



# NaaS Excellence Awards 2025

## Submission Guide

### Overview

The MEF 2025 NaaS Excellence Awards celebrate the industry's most innovative and impactful achievements in shaping the global Network-as-a-Service (NaaS) ecosystem.

These awards recognize standout contributions that advance automated NaaS solutions, accelerate service automation, enhance secure network offerings, and promote standardized service delivery.

Open to the global industry—including service providers, technology providers, cloud providers, and system integrators—the awards welcome entries from both MEF members and non-members.

MEF defines NaaS as the combination of on-demand connectivity, application assurance, cybersecurity, and multi-cloud networking delivered within a standards-based, automated ecosystem. NaaS solutions exhibit a core set of attributes—on-demand, observable, manageable, programmable, flexible, modular, and secure—and operate within a common service, automation, and cybersecurity framework that emphasizes standardized, certified services and LSO APIs wherever possible.

# Award Categories

## Service Provider Awards

### Best NaaS Vision - Service Provider

Recognizes a bold and innovative vision for delivering NaaS in a plug-and-play, standards-based automated ecosystem. This includes a clear strategy and roadmap for offering essential and extended NaaS service features and integrating modular underlay and overlay components into customized solutions. The award highlights strong alignment with MEF's NaaS vision, including a commitment to LSO-enabled transactions with ecosystem partners, and creative marketing that reinforces the transition toward cloud-like, on-demand services. Solutions do not need to be fully in production at the time of submission.

### NaaS Service Provider of the Year - Global, Regional

Celebrates the service provider delivering the most advanced and comprehensive NaaS solution--seamlessly integrating on-demand connectivity, application assurance, cybersecurity, and multi-cloud networking. The winner demonstrates strong alignment with MEF's NaaS framework, supporting both essential and extended NaaS service features through modular components and LSO-enabled automated transactions with enterprise customers and ecosystem partners. The award also recognizes leadership in ecosystem collaboration and commitment to leveraging standards-based, certified services and APIs wherever possible.

### Best NaaS Enterprise Customer Implementation

Recognizes the most compelling NaaS deployment delivered to an enterprise customer. This award highlights real-world adoption of NaaS solutions that demonstrate innovation, strong execution, and measurable business value. Entries should showcase how MEF-standardized technologies, APIs, or services were used to meet specific enterprise requirements and deliver tangible operational impact. Solutions may span industries such as finance, healthcare, retail, or manufacturing, and can reflect deployments across any global region.

<b>SASE Service Provider of the Year - Global, Regional</b>	<p>Honors the provider delivering the most advanced SASE solution, unifying SD-WAN, Zero Trust, and Security Service Edge (SSE) into a seamless offering. The award emphasizes customer value, scalability, and technical innovation--including robust cyber defense, centralized policy enforcement, and optimized application performance across multi-cloud environments. Special consideration is given to providers who leverage MEF-certified SD-WAN, ZT, and SSE technologies as the foundation of their SASE solution.</p>
<b>SD-WAN Service Provider of the Year - Global, Regional</b>	<p>Recognizes excellence in delivering SD-WAN services that are secure, application-aware, and policy-driven. The award emphasizes dynamic path selection, intelligent traffic management, performance-based application routing, and a consistent user experience across diverse network environments. Special consideration is given to providers who leverage MEF-certified SD-WAN technologies as the foundation of their SD-WAN solution.</p>
<b>Carrier Ethernet Innovation</b>	<p>Recognizes the industry-leading service provider that offers on-demand MEF 3.0 CE services that can be readily integrated into the plug-and-play NaaS networking ecosystem. Special consideration is given to providers who offer LSO-enabled CE, including automated quoting, ordering, etc.</p>
<b>Service Automation Leadership - Global, Regional</b>	<p>Celebrates leadership in LSO API-enabled automation of business and operational interactions with buyer or seller partners. Recognizes the service provider that has the largest number of current and planned implementations with partners in support of one or more service/product payloads (Carrier Ethernet, DIA, etc.)</p>

## Technology Provider Awards

### Best NaaS Vision - Technology Provider

Recognizes a technology provider that plays a pivotal role in enabling NaaS through a forward-thinking approach and strategic alignment with MEF's NaaS framework. This includes demonstrated product innovation, current and/or planned real-world implementations, and active engagement across the ecosystem. The award also highlights contributions to industry education and marketing that advance the adoption of standards-based, automated, and modular NaaS solutions.

### LSO Solution Provider of the Year

Acknowledges the highest number of MEF LSO API implementations in commercial production between July 2024 and June 2025. Emphasizes support for real-world automation between providers.

### Leadership in Customer Experience Automation

Recognizes a technology provider that enables service providers to transform customer engagement through MEF-aligned business automation. This includes support for LSO business APIs that automate functions such as address validation, quoting, product ordering, and more between buyers and sellers—accelerating time-to-revenue and enhancing user experience throughout the buying journey.

