



2026 STAR AWARDS
CALL FOR
ENTRIES

Deadline: February 4, 2026

FIRST ENTRY IS FREE



PIM STAR AWARDS CALL FOR ENTRIES

www.pimw.org/star-awards/



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QUESTIONS:

If you need any help find a category or have questions on how to fill out the form. Please email Kristin Pilling-Davis & Sadie Johnson at starawards@pimw.org with any questions.

SHARE YOUR NEWS:

After you get the results in February or after the June banquet, Printing Industry Midwest (PIM) wants to see you celebrate your winnings.

Tag us or email us photos! Use the hashtags #PIMStarAwards, #2026StarAwards #print and #PIM in your posts.

- **Facebook**
@PrintingIndustryMW
- **LinkedIn**
@PrintingIndustryMidwest
- **Email pictures to**
starawards@pimw.org

PIM ADDRESS:

8011 34th Ave S., Suite 150,
Bloomington, MN 55425

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

All forms & entries due to PIM's Office by February 4, 2026 at Noon

Printing Industry Midwest (PIM) proudly presents the Call for Entries for the 2026 Star Awards competition; the most prestigious symbol of printing excellence throughout the Midwest! The Star Awards is a powerful promotional tool for PIM members. It demonstrates your award-winning capabilities to customers and tells your employees you are proud of the work they produce.

WHO CAN ENTER?

This competition is open to all PIM members who are currently in good standing and have had a direct role in the production of the printed piece(s) entered. Entries must be created at PIM member company between **January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025**. There is no limit to the number of entries per company. If a piece meets the criteria, it can be entered in more than one category.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SUBMITTING ENTRIES?

- All Best of Category winners will be entered into the national America Print Awards competition for free. PIM will pay for your entry fees.
- Your company will receive increased name recognition.
- Best of Category winners will be announced and promoted in PIM's printed newsletter and in PIM's Print Buyers Guide & Membership Directory.
- Best of Category winners will also be in the running for the People's Choice Award & Best of Show Award, these awards will be announced at the banquet. Best of Category winners will be display at the award banquet. People's Choice voting will take place at the banquet too.
- A press release will be sent to trade publications announcing the winners.

HOW ARE THE ENTRIES JUDGED?

The team of judges includes experts in the graphic arts industry. An entry is judged first on technical expertise and quality of printing; next on design features and overall graphic appeal. Entries with visible technical flaws will be disqualified from the judging process. Please check your samples carefully. Judges will not know which company submitted the entry (except in the case of self-promotion category). PIM reserves the right to re-categorize any entry if it is determined that the entry may be judged more fairly in a different category.

HOW TO ENTER?

Submit **two unmounted** copies for each category you wish to enter. Consider saving extra copies for your company to use in the event your piece wins.

Submissions will NOT be returned after judging.

Fill out the forms on the following pages - one Item Entry Form and I.D. Tag for each piece entered. Attach an I.D. Tag to the back of each entry. Complete one Master Entry Form listing all your submissions.

ENTRY INFORMATION

Deadline: February 4, 2026

Please complete the following steps to enter your printed entries into Printing Industry Midwest's (PIM) Star Awards competition. All forms and items must be submitted to PIM's Office by **12:00 PM (Noon) on February 4, 2026**. Please note, **submissions WILL NOT be returned**. Make sure to keep a few extra samples in the event your entry wins so you can promote it.

1 SELECT YOUR BEST PIECE(S)

Select your best piece(s) to enter that you produced between **January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025**. You will need to send in two unmounted samples of your finished product. PIM will not return your submissions after the competition is complete. Submit **two unmounted** copies for each category you wish to enter.

Remember to enter your pieces honestly. Only enter a piece under a category, if you did the work and had a direct role in the production of the printed piece(s) entered.

2 REVIEW CATEGORY LIST

Next, review the Category List (found on www.pimw.org/star-awards/) for descriptions about where your projects will fit. One entry can be submitted into multiple categories.

3 FILL OUT FORMS:

NEW ONLINE FORM!! COMPLETE ONLINE MASTER ENTRY FORM - www.pimw.org/star-awards/

Complete **one online only** Master Entry Form for all submissions entered. The way you list your "Company Name" and "Entry Title" **must match the Item Entry Form & ID Tags** and how it will be displayed on your awards and in marketing/promotional material. First entry is **FREE**. Each additional entry is \$40.

COMPLETE ITEM ENTRY FORM - Page 4 - Print off Item Entry Forms and send with entries

Complete one Item Entry Form **per entry**. If you are entering a piece in more than one category, complete an Item Entry Form for each category. Photocopy the sheet as necessary for entries and your records.

COMPLETE ID TAGS - Page 5 - Print off ID Tags and send with entries

Complete **three per entry** you submit. Attach one ID Tag to the two pieces required for entry and one to the Item Entry Form. Photocopy the sheet as necessary for entries and your records.

