



Smart City Expo World Congress

World Smart City Awards 2026

Terms and Conditions

Entering the competition implies full acceptance of its rules

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1. Smart City Expo World Congress 2026

Smart City Expo World Congress is committed to leveraging the implementation and follow-up of all **global agendas** at the local and national levels. The event aims to be the place to **collectivize urban power**, increase the strength of cities, **identify business opportunities**, establish partnerships and contribute to enacting common policies. A place to share research, best practices and potential common solutions, achieved through effective collaboration.

As the **leading event for cities**, we understand the need to **give cities a powerful global voice** and an innovative platform for common urban action. Since its first edition in 2011, it has succeeded to become the meeting point for governments, companies, entrepreneurs, startups, research centers, and citizen's initiatives, where cities meet other cities, showcase their projects and find new solutions, and where companies do business. It has turned out to be an exceptional networking platform to connect people working in and with cities worldwide who are tackling similar challenges and generating opportunities for action.

The Congress **gathers the most relevant experts and leaders** of the world's most innovative cities, companies, entrepreneurs, start-ups, research centers, initiatives and solutions, with strategies for a smarter and more sustainable urban world. At the Exhibition Area, participants showcase their latest developments, real solutions and products, with technologies making tangible and lasting positive impacts on the lives of millions of people.

In 2026, the event will continue to bet on increasing the presence of organizations, exhibitors, and visitors worldwide to keep on generating synergies, sharing knowledge, provoking discussion, reflection, and inspiring new actions.

2. Purpose of the Call for Awards

The annual **World Smart City Awards (WSCA)** is a prestigious international competition that seeks to recognize pioneering projects, ideas and strategies making cities around the world more livable, sustainable, and economically viable.

The WSCA has been established to identify **cities, projects related to the topics of the event and innovative ideas** that are making urban areas worldwide more liveable, environmentally sustainable, and economically thriving, as well as stimulating diversity, social inclusion, equity, safety, and collaboration, thus enhancing the quality of life for all.



In the **2025 edition**, we received **462 entries** from 67 countries worldwide.

Please find in this section the **Award Categories for the 2026 edition** and the main guiding keywords for each of the topics considered. You will need to prioritise and select **only one topic** that your proposal primarily refers to. Submissions should be dealing with one or several keywords of this list. Additional keywords can also be suggested in the online form. Do not hesitate to contact the organization in case of doubt.

Topics 2026	Main keywords
Enabling Technologies	Algorithm Ethics, Algorithms, APP Solutions, Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality, Big Data, Blockchain, City Platforms, Cloud Computing, Cloud Storage, Cognitive Cities, Connectivity, Cybersecurity, Data Analytics, Data Integration, Data Lake, Data Management, Data Protection, Data Protection, Data Security and Safety, Data Storage, Deep Learning, Digital Modelling, Digital Rights, Digital Twins, Edge Computing, Facial Recognition, Fraud Detection, Identity Management, Implementation Challenges, IOT, Latency, Machine to Machine Communication, Metaverse, Networked Devices, PaaS, Phishing, Platform as Service, Privacy, Robotics, Safety & Security, Sensing, Simulated Environments, Smart Devices, Smart Environments, Smart Networks, Universal Broadband, Urban Tech, Virtual Reality, WiFi 6, 5G.
Energy & Urban Environment	Adaptation, Air Quality, Circularity, Clean Energy, Clean Water, Cleantech, Climate Change, Climate Emergency, Climate Tech, Cogeneration, Cooling Systems, Cradle-to-cradle, Decarbonisation, Decentralized Energy, Dietary Footprint, Disaster Risk Management, Ecology, Electrification, Emergency Response, Energy Efficiency, Energy Infrastructure, Energy Investment, Energy Security, Energy Storage, Energy Transition, Financing Funding, Food Policies, Food Safety, Food Systems, Food Waste, GHG Emissions, Green Cities, Green Deal, Green Districts, Green Spaces, Heating Systems, Hydrogen-powered, Integrated Management Systems, Landscaping, Low Emissions Tech, Mitigation, Net Zero Emissions, New Energy Models, Parks, Public Space, Rainwater systems, Recycling, Regenerative by design, Renewables, Resources, Smart Grids, Smart Infrastructures, Smart Street Lighting, Smart Utilities, Sponge Cities, Sustainable Garbage Processing, Sustainable Tech, Urban Agriculture, Urban Farming, Urban Forests, Urban Furniture, Urban Management, Urban Planning, Urban Resilience, Urban Services, Urban-rural Linkages, Waste Management, Water Management, Zero Waste.



