

Zinnov Awards 2026 – People and Culture Excellence

1. Purpose of the Form

The **Zinnov Talent Engagement Award Form** recognizes organizations that have successfully engaged their workforce and built a distinctive employee value proposition. It assesses the depth and effectiveness of talent strategies and programs, evaluating how organizations design and implement initiatives that enhance employee experience. The assessment focuses on the measurable impact of talent management, compensation, and benefits practices in driving engagement, retention, and organizational performance.

2. How to Approach the Form

When filling the form:

- **Tell a story** – Each initiative should have a beginning (the challenge or insight), a journey (the intervention), and an outcome (the result)
- **Avoid generic answers** – Use specific data, examples, or narratives
- **Link to the bigger picture** – Show how each initiative contributes to engagement, culture, or business performance
- **Reflect intentionality** – Make it clear that initiatives are not ad hoc, but part of a designed people strategy.

3. Focus Areas by Pillar

Pillar 1: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB)

- Clearly articulate how the initiative aligns with the company's global DEI vision or overall business strategy
- Specify who sponsors the initiative and how accountability is ensured through leadership reviews, KPIs, or governance forums
- Highlight how DEIB principles are embedded across core people processes — hiring, promotions, pay equity, learning, and leadership behaviors
- Demonstrate the measurable impact of the initiative through data on representation, engagement, retention, or innovation outcomes
- Showcase how the initiative has evolved over time, scaled across teams or geographies, and contributed to lasting cultural or organizational change

Pillar 2: Flexibility

- Explain whether there is an enterprise-wide framework or guiding policy that defines flexibility
- Describe how this framework ensures consistency while allowing for local or functional customization
- Highlight the measurable business or engagement impact of flexibility
- Include data or evidence showing how flexible work has influenced performance, innovation, or inclusion
- Illustrate how the organization is evolving its flexibility model for the AI era

Pillar 3: Holistic Wellbeing

- Explain how wellbeing initiatives holistically address all four dimensions — physical, mental, emotional, and financial
- Describe how wellbeing is integrated into leadership reviews, manager KPIs, or culture audits to ensure accountability and sustained focus.
- Provide employee participation or utilization rates across various wellbeing programs, highlighting adoption trends and demographic reach.
- Showcase any digital or AI-led health tools adopted for proactive wellbeing monitoring
- Demonstrate measurable impact through outcomes such as reduced absenteeism, improved engagement, or enhanced employee satisfaction scores

Pillar 4: Learning & Career Development (L&D)

- Explain how learning programs are mapped to role-based skill pathways or integrated into broader career pathing frameworks
- Highlight how these programs have contributed to building future leaders, improving internal mobility, or strengthening succession pipelines.
- Provide data on the percentage of employees who completed structured learning programs or earned certifications in the past year, segmented by role, level, or function where possible.
- Demonstrate how learning outcomes are tracked and linked to business capabilities, innovation, or performance improvements.
- Showcase examples of how personalized or AI-driven learning solutions are enabling scalable, continuous development across the organization.

Pillar 5: Recognition

- Outline the different types of recognition available — such as spot awards, peer-to-peer acknowledgments, leadership-driven recognition, innovation awards, or milestone celebrations
- Explain how the organization ensures equitable access to recognition across all roles, levels, functions, and geographies, preventing bias or exclusion
- Describe how recognition is enabled — whether through digital platforms, internal apps, or integration with performance management and feedback systems
- Provide evidence of how recognition initiatives have positively influenced employee motivation, engagement, or cultural belonging, supported by data, testimonials, or survey results
- Highlight any evolution in the recognition approach, such as using AI-driven insights or real-time analytics to make recognition more timely, transparent, and personalized

Pillar 6: Benefits Personalized to Generations

- Describe whether the organization offers a personalized or flexible benefits plan that allows employees to choose options based on their life stage, priorities, or preferences.
- Explain how the benefits portfolio caters to diverse employee needs across generations, geographies, and family structures.
- Highlight how your benefits programs compare to industry best practices — referencing benchmarking studies, employee surveys, or external recognition.
- Outline how you measure the ROI or continued relevance of benefits programs through metrics such as utilization rates, employee satisfaction, retention impact, or cost-effectiveness.
- Showcase examples of how benefits have evolved based on workforce insights or changing employee expectations, ensuring they remain meaningful and competitive.

Pillar 7: Technology Enablement

- List the key tools and platforms used across the employee lifecycle
- Specify the percentage of employees actively using these tools, along with adoption trends across geographies, functions, or levels
- Explain how employee satisfaction or user experience with these tools is tracked
- Describe how HR data from these tools is being leveraged for predictive insights
- Highlight how technology is enabling a more personalized and human-centered employee experience while driving efficiency and better decision-making

4. Judging Criteria (Broad Guidelines, Specific Criteria across Pillars are mentioned in the form)

- **Clarity & Relevance:** Responses should directly address each question, clearly linking initiatives to engagement and experience outcomes.
- **Design & Intentionality:** Show that initiatives are strategically designed, leadership-backed, and aligned to business or culture goals.
- **Impact Orientation:** Highlight measurable outcomes — participation rates, engagement scores, retention impact, or ROI.
- **Innovation & Evolution:** Demonstrate creativity, use of AI/tech, and how programs have evolved or scaled over time.
- **Evidence Quality:** Support claims with data, dashboards, testimonials, or recognition.

5. Shortlist Pitch

- **Hook (10s):** One-liner capturing the initiative and its impact.
- **Opening (30s):** Context — the challenge or insight that led to the initiative.
- **Core Story (60s):** Describe the design, execution, & differentiators of the initiative.
- **Impact (30s):** Present measurable results - engagement, retention, or culture shift.
- **Close (30s):** What's next — how the initiative will evolve or scale.