



EAC Regional Quality Awards 2026

RAISING STANDARDS: DRIVING REGIONAL EXCELLENCE & GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

BE RECOGNISED AS A CHAMPION OF QUALITY IN EAST AFRICA

APPLICATION PROCESS NOW OPEN

The 2026 EAC Regional Quality Awards, the region's highest recognition for excellence in quality performance, were formally announced during the 28th Meeting of the East African Standards Committee (EASC) on 13 May 2026 in Arusha, Tanzania.

The EAC Regional Quality Awards competition is an annual event implemented in accordance with the Awards Framework, which was approved by the East African Standards Committee (EASC) during its April 2022 meeting in Arusha, Tanzania. The Quality Awards are dedicated to promoting a culture of quality, and inspiring excellence by recognising outstanding achievements by EAC enterprises in quality management, across all sectors of the economy within the EAC region. The Awards are open to both Large Enterprises (LEs) and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in both service and manufacturing sectors, for recognition of the winners at the EAC level.

Purpose & Objectives of the EAC Regional Quality Awards:

The EAC Regional Quality Awards aim to foster a strong culture of quality across the East African Community by encouraging enterprises to adopt standards and quality management practices. This helps improve competitiveness, facilitate trade, and support regional integration.

The Awards pursue the following objectives:

- Promote the adoption of quality management practices and a culture of excellence among EAC enterprises
- Recognise organisations that demonstrate strong performance in applying international standards
- Encourage SMEs and large enterprises to pursue continuous improvement and innovation
- Raise awareness of the value and benefits of quality-related activities
- Strengthen regional collaboration and experience-sharing on quality, competitiveness, and market access
- Align with and support national quality award initiatives across Partner States

Benefits of Participation:

Participating in the EAC Regional Quality Awards offers several benefits:

- Regional and national recognition
- Increased trust and credibility with customers
- Positive media exposure
- Enhanced staff pride and organisational morale
- Opportunities to access new business and markets
- National-level winners automatically qualify to compete in the EAC Regional Quality Awards.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be a legally registered enterprise operating in an EAC Partner State
- Implement a management system or hold a valid product certification mark
- Comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements
- Where applicable, operate as a clearly defined and autonomous business unit with independent management and financial accounts

Award Categories

In 2026, participants will be recognised across four award categories, with separate awards for Large Enterprises (LEs), Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):

1. EAC Company of the Year (LE)
2. EAC Company of the Year (SME)
3. EAC Product of the Year (LE)
4. EAC Product of the Year (SME)
5. EAC Exporter of the Year, Agro-Processing Sector (LE)
6. EAC Exporter of the Year, Agro-Processing Sector (SME)
7. EAC Service of the Year – Public Sector
8. EAC Service of the Year – Private Sector (LE)
9. EAC Service of the Year – Private Sector (SME)

Application Process

The competition follows a two-stage process:

- STEP 1: Submit your application to the National Standards Body (NSB) in your country to participate in the national-level competition.
- STEP 2: Winners at the national level in each Partner State will be nominated by their respective NSBs to compete in the EAC Regional Quality Awards.

Additional information regarding how to apply for the awards can be obtained from the respective NSBs in each of the Partner States.

Important Dates

- April 2026 – Launch of National-Level Competitions
- By 30 June 2026 – Deadline for Submission of Entries at National Level
- By 30 August 2026 – Selection of National Winners
- By 30 August 2026 – National Winners Submitted as Nominees for Regional Competition
- By 30 September 2026 – Selection of Regional Winners
- October 2026 – Regional Awards Ceremony, Kigali, Rwanda

Awards Criteria

The 2026 EAC Regional Quality Awards are based on the seven Quality Management Principles, which promote a systems-based approach to achieving consistent quality and sustained organisational success.

These principles form the foundation of the ISO 9001 quality management system and can be applied by any organisation seeking to strengthen its processes and drive continuous improvement.

The Seven Quality Management Principles are:

- Customer focus
- Leadership
- Engagement of people
- Process approach
- Improvement
- Evidence-based decision making
- Relationship management

Terms and Conditions of Entry

- The closing date for entries follows the official competition timeline listed above.
- All submitted applications and supporting materials become the property of the EAC Secretariat and will not be returned.

- Applicants should avoid including confidential or price-sensitive information, as confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- The decision of the Regional Quality Awards Committee (RQAC) is final. The Committee reserves the right to determine the winners at its sole discretion and is under no obligation to disclose evaluation scores or details.

Awards Ceremony

Winners of the 2026 EAC Regional Quality Awards will be honoured at a formal ceremony to be held in October 2026 in Kigali, Rwanda.

The ceremony will take place alongside a major regional MSME platform, providing an opportunity to showcase quality excellence and inspire more SMEs to adopt quality management best practices that enhance competitiveness and drive sustainable growth.

Call for Applications

Interested enterprises can obtain the Application Guidelines for the 2026 EAC Regional Quality Awards from the websites of their respective National Standards Bodies (NSBs) or by contacting the designated national focal points listed below.

Burundi

Mr. Eric Ruracenyeka
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Kenya

Mr. George Mungai
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Rwanda

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