Governance & Economy	Accountability, Alliances, Best Practices, Business Models, Centre-periphery, Citizen Engagement, Circular Economy, City Diplomacy, City-to-city Cooperation, Co-creation, Collaboration, Creative Cities, Cross-sector Governance, Culture, Data Strategies, Economic Models, Financing Schemes, Global Cities, Global Funds, GovTech, Indicators, Innovation Ecosystems, International Projection, Internationalisation Strategies, Investment Models, Legislation, Local Economic Development, Metropolitan Governance, Model Performance Monitoring, Multilateral Institutions, Multilevel Governance, Multi-stakeholder, Open Data, Open Government, Philanthropies, Policies, Policy-making, PPP, Public Procurement, Regional Development, Regional Investment Banks, Regulations, Rural-Urban, Sharing Economy, Standards, Standardization, Start-ups, Talent Attraction, Urban Global Agendas.
Living & Inclusion	Affordability, Ageing Populations, Cities for All, Climate Justice, Co-housing, Co-working, Cross-district Equity, Digital Equality, Digital Rights, Diseases, Education, Ethnic Inclusion, Future of Education, Future of Work, Future Skills, Gender Equality, Gentrification, Health, Healthcare, Housing, Informal Housing, Innovative Housing Models, Labour Platforms, Leisure, Migration, Minorities, New Work Spaces, Physical Inclusion, Physical Security, Public Health, Racial Justice, Religious Inclusion, Right to Housing, Right to the City, Smart Destination, Social Impact, Social Inclusion, Social Inequality, Sustainable Destination, Tourism, Tourist-resident Balance, Universal Income, Urban safety, Utopia, Wellbeing, Wellness.
Infrastructure & Buildings	Asset Management, BIM, Building Automation, Building Simulation, Built Environment, Community Facilities, Construction Tech, Co-housing, Co-working, Critical Infrastructures, Decarbonisation, Design Services, Digital Construction, Digital Tools, Digital Twins, Drones, Electrification, Energy Efficiency, Extended Reality, Facility Management, Green Building, Housing, Immersive Technologies, Innovative Building Technology, Intelligent Security Systems, Metaverse, Mixed Reality, Modular Construction, Nearly Zero-Energy Buildings (NZEB), Off-site Fabrication, Property Management, PropTech, Refurbishing, Renewable Energy, Retrofitting, Roads, Smart Airports, Smart Buildings, Smart Infrastructures, Smart Ports, Street Design, Street Furniture, Urban Design, Urban Facility Management, Urban Infrastructure, Urban Management, Urban Planning, Virtual Reality, Workplace Management, Zero Emission Buildings, 3D Modelling, 3D Printing.



Mobility	Active Mobility, Air Mobility, Autonomous Vehicles, Automotive, Business Models, Car-sharing, Connected Vehicles, Cycling Lanes, Drones, E-mobility, Energy Transition & Efficiency, First Mile, Flexible Mobility, Fossil Fuel-free Streets, Freight, Future Mobility, Geolocation, Hydrogen Mobility, Individual Mobility, Insurance, Integrated Mobility Plans, Intelligent Transport Systems, Intelligent Mobility, Last Mile Logistics, Liability, Low Carbon Mobility, MaaS, Mapping, Mass Transit, Micro Mobility, Mobility Planning, Mobility Service Provider, Mobility Tools, Multimodal, On-demand Mobility, Non-motorized Mobility, Parking, Payment Systems, Peer-to-peer Ridesharing, Public Transport, Railway Transport, Ride-hailing, Roads, Scooter, Shared Mobility, Smart Airports, Smart Parking, Smart Ports, Smart Traffic, Traffic Management, Transport Hubs, Transport Infrastructure, Transport Integration, Transport Networks, Van-pooling, VTOL, Walkability, Zero Emissions.
Housing	Adaptive Architecture, Affordability, Auto-construction, Accessibility, Building Innovation, Building Retrofit, Collaborative Construction, Collaborative Housing Models, Densification, Dignified Housing, Digital Building Innovation, Energy-efficient renovation, Fast-Track Planning and Permitting, Gender Perspective Housing, Gentrification, Housing Capacity, Housing Financialization, Housing Inclusion, Housing Land Availability, Housing Policies, Housing Quality, Housing Regulation, Housing Stock Management, Inclusionary Zoning, Industrialization, Innovative Housing Models, Innovative Models of Collaboration, Institutional Funds, Land Activation, Land Banking, Land Policy, Land Regulation, Mixed Use Developments, Modular Construction, Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, Nature-Based Solutions, Net Zero Carbon Construction, Off-Site Fabrication, Public Housing Rehabilitation, Public Housing Stock Management, Public-Private Partnerships, Renovation, Retrofit, Reuse, Rent Regulations, Right to Adequate Housing, Right to the City, Scaleable Retrofit Solutions, Short-Term Rental Regulation, Social and Affordable Housing, Social Cohesion, Social Housing Policies, Social Housing Upgrades, Spatial Planning, Subsidized Housing, Tax Incentives, Urban Management, Urban Planning, Urban Planning and Land Policy, Urban Regeneration, Vulnerable Neighbourhoods.

