I-Zone

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the relationship between the Innovation Zone (I-Zone) and Display Week?
A: The I-Zone was created by the Society for Information Display (SID) more than a decade ago to provide a dedicated venue for emerging display technologies from new companies and university research labs at Display Week, SID's annual symposium, seminar, and exhibition. I-Zone takes place in its own area on the show floor, within the Display Week Exhibition.

Q: What is the difference between I-Zone and the Display Week Exhibition?
A: Display Week exhibitors pay for booth space to show their latest technology and products to the display industry. I-Zone exhibitors must apply to I-Zone. If their application is accepted by the committee, they get to exhibit in I-Zone free of charge. In general, Display Week exhibitors are companies with more established products and technologies, whereas I-Zone exhibitors are start-ups and research labs that have technology to show, and aren't ready to become full exhibitors.

Last but not least, the I-Zone is where the very newest technology is exhibited; this is often technology that isn't used for commercial products yet, but may form the basis for products of the future. The I-Zone is one of the most popular parts of Display Week because attendees know they will see technology demos there that haven't been shown anyplace else.

Q: What is the I-Zone Committee?
A: The I-Zone Committee comprises a dozen or more SID members from a wide variety of academic and industrial backgrounds. Committee members take the responsibility of deciding who is eligible for I-Zone very seriously and spend many hours deliberating over each year's applicants. A current list of members appears in the I-Zone Exhibit Guide that is published each year for Display Week.

Q: How are I-Zone exhibitors chosen?
A: The I-Zone Committee reviews each application carefully and votes for their top choices. In some cases, applicants will receive questions via email and/or participate in a video interview in order to provide additional information to the committee.

Q: How do I know whether my new technology is right for I-Zone?
A: Your technology might be right for the I-Zone if it:
- Represents a truly novel development
- Is not on the market yet or was not on the market prior to the year of the upcoming Display Week
- Can be represented with a physical, working demo at Display Week

Q: What is the Best Prototype Award?
A: Each year at Display Week, the members of the I-Zone Committee vote on the most outstanding technology in the I-Zone. This award is announced Wednesday morning at Display Week, on the show floor. The committee also bestows several Honoree awards.

Q: Where can I find examples of past I-Zone Best Prototype winners?
A: These can be found at https://www.sid.org/Awards/I-Zone

Q: How many applications can one company submit?
A: The committee recommends one application for one technology or product per company or institution, except in the case of academic research facilities, in which it is possible to have different teams working on completely different projects.

Q: My company participated in I-Zone in a previous year. Can we apply again?
A: Generally, no. SID encourages past I-Zone participants to consider exhibiting in a booth on the main floor of Display Week.

Q: Our company was turned down for I-Zone. Can I find out why?
A: The committee isn't usually able to provide individual feedback but here are the main reasons why an I-Zone application would be turned down:
- Incomplete application
- Technology is in a nascent stage, with no proof-of-concept
- Technology is sound, but does not represent a truly novel advancement
- Applicant is already exhibiting at Display Week or has exhibited in the past (indicating the company has moved past the start-up stage)
- Applicant has already exhibited in I-Zone and/or does not have brand-new technology to exhibit
- Product has been on the market prior to the year of the upcoming Display Week
- Applicant is a known, well-established company
- Applicant is unable to describe to the committee how the technology actually works
- Proposed demo consists only of white papers, posters, etc., with no working physical prototype

Q: Our company is already exhibiting at Display Week. May we also be in I-Zone in order to maximize exposure?
A: No. I-Zone is reserved for emerging technology from start-ups and institutions that might not otherwise have the ability to exhibit.

Q: What materials do I need to submit for my application?
A: The materials as described in the submission portal (link at www.sid.org/awards/I-Zone) are:
- A short (100 or fewer words) description of the technology you intend to show and how it is better than related incumbent technology
- A one-page in-depth summary of the technology
- An explanation of why the technology is best suited to the I-Zone (rather than the exhibition or symposium)
- Links to relevant videos or photos
- A brief logistical description of your demo -- what will it look like? Will there be displays, circuit boards, etc.?

Q: Is a physical prototype/demo required to be considered for I-Zone application?
A: We strongly encourage your submission to include a description of the physical prototype/demo. If your nomination is selected, the prototype/demo will be showcased in the I-Zone during Display Week. If, however, a physical prototype/demo cannot be provided/described at the time of the application (but will be ready by the show in May), do provide an explanation in the application and the committee will consider exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

Q: We developed the technology in conjunction with someone else. If we win the award, can we add another company or name later?

A: Applicants are strongly encouraged to identify any collaborators or additional companies in the original nomination. The committee may not be able to add collaborators or additional contributors after the original submission. Most awards have been given to a single affiliation.

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