

Online Application

Hotel Innovation Award 2025

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Information for completing the online form

*Please first read the instructions before preparing the necessary documents and then starting the entry process. Once you have registered by entering your name, your email address and address data regarding **the submitting company** in the application tool, you may start with the submission process ("**new entry**" button). Once you have registered, you will receive an **email confirming your registration** and asking you to confirm your email address. You will also receive a link to the application tool, which will allow you to log in there again at any time and to continue your application, as well as to review, edit or print your submissions.*

*Please note that none of the information will be saved unless you click on the "**Next**" button at the bottom of the form pages. For this to work, all boxes in the form that are marked with an * have to be completed. Once you have completed all the boxes, you can go to the overview page of your submission, where you can **send off the final version of your application by clicking on the "Submit" button** . Once you have **sent off the application**, the system will send you an e-mail to the e-mail address that you have provided to confirm that you have submitted your application. The final submission **deadline is 3rd November 2025**. You should expect to take about 45 minutes to enter all the necessary information in the form and upload any additional photographs, videos, presentations, etc. Should you have any questions prior to applying, please contact us at larissa.gruen@196plus.com or awards@196plus.com.*

SECTION 1: General information

1. Eligible projects and selection process

The submitting party can be either a hotel group, a hotel brand or a selected / individual hotel located in Europe. Each party may either submit a universal AI solution/concept which encompasses several or all implemented AI-technologies in the respective property(ies), or one particular AI solution or concept. The finalists and ultimately the winner will be selected in the following three stages:

1. Application process
2. Jury deliberation, decision and nomination by the 196+ forum Vienna jury (beginning of November)
3. Award ceremony (end of November)

2. Application process for the Hotel Innovation Award 2025

The Hotel Innovation Award 2025 focuses on Artificial Intelligence and recognizes AI-solutions and -concepts that demonstrate exceptional advancements and innovative use of AI within the hospitality industry . Any company which has implemented innovative AI-solutions in their hotel(s) may take part. However, the applicant must obtain all necessary permissions from the companies involved in the operation of the hotel, both past and present. The application needs to be submitted to 196+ forum Vienna **by 3rd November 2025**.

3. Nomination by the 196+ forum Vienna jury

The jury will select up to ten nominees and thereof three finalists from among the **completed** applications that have been submitted. The jury will meet in November of the respective year. All nominated applicants will then be immediately informed of the jury's decision. Additional documentation may be needed for the presentation of the nominees

during the 196+ forum Vienna event (e.g. additional photographs, videos, presentations). The organisers will communicate further details to the nominees once the jury has reached its decision.

4. Award ceremony

The award ceremony of the Hotel Innovation Award 2025 will take place during the 196+ forum Vienna event on 24 November 2025. This will be the first time the winning hotel, hotel brand or hotel group is made known. An official representative of each participant that has been shortlisted should attend the 196+ forum Vienna event in order to accept the award in case of winning. All nominated hotels including the three finalists will receive up to two (2) free tickets to participate in 196+ forum Vienna as well as a framed certificate.

5. Your application for the Hotel Innovation Award 2025

Please complete all the fields in the application form below. Boxes marked with * (section 3) are mandatory fields. You will receive a confirmation email permitting you to edit or complete the documents that you have submitted up until the submission deadline.

SECTION 2: Conditions for participation

1. Selection criteria

All hotels, hotel brands and hotel groups in Europe are eligible to take part in the competition. Each hotel, hotel brand or hotel group can only take part in the competition once every year.

2. Authorised number of projects

Each party may either submit one (1) submission presenting all technological solutions / concepts that are implemented either in the whole hotel group, for one or more hotel brands or for selected / individual hotel(s) (= universal) OR a maximum of two (2) individual technological solutions / concepts (=particular). Innovative technology concepts can for example cover the following aspects (non-exhaustive):

- Guest Experience Enhancement
- Operational Efficiency
- Sustainability
- Safety and Security
- Revenue Management
- Marketing and sales
- In-Room Technology
- and others

and include services or applications like (non-exhaustive examples):

- Mobile Apps
- AI and Chatbots
- IoT Devices
- Virtual and Augmented Reality
- Blockchain
- and others

3. Application process

Each participating company must submit a fully-completed application form. If the innovative technological solution / concept by the hotel, hotel brand or hotel group has been planned and realised by more than one company, the company submitting the application form needs to inform the other companies accordingly and obtain from them any permissions that may be required. The application forms should be officially submitted to 196+ forum Vienna by **3rd November 2025**.

