2027 CRYSTAL CABIN AWARD

Competition Guidelines

Dear applicant,

We strongly recommend reviewing this information before starting your application. For any questions, we will be happy to assist you. Please contact

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1) General Information

Under the motto “Let your ideas take off,” the Crystal Cabin Award annually recognizes exceptional products and innovations in the field of civil aircraft interior development. Entries are evaluated by an independent jury representing academia, engineering, airlines, manufacturers, and trade media. The award was initiated by the cluster agency Hamburg Aviation and is organized by the Crystal Cabin Award Association. Since 2007, the Award has been presented during the Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg. Today, it is recognized worldwide as a mark of excellence – and as a launchpad for many products that later enter service on commercial aircraft.

2) General Terms and Conditions

a. Scope of Eligibility

Any corporation, airline, scientist, university, institution or individual natural person related with the civil aviation industry may present an entry to participate in the Crystal Cabin Award.

The submission must have a clear and direct relevance to the aircraft cabin and cannot present it merely as one of several possible application areas.

Military and defense products are excluded from the contest. Only civil aviation products or concepts are allowed to be entered for the Crystal Cabin Award.

Individuals who are members of the Crystal Cabin Award Association or serve as experts on the Judging Panel are not eligible to participate in the competition. This restriction does not apply to the companies or organizations they represent. However, their associate will not be allowed to vote for their product, to make sure the scoring is completely neutral and unaffected by company loyalties.

b. Ownership of Entries

For innovations that have already been installed, implemented, entered service on board an aircraft, or have been commercially purchased and adopted by an airline, the application may be submitted either by the product manufacturer or the airline.

The submitting party shall act as the main applicant, while other contributing companies, organizations, or institutions shall be recognized as cooperative partners (see also 3a).

In the event that separate applications are submitted for the same innovation by different parties, the Crystal Cabin Award reserves the right to:

- request clarification regarding the respective contributions of each party;
- require the applicants to consolidate their submissions into a single joint entry; or

- determine, at its sole discretion, which application best represents the innovation.

The organizing committee may reject duplicate entries if it determines that they relate to substantially the same product, concept, or innovation.

By submitting an application, the entrant confirms that it has informed all relevant project partners of the submission and has the necessary rights and permissions to participate in the competition.

c. Categories

For the 2027 Crystal Cabin Award season, ending with the award ceremony on April 6, 2027, the following eight categories have been determined: Accessibility, Breakthrough Start-Ups, Cabin Concepts, Cabin Technologies, IFEC & Digital Systems, Passenger Comfort, Sustainable Cabin and University.

We reserve the right to adjust the categories and move submissions to a different category until the shortlist is announced. Any applicants affected by this will be informed in advance.

d. Submission Restrictions

A corporation/institution can submit only one application per category.

Also, an innovation cannot be registered for more than one category. For example, you cannot apply for the “Cabin Concepts” category and simultaneously submit separate applications for the seats, overhead bins, or other components in further categories.

The same entry cannot be submitted more than once, either in the same year or in subsequent years, unless significant changes have been made. This rule applies only to products and concepts that have been shortlisted. The Pre-selection Committee will make the final decision on whether a revised entry may be resubmitted.

e. Feasibility

Entries should be viable for implementation within approximately two years, and the concept or product itself should not be older than one year. An exception are the categories *University* and *Breakthrough Start-Ups*, where the factor of feasibility plays only a minor role.

f. General Criteria

An entry has to fulfil the general criteria of the category to which it has been entered (see category descriptions HERE).

3) Application Formalities

a. Cooperative Partners

If you are applying together with partners, make sure to coordinate with them in advance in order to align your interests and present a

joint strategy. Before filling out the form, please decide who will act as the main applicant.

b. Confidentiality and Data Protection

With regard to confidentiality and data protection, it is important to distinguish between the main document and the PR document.

