

37th
EDITION

OCTAS 2024

BY Réseau
Action TI

OCTAS CONTEST 2024
37th EDITION

CONTEST RULES



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INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONTEST

1. ABOUT THE OCTAS CONTEST

Presented annually since 1987 by Réseau Action TI, the OCTAS contest is a unique opportunity to recognize excellence in information technology (IT). Réseau Action TI pays tribute to individuals, businesses and organizations for their creativity, dynamism and exceptional contribution to the technology industry's growth.

Over the years, the OCTAS Contest has enabled many winners to achieve unparalleled visibility and recognition through this distinctive brand. Obtaining an OCTAS has important repercussions, both in Quebec and nationally and internationally. Since its creation, this Contest has given many Quebec companies remarkable visibility and growth.

During its annual awards evening, Réseau Action TI presents the OCTAS trophies to the winners of the various categories, chosen by the members of juries made up of representatives of the technology sector. In addition, the OCTAS of Excellence, the highest honour awarded by Réseau Action TI, is awarded to a winner chosen from among all the winners in all categories.

On average, 500 IT community members attend the OCTAS Gala every year, formerly known as the OCTAS Gala. The 2024 edition will take place in May. Artisans who have worked on the most remarkable projects of the year 2023, will be rewarded at this prestigious evening focused on innovation.

2. ABOUT RÉSEAU ACTION TI

For more than 40 years, Réseau Action TI has brought together and mobilized professionals from the information technology industry. Today, with nearly 10,000 members and clients, it is the largest network of people working in this industry in Quebec.

Made up mostly of information technology professionals and managers, Réseau Action TI creates opportunities for people to come together and helps improve knowledge and skills. It underlines the quality of the achievements and contributes to the valorization of IT.

3. CONTEST FORMAT

a) Free entry submission

Réseau Action TI does not charge a fee for submission to the OCTAS Contest, regardless of the category selected. In return, each finalist must delegate a representative to attend the OCTAS Night.

b) Category definition

To put innovation at the forefront, the categories are associated with the business line of the project carried out by the organizations that submit applications to the OCTAS Contest. The 2024 Contest has eleven categories for which a definition and examples are provided in the Categories section:

1. Human capital
2. Culture and society
3. Entertainment
4. Innovation
5. Video games & electronic sports
6. Research
7. Robotics
8. Responsible digital solution
9. Digital transformation
10. Data valorization and artificial intelligence
11. Emerging Talents— University

The jury may award more than one OCTAS in each category.

Two **Youth in IT** Awards will also be awarded to high school and college students, as well as the OCTAS **Français dans les TI**. Details on the selection of winners for these categories are provided below.

c) Specific categories of the projects submitted

Projects may be of any type, but each must have one or more of these characteristics:

- > Improves knowledge or organizational performance
- > Develops the skills and productivity of employees, customers or partners
- > Has a significant impact on society in its cultural, educational, media or entertainment dimensions (e.g. video games)
- > Improves the quality of life, well-being or integration of individuals into society
- > Distinguishes itself by the integration of web technologies to optimize transactional processes with customers, suppliers or partners and thus increase the productivity of the organization
- > Allows an organization to exceptionally renew its organizational processes while considering the needs of employees, customers, citizens or businesses
- > Brings together or integrates in an innovative way the information made

- available by distributed smart objects (Internet of Things)
- > Uses the ability of a functional unit to perform functions typically associated with human intelligence, such as reasoning and learning
 - > Constitutes an application solution designed by development (internal or customized), deployment or integration of a software package (ERP, CRM, SCM, artificial intelligence, BI, etc.) OR the use and deployment of free software or components thereof
 - > Is a particularly efficient use of business intelligence technologies, particularly in the context of the use of big data
 - > Is based on a mobile platform

4. JURY

First, the members of the OCTAS committee analyze the files according to their classification at the time of submission, decide on the categories for which the prizes will be awarded and assign the files in each category.

Jury's Favorite Award

Of all the applications received, the jury will vote among all the applications submitted; the organization that gets the most votes is awarded the Jury's Favorite award at the Grande soirée des OCTAS.

The jury then evaluates all the applications received and determines the finalists. Determining the number of finalists in each category is at the sole discretion of the first jury. **This year's finalists will be announced on April 25, 2024.** No explanation will be provided following the jury's decision.

Finally, a second evaluation of the finalists' files will be conducted, and the following will be selected:

- > The winners, meaning the files that will win an OCTAS in each of the categories;
- > The OCTAS of Excellence, among the winners in all categories. This OCTAS represents the highest distinction awarded annually by Réseau Action TI.