4. The duties of the jury and nomination

All completed application documents submitted to 196+ forum Vienna within the above timeframe will be admitted for evaluation by the jury. The jury has the task of selecting up to ten nominees, and thereof three finalists. The decision of the jury will be primarily influenced by a number of different, non-exclusive, criteria with regards to the technological innovation(s) presented by the hotel, hotel brand or hotel group:

- **differentiation & game changing**
- **measurable impact**
- **scalability & economic viability**

Items marked with * in section 3 must be answered completely. Incomplete application documents may be excluded from the application process. The jury reserves the right not to admit to the competition any documents that are incomplete or do not comply with the guidelines. The jury's decision is final and not subject to appeal.

5. Additional material for the final stage of the application

The applications who have been selected for nomination by the jury will be informed in writing. They may need to submit additional material, such as a short description of the concepts in English and/or further photographs or videos of the concept. The nominees will agree to be available for interviews and possibly present their concept on stage as part of the 196+ forum Vienna event.

6. Hotel Innovation Award ceremony 2025

The results of the competition will be announced during the 196+ forum Vienna event on 24th November 2025. At least one official representative of each nominee should take part in the event in order to accept the certificate and, in case of winning, the award. All finalists will receive a framed certification. For the representatives of the nominated hotels, up to two (2) free tickets for the event will be provided.

7. Competition and the jury's decision

No claims may be asserted concerning the application system, the jury's choice of nominees, finalists and the winner, or any other aspects concerning the competition. The companies accept the present conditions of participation by registering for the competition and the Hotel Innovation Award 2025.

8. Use of photographs and project-related information

The organisers are entitled to publish the photographs and videos provided and the following hotel-related information (namely: name of owner, operator, number of rooms) as part of the presentation of the applicants, on the 196plus website, the digital event platform, in press releases, in social media, in trade journals, conference documents (print/digital) or in an event app, as well as during the 196+ forum Vienna conference on 24 November 2025. The submitting company must clarify the use of the copyrights prior to the application, as well as the concomitant labelling. Participation is deemed to

constitute confirmation that the proper picture copyrights have been obtained. 196+ forum Vienna reserves the right to transfer any compensation claims resulting from inadequate labelling of image or video material from the application documents to the participating company. When submitting the image material, please make sure that all images are uploaded as JPG files in print quality (300 dpi) with the **image rights properly marked**.

9. Submitting complete information

All fields marked with * are mandatory and must be completed. An application will be automatically disqualified from the competition if the requested information is not submitted in full. **N.B.:** The provided information is only made available to 196+ forum Vienna and the 196+ forum Vienna jury for evaluating the submitted application. Neither 196+ forum Vienna nor the 196+ forum Vienna jury members will publish them or use them for any other purposes.

Your application is successfully submitted when you have received a confirmation via email.

SECTION 3: Online Application Form

3.1 User Profile*:

Information about the company submitting the application

- Name of company
- Street & no.
- Zip code
- City
- Country
- Contact person for the application
- Email
- Phone
- Function within the context of the hotel (General Manager, Executive Assistant, Marketing, Project Manager, IT Manager, etc.)

3.2 Hotel, hotel brand or hotel group*

- Hotel, hotel brand or hotel group name (Please make sure to spell the name correctly! It will be used for all marketing activities.)
- Category: please select whether you submit a
 - Universal AI solution / concept (valid for the hotel group or a hotel brand, it is not mandatory that the technology is fully implemented in all hotels)
 - Or a particular AI solution / concept (implemented in 1 or more hotels, but not company-wide)
- If you submit a universal AI solution / concept for several hotels, please list in which hotel brand(s) or hotels the AI solution has been implemented with a few details on the respective hotel brand(s) or hotels)
- Street & no.
- Zip code
- City
- Country
- Website

3.3 Suitability to receive the award*

Please describe why your innovative use of Artificial Intelligence should win the award (USP)* | up to 2,000 characters incl. spaces*

