



35th anniversary DAME Design Awards nominates 74 products

A total of 153 products originating from 30 countries across the globe sets yet another new record for this globally recognised benchmark of marine equipment design quality. Winners will be announced during the Official Opening on the first day of the show, 17 November.

The 2026 DAME Design Awards international jury comprises 11 leading design and user experts, offering a wide spectrum of knowledge and perspectives covering key leisure marine and superyacht activities. After initial scrutiny of online entries over three weeks, the jury gathered in a purpose-created facility at RAI Amsterdam for hands-on assessment and detailed discussions spanning two intensive days. This year we welcomed a new guest jury member, experienced sailor and Yachting World Test Editor, Toby Hodges. Our guest student jury member for the year is Leonie von Baeyer, who studies technical design at Deggendorf Institute of Technology in Germany.

From the 153 entries received, the jury named 74 nominated products – the highest number of products shortlisted for 23 years. All 74 will be displayed in the DAME Design Awards showcase at Metstrade, located in the Elicium (Hall 13) right in the heart of the show. To view this year's nominated products please visit damedesignawards.com/nominees

Nominee companies awarded access to Marine Impact Lab

New for this year, all DAME Design Awards nominated companies are being invited to free fast track sustainability training on the eve of Metstrade. Participants in the 16 November afternoon programme at RAI Amsterdam, run by the Marine Impact Lab and co-hosted by The Sustainability Toolbox and MarineShift 360, will learn how to better assess, strengthen, and communicate the sustainability value of their products. This invaluable session will include workshops, expert guidance and industry networking. Read about the Marine Impact Lab and apply for tickets to access this event yourself here metstrade.com/programme/the-marine-impact-lab

Impressive breadth and quality of entries

Commenting on this year's DAME Design Awards jury chair, Andre Hoek, says: "the breadth and quality of submitted products for this 35th anniversary edition provided a stimulating challenge to choose between many close entries. The level of design and development required to achieve nomination rose. Even so, when we counted the results after two long days, we realised it was the highest number of products passed through to the final stages of judging for more than two decades.

"Due to the high level of entries, the jury room occupied more space than ever before. It was filled with evidence of several strong industry priorities for smart product development, including sustainability, electrification, automation, AI and the networking of all things. It was equally encouraging to see strong entries that had taken an item of equipment, accepted as a norm for many years, and turned it into something much better. The hunger to improve the design of everything we rely on to ultimately create brilliant experiences afloat is vital for the marine industry today. The jury congratulates all entrants for their efforts and thanks Metstrade for its support and organisation of this influential competition since 1991. We look forward to revealing the names of our winners in November."

Metstrade Exhibition Manager, Tessa Meijer adds: "Just when we thought we had hit a milestone in terms of DAME participation last year, so we see the numbers rise again for our 35th anniversary. The active participation of so many Metstrade exhibitors in the DAME Design Awards is appreciated by our whole team and we're very much looking forward to greeting nominees at Metstrade's Official Opening on 17 November. We'll also reveal another first – our impressive DAME Design Awards hall of fame which will featuring all 35 overall winners from 1991-2025 in the main corridor that runs from entrance C up to Hall 13. A high percentage of those successful products, or their closely related replacements, are still exhibited at Metstrade to this day. A testament to the companies who created them and to the DAME in encouraging the whole industry to keep pushing its design efforts over the years."

DAME winners to be announced at Official Opening

The winners of each of the DAME's eight categories are selected from the nominated products. The overall DAME Design Award winner is then assessed from this exclusive group. The jury will also award a series of Special Mentions (highly commended entries) and, at its discretion, may name an Environmental Design Award winner.

All nominees and the much-anticipated names of the winners will be announced at the Metstrade Official Opening in the Harbour 8 dedicated events facility near entrance F, following a keynote speech by Bruno Thivoyon, Chief Executive Officer of Groupe Beneteau. This event is open to exhibitors, Metstrade Young Professionals, press, VIPs and speakers.