3. Organizer of the Award

The World Smart City Awards are organized by the Smart City Expo World Congress, providing global recognition in the following categories: **City Award**, **Enabling Technologies Award**, **Energy & Environment Award**, **Mobility Award**,



Governance & Economy Award, Living & Inclusion Award, Infrastructure & Buildings Award, Housing Award, and the Innovation Award.

4. Who can participate?

The **World Smart City Awards** are aimed at both public and private sector, cities, businesses, entrepreneurs, start-ups, digital innovators, developers, research centres, universities, civic techs, civil society representatives, non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, consortiums (public-private), social activists and individuals, with innovative ideas, analyses, studies, visions and solutions for the management and development of our cities.

5. Restrictions

Institutions represented in the Judging panel and organizers **CANNOT** compete in the **World Smart City Awards**.

6. Prize Categories

The following categories of proposals will be considered for the competition:

- **City Award**

The **City Award** considers a global strategy developed by a city that combines projects, initiatives, and policy implementations in **2 or more urban fields**. These fields are described in the topics section. It rewards a city for its innovation, collaboration, and sustainability strategies. Evaluation will include the proven impact to date.

Submissions to the City Award must **only be made by city governments**. Any submissions from private or non-governmental entities will be subject to disqualification from consideration for the World Smart City Awards.

We strongly recommend cities with a clear urban strategy, or relevant projects, in several fields to submit their candidacy combining the different projects/initiatives developed.

- **Project Awards**

The **Project Awards** consider the most innovative and successful projects already being implemented and developed in a specific urban development area. These areas are described in section 3 of the Terms & Conditions (Topics 2026). The



proposal can apply an in-depth approach to a single topic area or address multiple topic areas, but only one main topic must be prioritised and selected. The awards granted under this category are:

- **Enabling Technologies Award**
- **Energy & Environment Award**
- **Mobility Award**
- **Governance & Economy Award**
- **Living & Inclusion Award**
- **Infrastructure & Buildings Award**
- **Housing Award**

The best proposals in each topic will show a balance of innovative characteristics, proven impact to date, and clear proof of continuing feasibility.

The organization realizes that the definition of a project can be very broad and can include (but is not limited to): objects, hardware and/or software developments, technological systems, services, buildings, parks, neighbourhoods, and policy implementations. The possibilities are not limited to the themes above so, in case of any doubt, please contact the technical secretariat using the email stated below.

Submitted proposals must be already implemented or be in the process of implementation.

Proposals can be submitted by local governments, businesses and entrepreneurs, research centres, public or non-governmental organizations, and public-private consortiums.

- **Innovation Award**

The Innovation Award focuses on original initiatives contributing to the betterment of cities, together with inventive ideas devised to make the best in communities possible. To this end, the Innovation Award considers ingenious projects and initiatives that have the potential of contributing to the successful transformation, adaptation or response of our cities to current urban challenges or others that may occur in the future. Submissions do not need to already be in the implementation stage but must be sufficiently developed to allow for their evaluation. In addition to their innovative characteristics, submissions will also be evaluated for projected impact and demonstrated feasibility of implementation.

They can be submitted by local governments, businesses and entrepreneurs, research centres, public or non-governmental organizations, and public-private consortiums.



7. Presentation of Proposals

To enter in the running World Smart City Awards, please fill in the form [available online](#).

Proposals must be submitted electronically via our website and are to conform to the terms and conditions here included.

The form and all complementary information will have to be filled out entirely in **English**.

No proposals in **any other languages** will be accepted.

The organization reserves the right to ask for any clarification or additional information about the submitted entries.

No additional documents to the web form will be accepted, unless requested by the organization.

You are encouraged to refer to the evaluation criteria (section 10) when filling out the web form. Please do not leave any field blank. The web form to be fulfilled will require, among other details, the following fields.