OCTAS of Excellence

All the winners as well as the OCTAS of Excellence winner will be announced at the OCTAS ceremony.

Conflict of interest and confidentiality

Jury members must withdraw from the assessment of a category if they find themselves in a conflict or apparent conflict of interest.

The selection process for the finalists and winners of the Contest is confidential. Only the auditor, the General Manager of the Réseau, the Contest Project Manager and the members of the juries have access to the contestants' files. All members of the jury are required to sign a confidentiality agreement, as well as to destroy all documentation provided to them, upon completion of the evaluation work.

The names of the jury members remain confidential throughout the file analysis process until the OCTAS ceremony.

5. EXTERNAL AUDITOR

Compliance with the rules of the Contest and the compilation of the results of the OCTAS juries are placed under the supervision of an independent specialized firm.

The Contest Auditor is appointed by the Board of Directors of Réseau Action TI. He ensures compliance with the rules of the Contest, attends the work and deliberations of the juries, then makes the final compilation of the results, which he then gives to Réseau Action TI.

6. HELP WHEN SUBMITTING YOUR FILE

To remain impartial, Réseau Action TI does not offer assistance in writing an application for the OCTAS Contest. Contestants seeking a mentor can submit a request at octas@actionti.com.

7. QUESTIONS REGARDING THE CATEGORIES

For questions about the evaluation criteria and eligible categories, please contact octas@actionti.com

8. ENTRY FORMS

This year, the registration form and the application form will be made via Réseau Action TI's website. [Octas 2024 | Réseau Action TI](#) The entire application process will be done online, to allow for adequate support.

Your contact information may be requested to allow you to receive support from a jury member as part of a sponsorship program.

9. USE OF OCTAS TRADEMARKS

Finalists and winners of the OCTAS Contest are encouraged to use the OCTAS logo in any advertising related to them, in accordance with the criteria for use issued by Réseau Action TI. Appropriate visuals will be made available.

10. OCTAS VIDEO MONTAGE

Réseau Action TI produces a video montage for each of the finalists, notably for the OCTAS ceremony. Contestants by default allow the Réseau to use the information entered and identified in the submission form and are subject to being made public and may be disseminated through written or audiovisual means.

Point of contacts are encouraged to provide quality graphics and visuals to allow not only the jury to properly assess the files, but also to allow the Réseau to accurately communicate the value of their file in their various communications about the Contest and during the OCTAS ceremony.

Contestants may be asked for additional photos or videos to further explain their project. The quality of the visual assets provided will be reflected in the videos produced.

11. IMPORTANT DATES

December 11, 2023 2024 OCTAS Contest Launch
and opening of the online application period

**March 28, 2024,
17h** End of online application period for regular
applications

**March 29 – April 4,
2024** Verification by the auditor

**5 April – April 15,
2024** Evaluation by the members of the jury

April 19, 2024 Deliberation of the members of the jury

April 24, 2024 Deliberation for the French Prize in IT

April 2024 Deliberation for the Emerging Talents award

April 25, 2024: Announcement of the finalists

**April 25 to May 17
2024:** Public's favorite prize vote

May 30, 2024: OCTAS ceremony

CONTEST RULES

1. DEFINITIONS

ACHIEVEMENT: A set or part of a set of creative, management or communication work applied to information technology (IT). An achievement must not be a new version of a product that has already been installed or marketed, unless a major change from the original product can be clearly demonstrated (subject to Section 4).

HOLDER: Organization that owns and holds the rights (intellectual property) and title to an achievement. Any organization that has legal rights.

ORGANIZATION: Refers to any private, public, para-public or non-profit organization with an office in Quebec.

POINT OF CONTACT: A person authorized by their organization to submit an application to the OCTAS Contest and to whom one may refer following the submission of applications (audit committee, additional material, etc.) for all questions.

FINALIST: An organization whose case is selected by the first jury in its category to be part of the list of cases from which a winner will be chosen. Finalists will be announced through a press release and Réseau Action TI publications on April 29, 2024.

WINNER: An organization whose application, previously selected as a finalist in its category, is identified by the second jury as the winner of an OCTAS prize in its category. The winners are announced at the OCTAS ceremony.

2. INSTITUTION

Organizations with an office in Quebec since at least January 1, 2023, are eligible for the 2024 OCTAS Contest.