### Leadership in Network & Service Automation

Honors a technology provider delivering advanced automation capabilities that improve operational efficiency, agility, and service assurance for providers. The award highlights support for MEF LSO operational APIs that enable such functions as automated service ordering, service inventory, and performance monitoring in multi-partner environments.

### SASE Technology Provider of the Year

Honors the technology provider delivering the most advanced SASE solution, unifying SD-WAN, Zero Trust, and Security Service Edge (SSE) into a seamless, integrated offering. The award emphasizes customer value, scalability, technical innovation, and real-world deployments. Special consideration is given to technology providers offering MEF-certified SD-WAN, ZT, and SSE technologies that align with industry standards and accelerate secure digital transformation.

### SD-WAN Technology Provider of the Year

Recognizes a technology provider that empowers customers with secure, application-aware, and policy-driven SD-WAN solutions. The award highlights advanced capabilities such as dynamic path selection,

<b>Year</b>	intelligent traffic management, performance-based application routing, and a consistent user experience across diverse network environments. Special consideration is given to technology providers offering MEF-certified SD-WAN technologies with validated application performance, application classification/prioritization accuracy, and application assurance and protection.
<b>SSE Technology Provider of the Year</b>	Recognizes a technology provider that empowers customers with advanced Security Service Edge (SSE) capabilities, including cloud-delivered security functions such as secure web gateway, firewall-as-a-service, CASB, DLP, and zero trust network access. The award highlights support for centralized policy enforcement, threat protection, and secure access across hybrid and multi-cloud environments. Special consideration is given to technology providers who provide MEF certified SSE technologies with validated protection against real-world threats, including exploits, evasions, and malware (proven capabilities that go beyond technology provider data sheets).
<b>Zero Trust Technology Provider of the Year</b>	Recognizes a technology provider that empowers customers with Zero Trust solutions that deliver secure, identity-driven access across distributed environments. Special consideration is given to technology providers offering MEF-certified Zero Trust technologies with the validated ability to deliver on promised components and capabilities of a Zero Trust architecture approaches, including identity, device, and location context awareness, application/security policy granularity, SSL/TLS functionality and cipher support, and identity provider (IdP) and SSO integration.
<b>Naas Ecosystem Collaboration</b>	Honors a group of two or more companies that have demonstrated exceptional collaboration in delivering a NaaS solution. This award recognizes joint efforts that span service providers, technology providers, or ecosystem partners working together to deliver a cohesive, standards-based NaaS experience. The winner will showcase a real-world deployment or pilot that integrates MEF-standardized services, LSO APIs, or certifications—demonstrating interoperability, innovation, and meaningful business or operational impact. Special recognition is given to solutions that highlight the power of federation, partner-to-partner automation, or cross-domain orchestration.

## Professional Awards

### Industry Exec of the Year

Recognizes the industry executive who has exhibited exceptional leadership (vision, strategy, execution, collaboration, etc.) during the past year in driving industry transformation toward NaaS across an ecosystem of automated networks.

### Michael Howard Industry Impact Award

This memorial award recognizes an outstanding individual who has made a demonstratively positive impact in building a sense of community, sharing knowledge, and encouraging collaboration to create a better together industry. Examples of positive impact include a friendly, supportive approach to professional relationships, leadership in helping industry leaders tackle difficult challenges, meaningful contributions to hot topic projects, demonstrated willingness to engage with and mentor colleagues, and a positive attitude that inspires others.

### NaaS Professional of the Year

Spotlights an outstanding MEF member professional who has demonstrated transformative leadership and innovation in advancing NaaS. This award honors an individual whose career achievements, pioneering projects, thought leadership, and community contributions have significantly impacted the evolution and adoption of NaaS across the industry.

## Key Dates

Awards Open: 1 May 2025

Deadline for Entries: 26 June 2025

Finalists Announced: 2 September 2025

Winners Announced: Global NaaS Event Awards Gala, 11 November 2025

## Entry Requirements

Submissions should be no more than 750 words in total and must address the three core areas below. Be concise, highlight tangible results or future impact, and use supporting visuals where helpful.

Entrants are strongly encouraged to include evidence of success, such as customer or partner quotes and adoption statistics. Named or anonymous quotes that illustrate operational, efficiency, or experiential impact are especially valuable. Testimonials are welcome even for early-stage offerings.

## Global and Regional Award Category Requirements

**Global Awards:** Service provider must offer the service across two or more major regions (Asia Pacific, Latin America, North America, Europe, Middle East/Africa).

**Regional Awards:** Service providers can compete in the region where their headquarters is based or where the majority of their revenue is generated. (Example: A Miami-based provider serving Latin America should compete in the LATAM category.)