3.4 Profile of the hotel, hotel brand or hotel group*

1.1. Hotel group or hotel brand: Associated hotels

Please include a brief overview of each associated hotel to be able to grasp the dimension in the following format: For hotel brand: Name of hotel, city, country, segment (luxury / city / budget / resort / ...), total number of rooms, total number of staff, any relevant details (spa, barrier-free, etc)

For hotel group: each name of hotel brand, number of hotels (in the brand), if possible per country

| up to 2,000 characters incl. spaces*

1.2. Only for Profile of the Hotel

1.2.1. Details on Segment (only hotel)

- City hotel
- Resort hotel
- Budget hotel
- Luxury hotel
- Serviced Apartment
- Other

1.2.2. Official Classification (only hotel)

- Official classification (no star, 1 star, 2 stars, 3 stars, 4 stars, 5 stars, other categories)
- Other

1.3. Rooms (hotel groups and brands only total number, hotels in detail)*

When assigning rooms, please decide on one room category, multiple entries are not possible.

- Number of rooms (total)
 - Single rooms
 - Double rooms
 - Family rooms
 - Suites
 - Of which are Barrier-free rooms
- Room per category (in sqm, from/to) | up to 1,000 characters incl. spaces

1.4. Number of staff (hotel groups and brands only total number, hotels in detail)*

- Full time*
- Part time*
- External staff (cleaning company, etc.)

1.5. Operator* (only for hotels)

1.6. Owner* (only for hotels)

1.8. Supplier of AI-technology*

Please state all suppliers / partners contributing to the implementation of each AI solution or concept which are being described in your application.

3.5 Details of your innovative use of technology *

1. What innovative AI solution(s) or concepts have you implemented in your hotel/hotel brand/hotel group?.*

Max. 3,000 characters incl. Spaces

2. Keywords regarding unique characteristics.

Max. 200 characters incl. spaces

3. In which way can your use of Artificial Intelligence be seen as a lighthouse concept for the industry?*

Max. 2,000 characters incl. spaces

4. What is particularly innovative regarding your AI solution(s)? (In-depth description) *

Max. 3,000 characters incl. spaces

5. What was your motivation to implement this(these) particular AI technology(ies) in your hotel operations?*

Max. 2,000 characters incl. spaces

6. Which impact did the use of this (these) AI solution(s) have on the stakeholders such as employees, environment, and hotel guests?*

Max. 2,000 characters incl. spaces

7. Which financial impact did your use of Artificial Intelligence have?*

Max. 2,000 characters incl. spaces

8. Which additional impact did your AI solution(s) have on the hotel/hotel brand/hotel group?*

Max. 2,000 characters incl. spaces

9. When did you start with the idea of using Artificial Intelligence solution(s) and how long did the implementation take?*

Max. 2,000 characters incl. spaces

10. What were the challenges you had to face when implementing the AI solution(s)?*

Max. 2,000 characters incl. spaces

3.6 Preview images*

Please upload here the three most representative images of the hotel (façade/exterior, public space and room) as JPG files in print quality (300 dpi) with identification of the image rights in the file name. These images will be primarily used in order to present your hotel (trade journals, 196plus website, POS material, etc.)

- Façade / exterior view
- Public space
- Room

3.7 Upload files

Here you have the possibility to upload further pictures, presentations, press releases, advertisements and video clips in a collective folder.

For an overview, which is as complete as possible, we recommend submitting the following material in addition.

When uploading the respective file, please pay attention to the exact indication (e.g. view standard room, view restaurant "name", view lobby). Please note that all images should be submitted as JPG files in print quality (300 dpi) indicating clearly the intellectual property rights of the photographs and videos submitted.

- **Exterior view/façade (1 additional picture, different from the already uploaded pictures)**
- **Public Space (1 additional picture)**
- **Rooms (1 additional picture)**
- Photos or presentation of your innovative use of Artificial Intelligence, can also include How To Guidelines or explanatory documents
- Selected press articles (up to 5 articles)
- Videos, interviews (up to 4 files)

3.8 Submit application

Once you have filled in all mandatory information and submitted your application, you can still edit it until the submission deadline.

You will be informed after the jury meeting beginning of November if your participating hotel, hotel brand or hotel group has been nominated and will be presented at the 196+ forum Vienna 2025.

Please do not hesitate to contact us, if we can be of further assistance.