3. ENTRY SUBMISSION

The evaluation criteria, additional explanations and rules of the Contest can be downloaded from the Réseau Action TI website, in the Events/ OCTAS section.

Electronic nomination forms must be completed on Octas 2024 | Réseau Action TI, at the designated location, no later than Thursday, March 28, 2024, at 5 p.m. The electronic nomination forms provided by the Réseau Action TI must be duly completed for each of the registered achievements.

4. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

For all categories, with the exception of disruptive innovation projects, the accomplishments submitted must have been completed by January 31, 2024, meaning that the project has been deployed in production mode and can be measured/estimated at 9 on the TRL/NMT scale (Technology Readiness Level/ *Niveau de maturite technologique*, an internationally recognized measurement.) The project must be operational. For example, if promotional or training portions are in progress after January 31, 2024, but the technology stream is operational and ready for use, then the project is considered complete and, therefore, eligible for the Contest.

It should be noted that the project cannot have been submitted in a previous edition of the OCTAS, regardless of the period of production and whether it was a finalist or not.

For disruptive innovation projects, the submitted project or initiative is not required to be completed by January 31, 2024. It is rather required that the firm or organization submitting the project demonstrates that, as of January 31, 2024, the level of technological maturity of the innovation within the project is measured/estimated at at least 6 on the TRL/NMT scale.

5. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

An organization may only submit the achievement(s) for which it holds the intellectual property. The authorisations required, for projects resulting from active collaboration between several organizations, must have been obtained beforehand. In addition, where an achievement is the result of a partnership in which several organizations share risks and benefits, OCTAS may be awarded to all partners.

Contestants must enter, in the appropriate space of the form, the name of the company carrying the project as well as that of its collaborators.

6. PRESENTATION WITH A SERVICE PROVIDER

If an accomplishment has been carried out and implemented in collaboration with a service provider under the terms of a contract, the accomplishment must be submitted by the holder, in collaboration with the service provider. However, under no circumstances can the performance be presented by the service company.

7. INSUFFICIENT NUMBER OF ENTRIES IN A CATEGORY

A category may be cancelled if the organizing committee determines that there are not at least three projects that apply to it. In this case, the audit committee may, in agreement with the contestant(s) concerned, transfer the file(s) to another relevant category.

8. NUMBER OF ENTRIES SUBMITTED

An organization may a maximum of two (2) files. Each achievement will be classified into a single category.

9. ATTENDANCE OF THE FINALISTS AT THE OCTAS CEREMONY

Réseau Action TI requires that each finalist delegates at least two representatives to attend the OCTAS ceremony. The ceremony rewards teams for their work on the winning project, so it is important that the team who worked on the project can be present to collect their prize, if necessary.

10. INFORMATION AND FILES

To be successful, a file must be accurate in all its aspects and meet all the requirements. No items other than those requested will be considered in the assessment of the application. Contestants are asked **not to include documents other than those required**. (Promotional items, annual reports, newspaper extracts, etc., will be rejected without notice. Attachments must be objective and not based on opinion.)

The file may include up to eight (8) illustrations, graphs, tables or links (URLs) to complete the information in the appendix. As for the attached files, each of these elements must constitute a separate file of a maximum of 10 MB (thus, a maximum of eight [8] files of 10 MB each). These files should only be in PDF, JPG, or GIF.

The description of the achievement in the application form must clearly indicate the references to these files (included in the number of words allowed), and it is recommended to use the same naming convention in the text to identify the illustrations and the files (for example: ACTIONTI_fig1.jpg, ACTIONTIONNetwork2.pdf, etc.). The URLs should be referenced in the detailed description of the achievement and point to information with a dynamic character, such as a video, presentation or demonstration. These videos or demonstrations must be short (1 to 2 minutes each), otherwise, they will be removed from the material submitted to the juries without notice. URLs should not redirect to a Web folder requiring privileged access.

The contestant has the responsibility to demonstrate the proper functioning of the produced achievement. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to include an Internet link to the submitted project. In all cases, the contestant will be required to provide the appropriate information and terms of access, in complete confidentiality.

High-resolution logos in JPEG, PNG or vector format of the company owner and collaborator will be requested.

11. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications may be submitted in English or French, as desired. Although we encourage using French, a file will not be penalized if submitted in English. However, your application's public portion (short description) must be written in French to respect the language of Réseau Action TI, if published.