4 SEND IN FORMS & ENTRIES

Once all the forms are filled out and the tags are added to lease mail everything to PIM's office - 8011 34th Ave. S, Suite 150, Bloomington MN 55425 - by **12:00 PM (Noon) on February 4, 2026**. Submissions **WILL NOT** be returned. Please email Kristin and Sadie (starawards@pimw.org) when you mail your entries so we know that they are coming.

5 JUDGING & RESULTS

Judging will take place in February by a team of industry experts. PIM will reach out with the results in March. Awards will be presented at the June banquet. Learn more on **page 3**.

AWARD LEVELS

In March, the person who filled out the Call for Entry forms will be notified of what awards each entry has won. At this time, you will receive an order form from duplicate and customized awards that can be ordered for your staff or customers. As well as a Marketing Celebration Kit to help promote your wins.

All winners will be recognized and top winners will be announced at Printing Industry Midwest's (PIM) 2026 Star Awards Banquet held on **June 18, 2026** at the JW Marriott Minneapolis Mall of America, Bloomington, MN.

Promote and announce your wins in March or wait until after the banquet to announce or do both. Registration for the banquet will open in March on PIM's website at www.pimw.org/events/. It is an honor to receive these awards. Award levels are listed below starting at the highest level that can be awarded.

- **BEST OF SHOW AWARD – Highest Honor**

The Best of Show Award is selected from all Best of Category winning pieces. The winner will receive a large 14" glass award statue. Should judges find more than one entry worthy of the criteria, Best of Show Runner-Up and Best of Show Honorable Mention will be awarded.

- **PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD**

On the night of the Star Awards Banquet, attendees will select one entry to win the People's Choice Award. The winner is picked from all the Best of Category winners. Voting will open during the event Happy Hour from and close right before the dinner starts, from around 4:00 to 6:00 PM. The winner will receive a medium 10" glass award statue.

- **BEST OF CATEGORY AWARD**

The Best of Category is awarded to the most outstanding entry in each category. The entry must be flawless to win. Only one entry per category can win this award or none at all. Winners will receive a glass award statue.

- Best of Show Award and People's Choice Award will be selected from Best of Category winning entries.
- Your winning entry will be on display at the awards banquet and eligibility for the People's Choice Award.
- A photo of your winning piece will be included in the PIM's Print Buyers Guide and PIM's newsletter.
- PIM will pay for all Best of Category winners to be entered into the national America Print Awards.

- **AWARD OF RECOGNITION**

This award is the runner-up for the top honors, Best of Category. There may be several winners in a category or none at all. Winners will receive a personalized framed certificate.

- **CERTIFICATE OF MERIT**

Not all entries will receive Best of Category or Award of Recognition but deserve to be acknowledged for achieving high-quality printing. The judges award a Certificate of Merit to those pieces meeting this requirement. There may be several winners in a category or none at all. Winners will receive a personalized certificate in a folder.

ITEM ENTRY FORM

Deadline: February 4, 2026

Complete one Item Entry Form per entry. If you are entering a piece in more than one category, complete an Item Entry Form for each category. Photocopy the sheet as necessary for entries and your records. Submissions will not be returned. Please notify PIM once you send your entries.

***IMPORTANT:** The way you list your "Company Name" and "Entry Title" **must match the Master Online Form** and is how it will be displayed on your awards and in marketing/promotional material. **Please write clearly!**

SUBMITTED BY:

*Company Name _____

ENTRY INFORMATION:

*Entry Title _____

Category Name _____ Letter _____ Number _____

If the category **requires** a description describing the production process used (read Category List carefully, not all require this) or if you want the judges to know anything special about your entry. Please write it here or attach a separate piece of paper.

REQUIRED STEP: What did your company do in the production process?

To help the judges better understand how your entry was created, please answer the following questions. This information will not be shared with the public, only judges will see this. Did you do the...

Design? **Yes or No** If no, who helped? _____

Prepress? **Yes or No** If no, who helped? _____

Binder? **Yes or No** If no, who helped? _____

Finisher? **Yes or No** If no, who helped? _____

Printer? **Yes or No** If no, who helped? _____

Other _____

ID TAGS

Deadline: February 4, 2026

Complete and cut out three ID Tags for each entry. Attach a completed ID tag to each entry (two pieces required for each entry) and attach one copy to the Item Entry Form (page 4) for the corresponding entry. **Please write clearly!**

2026 STAR AWARDS ID TAG



Tape 1 copy of this tag to the back of each entry you submit & 1 copy to the corresponding Item Entry Form.

Entry Title _____

Category Name _____

Category: Letter _____ Number _____

2026 STAR AWARDS ID TAG



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