Healthcare:** Uniforms for healthcare sectors, including clinics, nursing services, and eldercare.
- **Lodging:** Uniforms for the lodging industry, including hotels, motels, and resorts.
- **Manufacturing:** Uniforms for manufacturing industries, including agriculture, food production, and technology.
- **Restaurants & Food Service:** Uniforms for food service settings, including fine dining and quick service restaurants.
- **Retail:** Uniforms for retail environments, including automotive dealerships and department stores.
- **Safety & Industrial:** Specialized uniforms for safety and industrial work, including flame-resistant apparel and high-visibility gear.
- **Services:** Uniforms for service industries, including cleaning, construction, and real estate.
- **Transportation:** Uniforms for transportation sectors, including aviation, shipping, and rail services.



Innovation Awards®

Overview

The Innovation Awards® recognize groundbreaking advancements in the uniform, image apparel, workwear, and public safety equipment industries. This award honors the best innovations in design, technology, and sustainability.

Eligibility

- Open to all companies within the relevant industries.
- Innovations may be entered in more than one category but can only win in one category per year.

Judging Criteria

Submissions are judged on a 100-point scale, with points distributed across three categories:

- **Originality** (45 points): Assesses the uniqueness and quality of the innovation or design.
- **Technology** (35 points): Evaluates the use of new technologies in the innovation.
- **Problem Solving/Importance** (20 points): Considers the significance of the problem solved by the innovation.



Submission Details

- Submissions are accepted until March 12, 2026.
- Multiple winners are allowed in each category, with 10 to 15 awards typically given annually based on the judges' consensus.
- Winners are announced at the NAUMD Annual Convention and Exposition.

Award Categories and Examples

- **Badges:** Innovations in badges, including RFID technology and customizable designs.
- **Branding:** Innovations in logo placement, brand visibility, and fabric integration.
- **Digital Service:** Innovations in digital services, including mobile apps and online fitting tools.
- **Decoration (Emblems, Transfers, etc.):** Innovations in decoration, including 3D embroidered emblems and reflective patches.
- **Fabric:** Innovations in fabric, including moisture-wicking textiles and eco-friendly materials.
- **Footwear:** Innovations in footwear, including slip-resistant soles and ergonomic designs.
- **Garment Comfort:** Innovations enhancing comfort, including seamless construction and adaptive fit technology.
- **Garment Function:** Innovations improving garment function, including multi-pocket designs and protective features.
- **Headwear:** Innovations in headwear, including moisture-wicking caps and integrated communication systems.
- **Outerwear:** Innovations in outerwear, including insulated vests and water-resistant jackets.
- **Safety:** Innovations in safety, including high-visibility gear and protective gloves.
- **Sustainability:** Innovations in sustainability, including uniforms made from recycled materials and eco-friendly processes.
- **Technology:** Innovations in wearable tech and smart fabrics.
- **Other:** Any other innovations not covered by the above categories, such as multi-functional accessories or new packaging solutions.