The jury members are particularly interested in hearing about the tangible improvements your achievement has made to your organization's productivity and performance and its innovative nature. **It is therefore essential to explain how your project stands out.**

The jury will pay particular attention to the project's innovative aspect, within its category and according to its type. Innovation can be reflected through information management concepts or strategies. It can also be reflected in the impact of the solution or project on the culture (technological, social, organizational) or the practices of the company or organization that receives it. Innovation may involve the development of new technologies or methods or significant improvements in applying existing technologies.

Main evaluation criteria:

- > **Clarity and relevance of project objectives;**
- > **Scope of achievement relative to the size of the organization** (complexity, issues, risks and challenges);
- > **Actual benefits achieved, tangible or intangible, based on measurable indicators** (productivity gains, increased sales or revenues, reduced operating costs, etc.) or demonstrable;
- > **Impact on the target audience** (change in habits, satisfaction index, customer retention, knowledge acquisition, etc.) **and on the organization** (collaboration index, efficiency, knowledge transfer);
- > **Concepts, methods and tools used**, including project management approach (effectiveness, efficiency, innovation);

- > **Innovative use of technology or incremental innovation supported by the project;**
- > **Potential scope of the project** (with other comparable organizations, internationally, etc.).

For applications presenting a breakthrough innovation, certain additional criteria apply. Please see the section specifically describing disruptive innovation, in the section *Project implementation period*.

12. ENTRY VALIDATION

The audit committee ensures that the files submitted comply with the regulations, that they comply with the period of performance and the spirit of the Contest, that the required documents are submitted, that the file meets the criteria of the category, etc.

The contestant has 48 hours following a telephone message or email from the audit committee to provide the requested information. Any contestant who does not provide the details required by the committee at the end of this period will be disqualified, and the file will not be sent to the jury.

13. RESPECT OF CRITERIA

If the projects submitted in a category do not meet the criteria determined by these regulations, the jury, after notifying the audit committee, may decide not to select any finalists in this category and move these projects to another category deemed relevant. Jury members are therefore not required to nominate a finalist in a given category.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding the requirements of the project categories and/or type(s).

14. INFORMATION CONFIDENTIALITY

In the sections of the application form identified as "public" information, the contestant agrees in advance that this information may be made available to the public by the Réseau Action TI and its partners.

15. REJECTION OF AN ENTRY

The jury reserves the right to refuse any case whose authenticity is questioned.

16. DEROGATION

Any request for derogation from these rules will be submitted to the auditor for analysis and decision, after consultation with the management of the Réseau Action TI and the head of the jury.

17. IMPLICIT ACCEPTANCE OF CONTEST RULES

The submission of an application to the OCTAS is equivalent to full agreement and acceptance of the Contest Rules.

18. JURY DECISION

The participants in the OCTAS Contest recognize that the jury's decision is final and without appeal.

19. CANCELLATION

In the event of circumstances beyond its control, Réseau Action TI reserves the right to terminate or cancel the Contest at any time without notice.

20. COMPLIANCE AUDIT

In order to ensure the compliance of the applications submitted, the Réseau Action TI reserves the right to carry out audits on an indefinite number of projects, throughout the process of examination of the applications by the jury.

CATEGORIES

Contestants are invited to submit their general application by selecting the category(s) that apply. A project may be submitted in up to (two) 2 categories. It is important to clearly describe the project so that the members of the organizing committee can properly classify it. The jury will tell the prizes by category following the selection of the projects.

1. Human capital
2. Culture and society
3. Entertainment
4. Innovation
5. Video games & electronic sports
6. Research
7. Robotics
8. Responsible digital solution
9. Digital transformation
10. Data valorization and artificial intelligence
11. Emerging Talents— University
12. *Emerging Talents— High School and college (Cannot submit directly)*
13. *Français dans les TI (Cannot submit directly)*

The winning organizations in each category will have made remarkable use of the potential of information technology in order to stand out in a field, whether it be for their products, services, reputation, productivity or know-how.do or know them. They will have had a significant impact and demonstrated their relevance to their employees, customers, partners, the community and society.

If the number of applications warrants, the Audit Committee may subdivide any categories by applying additional criteria to reflect the reality of the contestants more accurately. In this case, more than one OCTAS may be assigned in this category.

The choice of the category that the participant will have made is subject to change after the event committee evaluates the project. No changes will be made without consultation and notification.

Réseau Action TI remains available to answer your questions regarding the category descriptions and specific requirements for each category. If you have specific questions about this, you can contact the Réseau Action TI using the information provided at the end of the document.