While the PR content is considered to be public (see 3e), the information provided with your main document will be treated as confidential. This includes all technical or commercial details of entries to the competition.

c. Main Document: File Formalities

Your main document must be provided as a digital PDF document with the following features:

- Max. 600 words (up to 4 pages)
- all texts in English language
- optional: web link for a short video; videos with English voiceover or additional English subtitles

IMPORTANT: Do not mention the category you apply for in your presentation. The pre-selection committee might suggest moving it into another category during the shortlisting process. (see 2c)

d. Main Document: Content

We recommend framing the storyline of your entry around the innovation's core Unique Selling Proposition (USP). Also provide details on the current development status of your innovation and your go-to-market strategy.

If you are the first to develop this type of product, take special care to explain which existing problem it solves or which challenge it significantly improves.

If similar products or concepts already exist, highlight precisely how your innovation differs and where it outperforms others.

If your product is already in service, please name the customer.

Your submission should provide clear answers to the following key questions:

- What passenger or operator benefit does your innovation offer?
- What technological breakthrough does your innovation represent?
- What are the economic benefits of your innovation?
- Where is the market need for your innovation?
- What is the patent and certification status of your innovation (e.g. feasibility with respect to FAA/EASA)?

Please ensure your submission focuses entirely on the innovation itself. Background information about your company should **not** be included. If the Judging Panel requires additional details, the Crystal Cabin Award team will reach out to you.

e. PR Content

Applicants must submit the following materials for public relations purposes as part of their application:

- Filled "CCA_PR_form_2027" (pdf-document), to be found in the Applicant Information Package folder
- Main picture: Landscape image showcasing your innovation. Please select a high-quality image, as it will represent your innovation across all PR activities throughout the competition.
- company logo with transparent background, in a dark version suitable for use on light backgrounds, preferably as eps and png
- optional: additional photos/graphics of your product/concept

By submitting an entry, each applicant grants the Crystal Cabin Award Association the right to print, publish, display, broadcast, and otherwise use the provided PR content for any purposes related to the award. This includes the right to share such content with media partners and selected journalists. The Crystal Cabin Award Association assumes no liability for any trademark disputes or infringements related to the submitted entries.

f. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is generally permitted in this competition. However, the innovation process including creative, strategic or technical approaches, must originate from and be directed by human participants.

The use of AI itself will neither advantage nor disadvantage participants. Entries will be evaluated based on the competition criteria (see 6b).

Any use of generative AI must be clearly disclosed in the submission by naming the AI tool used and the purpose for which it was used.

Permitted uses of generative AI include the following:

- Research, data analysis and technical assistance
- Text creation support (including translation, editing, proofreading)
- Visualization, formatting, and presentation of participant-generated content

Prohibited uses of generative AI include the following:

- Submitting AI-generated material without disclosure.

- Using AI to fabricate, falsify, manipulate, or misrepresent data, research findings, test results, customer feedback, market evidence, or other supporting information.
- Using AI-generated content that infringes intellectual property rights, confidentiality obligations, or applicable laws and regulations.

By submitting an entry, participants confirm that any use of generative AI has been disclosed accurately and completely and that the submission complies with this policy. They accept full responsibility for the accuracy, legality, and integrity of all submitted materials.

The competition organizers reserve the right to request additional information regarding the use of AI, including prompts, workflows, source materials, or evidence of human involvement.

The organizers reserve the right to disqualify entries that violate these requirements.

4) Submitting your application

The submission period runs from September 10 to November 21, 2026. Applications received after 00:00 a.m. (midnight) CET of November 21, 2026, will not be accepted (subject to possible extension).

Entries must be submitted online using the CCA Award Platform on application.crystal-cabin-award.com.

During the application process, you will be asked to create a personal login. This will allow you to edit your entry and add elements before final submission. Please note that your application will only be considered once you have actively clicked the “Submit” button.

5) Application fee

The Crystal Cabin Award Association charges a submission fee of EUR 380.00 per entry (if applicable, plus 19% VAT).

The fee must be paid by the applicant within 14 days from the date of filing, otherwise the entry will not be accepted for the competition.

Entries in the *University* category are free of charge. Student status must be verified by providing a valid student ID from the current year.

In case your entry is not accepted by the pre-selection committee, the Crystal Cabin Award Association will refund the submission costs, except for an administrative fee of EUR 100.00. The same policy applies if you choose to withdraw your submission voluntarily before the shortlist round.

