GROUNDBREAKERS 100

The Groundbreakers 100 recognises the 100 people shaping the next decade of construction, infrastructure, energy, mobility, climate adaptation, urban development, AI applied to the built environment and new industrial ecosystems. The objective is not to recognise today's most powerful individuals, but those actively building tomorrow's world. The inaugural cohort will be revealed at Leonard's 10th anniversary in Paris on 25 February, 2027.

Eligibility

To be considered, a candidate must:

- be an individual (organisations and teams are not eligible)
- be working today in at least one of the focus areas in Leonard's brief: construction, infrastructure, energy, mobility, climate adaptation, urban development, AI applied to the built environment, or new industrial ecosystems
- have a public, verifiable track record of the work they are nominated for
- be based anywhere in the world (the list is global)
- for Young Leaders Under 30, be aged 29 or under on the date the list is revealed in mid-February 2027

The following are not eligible: the Selection Committee, Sifted staff and Leonard employees, to protect the list's independence. Founders of Leonard-backed startups and VINCI employees remain eligible and are assessed in exactly the same way as everyone else. Each honouree appears in one category only, and co-founders are assessed separately. There is no fee to apply or to be included.

How the 100 are selected

Sifted reviews every entry against five criteria: impact, innovation, scalability, future orientation and ecosystem leadership. More information on each of these can be found below. A shortlist of 200 is then drawn from these applications and Sifted's own research. An independent committee of experts assesses the shortlist against the same criteria and votes for 10 people in each category.

Categories

The 100 are split across the ten categories, with 10 honourees in each. Within each category, honourees are listed alphabetically.

Category	Who it covers
Entrepreneurs	Founders building the next generation of construction, infrastructure, mobility, climate-tech and energy businesses
Investors	Venture capitalists, infrastructure fund managers, corporate venture leaders and capital allocators accelerating innovation
Corporate Leaders	Executives driving transformation within major industrial, infrastructure and energy organisations
Academics & Researchers	Scientists and scholars producing breakthrough knowledge and influencing industry practice
Technology & AI Leaders	Pioneers in AI, robotics, automation, digital twins and advanced computing applied to the built environment
Sustainability Pioneers	Experts advancing decarbonisation, adaptation, water security, biodiversity and circular economy solutions
Public Sector Visionaries	City leaders, policymakers and institutional figures shaping the infrastructure agenda
Future Thinkers & Futurists	Leading voices in foresight, strategic planning and long-term scenario development
Ecosystem Builders	Individuals connecting entrepreneurs, corporations, investors, researchers and public institutions
Young Leaders Under 30	Emerging talents already influencing the future of infrastructure, energy and cities

Evaluation criteria

Candidates are assessed against the following five criteria provided in the proposal. They are used by Sifted to finalise the shortlist, and committee members use them to guide their votes. The emphasis throughout is on who is building the next decade, not who leads today.

Criterion	What is assessed	Evidence looked for
Impact	Demonstrated influence on the transformation of infrastructure, construction, energy or cities	Projects delivered, capacity deployed, emissions cut, policy adopted, people or cities served
Innovation	Ability to introduce breakthrough technologies, business models or approaches	Patents, research, products first to market, new delivery or financing models
Scalability	Capacity to achieve significant market or societal adoption	Growth, funding raised, customers, replication in other markets or cities
Future orientation	Contribution to shaping the next decade rather than solely current performance	A clear agenda for the coming years, early bets that others follow, work on long-term problems
Ecosystem leadership	Ability to mobilise stakeholders and accelerate collective transformation	Coalitions, standards, programmes, mentoring, investment in others, public voice