

# Zinnov Awards 2026 – AI Innovation Vanguard (Individual Contributor)

## SECTION A – Personal & Role Details

### Best Practices

- Keep all details **accurate, current, and consistent** with internal and external profiles.
- Describe your role in **1–2 crisp lines**, focusing exclusively on the **AI, ML, data, automation, or innovation** components of your mandate.
- Avoid generic managerial responsibilities; make your AI ownership explicit (e.g., “AI Platform Delivery,” “Model Engineering,” “ML Systems,” “Innovation Charter”).

### Zinnov-Tip:

*Position your role in the context of the **capability you drive**, not the designation you hold.*

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## SECTION B – Leadership Track vs. IC Track

The track selection is critical — evaluators apply **different scoring lenses** based on this choice. Select the track that most accurately reflects your **primary mode of contribution**, not your title.

### Selecting the Appropriate Track

#### IC Track – Select if you:

- Individually build, architect, design, or optimize **AI/ML systems**.
- Demonstrate deep technical innovation through **hands-on model development**.
- Contribute via **experimentation, engineering excellence, and solution design**.
- Do not carry a people-management responsibility as your primary role.

### Zinnov-Tip:

*Choose based on **actual contribution**, not hierarchy.*

## How Responses Should Differ by Track

### IC Track – Your responses should reflect:

- Technical craftsmanship: architecture, model design, experimentation, and pipelines.
- Innovation depth: novel techniques, domain fine-tuning, frameworks authored.
- Complexity management: solving hard engineering challenges.
- Individual ownership of critical modules or IP.

### Zinnov-Tip:

*IC = Craft + Innovation Depth*

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## SECTION C – Nomination Justification

This section carries the most weight. Responses must be structured, concise, & metric led.

### Problem Statement

Write a 2–3-line articulation covering:

- Context: Where this problem sat (business unit/function).
- Pain Point: The inefficiency, risk, or opportunity gap.
- Scale: Quantify the size of the challenge.

### Zinnov-example:

*“Manual underwriting processes across two regions resulted in 7–10 day cycle times, ~15% revenue leakage, and inconsistent decision quality”*

### AI/ML Innovation Description (Core Narrative of Your Nomination)

This is the centrepiece of the form. Your response must demonstrate novelty, rigor, and applied innovation.

Include:

- What was built (solution overview).
- Why it is innovative (the differentiator).
- AI/ML techniques (LLMs, RAG pipelines, GNNs, generative modelling, etc.).
- Architecture and data approach (summarized, not exhaustive).
- Scale of deployment (data volumes, user groups, markets).
- Timeline and velocity.

### IC Track:

Detail model architectures, pipelines, fine-tuning strategies, evaluation frameworks, and experimentation.

## Individual Contribution

The Excel form evaluates your personal contribution, not the team’s.

### IC Track:

Show:

- Model development ownership.
- Pipeline design, features engineered, methods implemented.
- Performance optimization, evaluation metrics, experimentation rigor.
- Patents, frameworks, reusable accelerators authored.

### Zinnov-Tip:

*Use sharp bullets beginning with high-impact verbs (Architected, Led, Designed, Engineered, Defined).*

## Tangible Impact (Mandatory Quantification)

Impact must be:

- Measurable
- Time-bound
- Directly attributable

**Impact categories expected in this form:**

- Efficiency (cycle time reduction, automation levels)
- Accuracy or precision improvements
- Cost optimization
- Revenue influence
- Engineering velocity
- Risk or compliance uplift
- Employee or customer experience

**Zinnov-Style Format:**

*“Reduced manual review effort by 58% within two quarters, enabling a 2.5x improvement in throughput.”*

**Innovation Differentiator**

This field requires a crisp, evidence-backed articulation of what sets your innovation apart.

**Examples:**

- First-of-its-kind application in your domain
- Novel architecture or evaluation method
- Creation of reusable IP or accelerators
- Domain-specialized LLM adaptation
- Deployment under unique constraints (scale, compliance, security)

**IC:** Differentiator = Technical novelty + invention depth

**SECTION D – Evidence & Supporting Artefacts**

The Excel form expects clean, self-contained, verifiable links. **Recommended artefacts:**

- Architecture diagrams
- Demo videos
- Dashboard screenshots
- Model evaluation reports
- Patent disclosures
- Blogs or press mentions supporting impact

**Zinnov-Tip:**

*Attach only high-quality artefacts that directly validate your claims — not broad folders.*

**SECTION E – Future Potential & Scalability**

Keep this section strategic, directional, and realistic.

**Include:**

- Near-term roadmap (6–12 months)
- Opportunities for cross-functional or multi-geo adoption
- Scalability across platforms or business lines
- Evolution of the model/architecture
- Reusability as enterprise-wide capability

**IC:**

Focus on next-gen technical enhancements, model evolution, efficiency, or modularization

## FINAL SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

- Track selected appropriately (Leadership vs IC)
- Responses follow Zinnov's recommended flow:
  - Problem → Innovation → Individual Contribution → Impact → Evidence
- All metrics quantified with timeframes
- No generic claims: every statement is factual and specific
- Individual contribution differentiated from team contribution
- No duplication across sections
- All links validated
- Language is concise, consulting-grade, and outcome-oriented
- Differentiator clearly articulated
- Future potential realistic and aligned to organizational context