



DNFI Innovation in Natural Fibres Award 2026

The deadline for award submissions is
30th September 2026

5 August 2026
For Immediate Release

The Discover Natural Fibres Initiative ([DNFI.org](https://dnfi.org)) was created in January 2010 as an outgrowth of the International Year of Natural Fibres 2009, declared by the United Nations General Assembly. DNFI is an organization that works to further the interests of natural fibres by serving as a platform for information exchange and by raising awareness of the benefits of natural fibre industries to the world economy, environment and consumers.

The previous award winners provide a very good reflection of developments in natural fibre research over the past 10 years:

2017–2018: Process innovations and recycling (natural fibre composites, WECYCLED®)

2019–2021: New sustainable applications as substitutes for plastics and petrochemical materials (PVC substitutes, bioplastics, vehicle insulation)

2022–2025: High-performance materials and new sources of natural fibres (PureCell®, The Regrow, PalmFil®, banana fibres), as well as circular and bio-based material systems



Celebrating Breakthroughs in Natural Fibre Innovation – DNFI Award 2026

The DNFI Innovation in Natural Fibres Award 2026 shines a spotlight on groundbreaking developments in the world of natural fibres. Its mission: to highlight innovative achievements, amplify the work of leading researchers, and create new pathways for commercial impact. From sustainability to smart materials, the award honors those pushing the boundaries of what's possible with nature's finest resources.

Proudly sponsored by the International Textile Manufacturers Federation ([ITMF.org](https://itmf.org)), this prestigious award is now open for submissions.

Entries will be accepted until 30 September 2026, with the winner revealed in October. The award ceremony will take place in January 2027 in Frankfurt, Germany, offering the winner well-deserved recognition on an international stage.

Judging Procedures:

A sub-committee of DNFI members from production and academia will choose the award winner. The results of the judging shall be final, and there will be no option to challenge their decision.

Awards will be judged in three categories:

- Innovative products/components or applications
- Innovative processes/procedures
- Research and science

Evaluation criteria are:

- Outstanding scientific work and technical feasibility
- Level of improvement of the innovation over existing products or processes
- Degree to which the innovative product or process has been implemented
- Potential for opening new markets or sectors for products made of natural fibres
- Potential for displacement of manmade fibres with natural fibres

Deadline:

Closing date for applications: 30th September 2026

Application Templates:

Forms for the application are available on the DNFI web site. <https://dnfi.org/award>

Intellectual Property Rights:

DNFI claims no rights and makes no effort to gain advantage of any kind over the intellectual property represented in applications for the annual DNFI Award for Innovation in Natural Fibres.

Previous winners:

A list of all previous winners is available on the DNFI web site. <https://dnfi.org/category/award>

Are you ready to inspire the future of natural fibres?



DNFI INNOVATION IN NATURAL FIBRES AWARD



CELEBRATING A DECADE OF INNOVATION. SHAPING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE.

Since 2017, the DNFI Innovation in Natural Fibres Award has recognized outstanding innovations that unlock the potential of natural fibres for a more sustainable world. Ten years of pioneering ideas. Global collaborations. Real impact.



Global participation
from all continents



Researchers, companies,
start-ups and institutions
driving change

OUR AWARD WINNERS OVER THE YEARS

2017



Marie-Isabel Popzyk & Dr. Roland Klein



Germany

RWTH Aachen University / Fraunhofer LBF

Reduction of the moisture absorption of natural fibers and production of no-twist yarns for use in structural components

2018



Ernst Grimmelt



Germany

Velener Textil GmbH

WECYCLED® – Real added value for weaving mills and our partners in the textile chain

2019



Dr. Debasish Das & Dr. Subhas Ghosh



India

Government of India / University of Calcutta

Biodegradable cotton-jute fabric with waterproof coating as a substitute for PVC-coated polyester

2020



Dr. Noureddine Abidi



USA

Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute, Texas Tech University

Production of bioplastic films from low micronaire cotton fibers

2021



Dr. Maryam Naebe



Australia

Institute for Frontier Materials, Deakin University

Light-weight nonwoven insulation material made from virgin and recycled wool fibres for automotive applications

2022



Dr. Frank Hermanutz & Dr. Tanja Schneck



Germany

DITF Denkendorf

PureCell – Natural fiber-reinforced composites based on pure cellulose

2023



Amelie Pörschmann



Germany

Hochschule Hof

The Regrow – biologisch abbaubarer gewebter Pflanztopf aus Naturfasern

2024



Dr. Mohamad Midani



USA / Egypt

North Carolina State University / Valorizen LLC

PalmFil® – The World's First Date Palm Fibres

2025



Mohammad Faraz



Pakistan

BUIITEMS University, Quetta

Sustainable production of high-performance banana- and cotton-fibre reinforced epoxy composites using chemical-free, solar-powered fibre extraction



BE PART OF THE NEXT 10 YEARS OF INNOVATION!

Share your innovation. Make an impact.

Submit your project for the DNFI Innovation in Natural Fibres Award 2026.
Together, let's build a sustainable future with natural fibres.



Submission Deadline:
30 SEPTEMBER 2026



www.dnfi.org



DNFI – Discover Natural Fibres Initiative



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NATURAL FIBRES. ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES. A BETTER FUTURE.