### 1. Solution Overview

Describe the business or technical challenge or opportunity, the goals of your initiative, and how it addresses market or customer needs.

### 2. Benefit and Impact

Highlight measurable outcomes, including improvements in operations, customer experience, service performance, or market reach.

### 3. Ecosystem Engagement - Use of MEF and Industry Standards, APIs, or Certifications

Describe how your solution leverages MEF standards, APIs, certifications, or frameworks to enable automation, interoperability, or improved performance. If applicable, highlight the use of additional recognized industry frameworks (e.g., TM Forum, CAMARA, GSMA, ETSI) and explain their role in the solution's success.

## Supporting Materials (Optional)

You may submit up to five slides (PowerPoint or PDF) containing visuals such as solution diagrams, KPIs, customer testimonials, or before/after comparisons (no more than five pages total).

## Judging Criteria

Judges will evaluate entries based on the following three criteria.



## Solution Overview

How clearly does the submission define the challenge or opportunity, the goals, and the solution's relevance to market or customer needs?

## Benefit and Impact

How strong and measurable are the results? Are the outcomes compelling, well-supported, and aligned with business or customer success?

## Ecosystem Engagement

How effectively does the solution leverage MEF standards or other recognized frameworks to deliver automation, interoperability, or service performance improvements?

## Tips for Successful Entries

1. Be clear and concise: Focus on key achievements and measurable outcomes.
2. Use customer testimonials and data: Support your story with real-world endorsements and KPIs.
3. Avoid marketing jargon: Judges value substance over hype.
4. Tell a compelling story: Frame your submission as a journey.
5. Emphasize use of MEF-standardized technologies, APIs, certifications, or interoperability work.

## Submitting an Entry

All entries must be submitted through the online awards portal [www.Awards.MEF.net](http://www.Awards.MEF.net).

Once submitted, entrants will receive a confirmation email.

For any questions about the awards or submission process, contact [awards@mef.net](mailto:awards@mef.net).

## Frequently Asked Questions



## **Who can enter the NaaS Excellence Awards?**

The awards are open to the global industry – including service providers, technology providers, cloud providers, and system integrators – whether or not they are MEF members.

## **How do I enter the Awards?**

Entries must be submitted via the online entry form (available from 1 May - 26 June). Each entrant will need to create a profile. Once your profile has been created, the submission tab will appear at the top of the entry form homepage.

## **Will I be sent an acknowledgment of my entry?**

Once you have completed your entry form(s), you will receive confirmation via e-mail. Please contact [awards@mef.net](mailto:awards@mef.net) if you have any questions concerning your entry.

## **How much does it cost to enter?**

There is no fee to submit an entry.

## **Can I submit multiple entries?**

Yes. Companies may submit entries in multiple award categories. Each entry must be specific to the category entered and adhere to the entry requirements of that award category.

## **Can the same project be submitted in more than one category?**

Yes, provided the entry is tailored to match the intent of each category.

## **Does the submission need to demonstrate use of MEF standards?**

Use of MEF standards, APIs, certifications, or frameworks is strongly encouraged. Judges will look for clear alignment with MEF's work—such as adoption of LSO APIs, MEF-certified services, and participation in MEF initiatives. Use of additional industry frameworks (e.g., TM Forum, CAMARA, GSMA, ETSI) may also be noted and is welcomed where relevant.

## **Will MEF produce case studies for finalists?**

Finalists will be invited to submit an optional short video (up to 5 minutes) offering additional context or highlighting their project in more detail. Videos submitted by 16 September 2025 may be featured on the MEF Awards website and considered during judging.

Winners will also have the opportunity to collaborate with MEF on a written case study to be published online and promoted across MEF channels.

## **How will the Awards be promoted?**

Award winners will be honored live at the Global NaaS Event Awards Gala on 11 November 2025. Winners and finalists will receive promotion through MEF's website, social media, and industry outreach.

MEF will issue a press release recognizing all winners. Participating organizations are encouraged to promote their achievement among their channels.

### **What file types are accepted for supporting materials?**

PowerPoint, PDF, weblinks are acceptable.

### **Will finalists and winners receive promotion?**

Yes. Finalists and winners will be promoted through MEF announcements, social media, and recognition at the Global NaaS Event Awards Gala.

### **Who are the judges?**

Entries will be reviewed by an independent panel of industry experts, analysts, and MEF leadership.

### **When will I be notified?**

Finalists will be announced on 2 September 2025. Winners will be revealed at the Global NaaS Event on 11 November 2025.

**More Questions? Contact us.**



Questions? Reach the team at [awards@mef.net](mailto:awards@mef.net)



View past winners and find nomination details at [mef.net/awards](https://mef.net/awards)



Stay up to date by following MEF on LinkedIn or the hashtag [#NaaSExcellence2025](https://twitter.com/NaaSExcellence2025)