6) Contest process

a. Shortlisting

All applications fulfilling the general application criteria will be evaluated by the Pre-Selection Committee. It is put together by the Executive Board of the Crystal Cabin Award Association and consists of five or more independent aviation experts.

The committee will screen all entries for compliance with the rules and regulations of the Awards. The committee may also change the applicant's initial category choice, and/or ask for clarification and further information from the applicant. Submissions that fulfil all requirements and answer the questions of the pre-selection committee in satisfactory manner will be elected into the shortlist.

b. Online Evaluation

All shortlisted entries will be evaluated online by the Judging Panel. For this, judges will be provided with the files the applicant has submitted.

Every member of the Judging Panel will rate every entry. A judge with any professional or personal relation to a submission or an applicant will not be allowed to evaluate that entry.

The criteria for the evaluation are:

1. Grade of innovation (0 - 20 points)
   - Does the entry push the boundaries of what has been achieved before in its field of use?
   - Does the entry solve a given problem in a completely new, innovative way?
   - Does the entry include components designed of new/improved materials?
2. Operator benefit/utility (0 - 10 points)
   - Does the entry completely and satisfactorily serve its purpose?
   - Is it a relevant improvement to existing alternatives?
   - Does it suit operators' needs?
3. Passenger benefit/utility (0 - 10 points)
   - Does the entry completely and satisfactorily serve its purpose?
   - Is it a relevant improvement to existing alternatives? Does it suit passengers' needs?
   - Is the entry easy to use for the customer?
   - Does it facilitate processes for the user in comparison to other products/concepts designed for the same purpose?

The number of points that are assigned by a judge to each category should reflect overall satisfaction with the specific category demands.

Contestants can achieve a maximum of 40 points in total. The finalists will be the three entries with the highest average score, which is calculated by dividing the sum of scores by the number of

participating judges. This way, cases of forced abstentions (see above) are taken into account.

At the end of the shortlist evaluation round, three finalists for every category will be announced. When the scores of the third and fourth position are very close together, four finalists can be announced as an exception.

c. Final Viewing

All finalists will be asked to present their submission to the Judging Panel in Hamburg, Germany, on the day before Aircraft Interiors Expo, which is Monday, April 5, 2027.

The finals will take place in a conference room on the site of the show at Hamburg Messe + Congress exhibition campus. The finalists can present their innovations

- in person to the audience in the conference room (max. two speakers).
- at the exhibition booth. This option is available only upon request and for the sole purpose of demonstrating the product live.

All members of the Judging Panel will be invited to participate in the finals. At least one third of the Judging Panel must be present in Hamburg for the final viewings to take place.

After the pitch presentations in each category, the judges present will cast their votes in a confidential online vote. The finalist with the most votes will be declared the winner of the respective category.

Judging Panel members who already had to abstain from voting in the round before will have to abstain in the entire category in the finals.

In the event of a tie in the runoff, the average score from the first evaluation round (when the finalists were determined) will be taken into account, and the candidate with the highest overall average score will be declared the winner.

d. Award Ceremony

Winners will be announced and awarded with the prestigious Crystal Cabin Award trophy at the award gala on Tuesday evening, April 6, 2027 in Hamburg alongside the Aircraft Interiors Expo 2027.

Please note that each winning entry receives only one trophy, which will be presented to the main applicant. Any cooperating partners will receive a digital award certificate.

The winner of the *University* category will additionally receive a prize money of EUR 2,000.

All finalists are invited to attend the event and will receive two complimentary tickets per entry. Additional tickets may be purchased subject to availability.

7) Final Provisions

a. By submitting an entry, applicants acknowledge that they have read and understood these rules and agree to be bound by them.

b. The CCA Association reserves the right to amend these rules at any time, provided that such amendments do not unfairly disadvantage participants.

c. The decisions of the Judging Panel are final, and legal recourse is excluded.

d. Each participant is self-responsible to ensure that the provided content – including AI-generated content – aligns with copyright laws and intellectual property rights.

e. The CCA Association accepts no liability for late, lost, or incomplete entries due to technical or other reasons beyond its control.

f. If any provision of these rules is found to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.