Details of nominees and winners will be included within the Jury Report which you'll find on the DAME Awards website following the announcements – damedesignawards.com.

This year's DAME Design Awards entry fees will be donated to the Royal Netherlands Sea Rescue Institution (KNRM), one of the world's oldest and most respected voluntary rescue organisations.

At 11:00 on 17 November the Metstrade Theatre will host a DAME Design Awards 35th anniversary panel on the topic of 'Great design is more than skin deep', with participants including past DAME Chair and renowned designer Tony Castro, current jury member Arjen Jansen from TUDelft and the DAME non-voting secretary, Kim Hollamby. See metstrade.com/programme for more details.

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Editor's Notes

About the DAME Design Awards

Metstrade's DAME Design Awards is a much coveted globally recognised benchmark and endorsement of design quality in small boat, yacht and superyacht equipment. Juries of renowned designers and end user specialists have scrutinised more than 4000 products since 1991. Nearly half that number were commended with a nomination, from which 200 DAME Category Winners were named and then considered for the ultimate annual accolade of DAME Overall Winner.

Metstrade fully funds the DAME Design Award's costs as an important investment in the industry it serves. All entry fees are donated to charity, resulting in more than €330,000 of grant funding being awarded to 16 deserving causes since 2008.

The products chosen as the best of the best will be drawn from the 74 nominated entries chosen by the DAME Jury this year, shortlisted from 153 submissions. This impressive field of entries, spanning many technologies and applications, is the highest number of nominees selected for 23 years. Browse all 74 by visiting the DAME Design Awards exhibition in hall 13.

All winners will be drawn from the 74 nominees and announced at the Metstrade Official Opening on 17 November at 0800-0930. You can subsequently read the full results and comments from the Jury at damedesignawards.com

DAME Jury 2026

This year's DAME Jury is made up of 11 individuals:

- Andre Hoek (chair), naval architect and yacht designer, founder of Hoek Design and Hoek Brokerage, The Netherlands
- Leonie von Baeyer, guest student jury member for 2026, third-year technical design student at the Deggendorf Institute of Technology
- Davide Cipriani, boat and industrial designer, president of yacht design at Centrostiledesign, Italy
- Rory Coase, yacht designer, Coase Design, Norway

- Patrick Hemp, technical director, International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA), South Africa
- Toby Hodges, experienced sailor and test editor at Yachting World, UK
- Arjen Jansen, senior lecturer, School for Industrial Design Engineering at TUDelft, The Netherlands
- Amy Munroe, sustainability consultant, Foxall Munro, UK
- Alexandra Foineau Oakley, yacht surveyor, France
- Klaus Roeder, yacht designer and surveyor, Germany.
- Ben Stein, editor of Panbo marine electronics hub, USA

The DAME Jury is supported by a non-voting secretary, Kim Hollamby of Hollamby Partnership, UK

About this year's DAME Design Awards charity

All entry fees for the 2026 DAME Design Awards will be donated to the Royal Netherlands Sea Rescue Institution (KNRM), one of the world's oldest and most respected voluntary rescue organisations. Founded in 1824, the KNRM's mission is to save lives and prevent accidents at sea and on the Dutch inland waterways network. Its professionally trained volunteers are available 24/7 year-round providing help free of charge in all weather conditions.

The organisation operates 75 lifeboats from 45 stations across the Netherlands and is supported by more than 1,600 volunteers. In 2025, the KNRM responded to 2,178 emergency calls, assisting 3,592 people and rescuing 161 animals. In addition, the KNRM Help Assistance Centre handled 1,038 requests for non-emergency assistance, while the Radio Medical Service provided 846 medical consultations to vessels at sea.

Read more about the work of the KNRM at www.knrm.nl/

About Metstrade

Metstrade is the world's largest trade show for the global leisure marine industry, bringing together yacht builders, naval architects, refit specialists, distributors, and marine equipment manufacturers. Organised by RAI Amsterdam in partnership with ICOMIA, Metstrade 2026 will take place from 17-19 November at RAI Amsterdam.