1. HUMAN CAPITAL

Projects aimed at increasing or highlighting all the skills, talents, qualifications and experiences accumulated by a person or group and which partly determine their ability to work or produce for themselves or for others.

2. CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Projects focused on increasing access or promoting existing or new services for all targeted communities or groups.

3. ENTERTAINMENT

Creative projects focused on the development of a digital entertainment solution offering entertaining and innovative experiences.

4. INNOVATION

Projects focused on creating or implementing an organizational innovation (technological or non-technological) related to a product or service and replacing a technology or process within the company or sector with a strong innovative impact for the business field or business category.

5. VIDEO GAMES & ELECTRONIC SPORTS

Projects focused on creating a video or virtual gaming solution by an organization or individual.

6. RESEARCH

Research projects focused on digital technologies, their impacts, their benefits, their evolution or their use.

7. ROBOTICS

Projects focused on creating a digital solution or application whose objective is to robotize certain stages of production for an organization.

8. RESPONSIBLE DIGITAL SOLUTION

Projects focused on creating a digital solution or application aimed at reducing an organization's or individual's environmental impact.

9. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Projects focused on integrating digital technology into several aspects of the business involving fundamental changes in technology, culture, processes and value creation.

10. DATA VALORIZATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Projects focused on creating value through better data or artificial intelligence use by an organization or an individual.

11. EMERGING TALENTS — UNIVERSITY

This category recognizes a project **carried out by university students** highlighting the use of technology. The project stands out for its ingenuity, utility and innovative aspect.

Specific requirements for Emerging Talent - University category

The project must be completed **before March 2024**.

Projects submitted must include:

- > A description of the student achievement;
- > A description of the composition of the student team and the contribution of each team member, if applicable;
- > Information pertaining to the scope of the achievement and its actual or potential impact;
- > A description of the impact of the project presented on the training of the contestants themselves, on their learning experience or on the organization for which the project was carried out;
- > Information on the nature of the achievement's contribution to the advancement and transfer of knowledge.

Réseau Action TI requires a letter of attestation from the educational institution confirming the student(s) full-time enrollment at the time of the project or an official transcript. This attestation must be uploaded (appended) in PDF format with the electronic application form, together with the illustrations and graphics.

12. EMERGING TALENTS — HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

This category recognizes the IT achievement of a high school student and that of a college student presented in the regional finals of the [Hydro-Québec Science Expo Contest](#) of the Réseau Technoscience. As a partner, the Réseau Action TI is a national award donor.

Contestants for Youth in IT Award categories must have submitted, in the context of the Regional Science Fairs, an information technology project that meets the criteria established by the Réseau Technosciences for this contest.

Students who have completed the selected projects must fill out a form for the Réseau Action TI jury in order to be nominated for an OCTAS prize. The latter then convenes a special jury determining the submitted projects' winner. The winner is presented with the Youth in IT OCTAS at the OCTAS ceremony.

Visit the Science Fair website for more information on this contest www.exposciences.qc.ca.

13. OTHER CATEGORIES

The OCTAS Contest engages with partners to promote information technology and digital technology in specific areas. The prizes awarded for these categories do not require any application in the formal framework of the OCTAS Contest. Please refer to the category descriptions below for further details on eligibility.

Français dans les TI

A prize will be awarded to the project by the Réseau Action TI, which will be particularly distinguished for the use of French during the development of the product, as in the final result.

A question specific to this category is included in the general form. The answer to this question is optional, but all contest participants can answer it. Only contestants who have completed this section of the form will be nominated for the Français dans les TI award.

A special jury will select the winning project; this committee is composed of linguists and a representative of the Réseau Action TI.

If, among the eligible files, none qualify to receive a prize, the jury members may decide not to award the French OCTAS in IT at the present edition of the OCTAS.

OCTAS OF EXCELLENCE

The OCTAS of Excellence is the highest honour awarded annually by the Réseau Action TI, in recognition of the exceptional quality of an achievement.

No submissions are required for the OCTAS of Excellence. The winner of this OCTAS is selected by the jury, amongst all the winners of the Contest. The scope and potential of the project beyond IT, its current and future impact, as well as its innovative nature, guide the jury in awarding this award.

QUESTIONS?

If this document does not answer all of your questions, please visit the OCTAS Contest webpage at [Octas 2024 | Réseau Action TI](#) for more information.

You will find additional information, and Internet links to the archives of 2017 to 2023 (video clips of the finalists, photo albums and descriptions of the finalist projects).

Please feel free to contact us by email at octas@actionti.com