City Award / Project Award / Innovation Award

- Main Topic (please select only one from the list)
- Keywords (max 100 characters)
Select one or more from the list of main keywords.
- Submission title (max 30 characters)
- Organization or company responsible for the project (max 50 characters).
Please note that this organization would be stated as finalist if the proposal is selected.
- Brief description of the proposal (max 300 characters)
- Abstract (max 1500 characters)
You may include the context of implementation, added value of the proposal, methodology of resolution, solutions/conclusions, and any other information helpful to understanding the main ideas of your proposal.
- Current state of implementation (max 300 characters)
- Innovative characteristics of the proposal (max 300 characters)
Indicate how the subject addressed is relevant and original and explain why it demonstrates and innovative approach.
- (Expected) Results / Impact of the proposal (max 300 characters)



Provide information on the impacts, including a quantification of the scope of the impact. If the proposal has not yet been implemented, please state the expected results/impact.

- Partners involved: name / job title / organization details (max 300 characters)
- Reference website of the proposal
You may include here a link to an explanatory website or video of the proposal.

Supporting Document:

- The uploaded document should be no longer than 10 pages/slides. Only PDF format will be accepted.

Proposal images/pictures:

- The photos should represent the award proposal, showing either the materialization of the solution or the city/country/group of people that benefit from it. Please include 5 landscape format images/pictures that better represents your proposal. Only JPEG format in high resolution (at least 2048px) will be accepted. If your proposal is selected as a finalist, the organizers may make public these images and use them in a large size projection screen. Please avoid infographics, PowerPoint presentations and screenshots (these ones can be included in the supporting document).

8. Submission period

All entries should be submitted **before June 29th, 2026, 23:59:59 CET (Central European Time)**.

9. Evaluation Criteria

City Award / Project Award / Innovation Award

The quality of each proposal will be evaluated according to the criteria described below. Each submission will be evaluated based on ten aspects. For each aspect, a score will be assigned based on the degree to which the submission demonstrably fulfils each listed criterion. The leadership award will be evaluated based on a distinct set of evaluation criteria (see below).



Aspects	Criteria considered
Innovation	- The subject addressed is relevant, original, AND demonstrates an innovative approach. Additionally, the proposal includes some explanations of why the submission is innovative. - The proposal includes innovative concepts, processes, tools OR governance models as a testbed for innovation.
Relevance	Defines a need(s) or unresolved problem(s) being addressed in its context.
Impact	- Demonstration of clear, significant, and tangible impacts (or potential impacts) - Includes quantification of the scope of the impacts (or potential impacts) - In case of research or comparative analysis, demonstration of clear contribution to future action plans and to decision making processes.
Citizen Engagement and Co-creation	Embraces considerations of citizen engagement and how to ensure the uptake of their ideas; AND/OR includes innovative methods and tools such as co-design or co-creation.
Inclusivity	Defines inclusion targets in terms of gender, ethnicity, class and poverty, and/or age.
Feasibility	Clearly makes a persuasive case for feasibility. If <u>implemented</u>, the proposal has an established record of success, AND/OR includes some information on the development cycle, the current status of implementation, and questions of financial and logistical feasibility. If it is a <u>proposed project, initiative or idea</u>, it includes some information for developing, piloting, and scaling the idea; AND addresses questions of financial and logistical feasibility.



	Does not apply to research and comparative analysis or to a more analytical and theoretical proposal.
Replicability	Proposal with the potential to be transferred onto other contexts different that those where they were originally conceived for; that is, that could be replicated in other sectors, regions, countries, or even different modes.
Multi-stakeholder Collaboration	Identification of People-Public-Private-Social/Citizens partnerships or other forms of multi-stakeholder collaboration aspects.
Soundness	The data being presented is reliable and sound.

10. Evaluation Process

The evaluation process is divided into two phases:

1) Regulation compliance and pre-selection of finalists

The technical office of the organization will conduct a first evaluation to check whether the proposal complies with the requirements and selection criteria defined. Expert evaluators will then evaluate all the proposals, which could be subject to additional request of information or clarification from the evaluators.

A pre-selection of 6 award finalists will be made for the Innovation Award.

A pre-selection of 4 award finalists will be made for each of the following categories: City Award, Enabling Technologies Award, Energy & Urban Environment Award, Mobility Award, Governance & Economy Award, Living & Inclusion Award, Infrastructure & Buildings Award, and Housing Award.

Finalists from all categories will be informed starting on **September 21st, 2026**. At this stage all finalists from each prize category will be **required to provide the organizers with graphic material** to be determined, such as high-quality images or a short video, **of the award proposal**. The organizers of the event will use such graphic material, which will be a mandatory condition to remain a finalist, for the promotion of the prize.

The Ceremony will be held during the Smart City Expo World Congress on November 4th, 2026, where the winners will be announced.



For the ceremony organization purposes, **all finalist candidates must confirm their attendance to the Award Ceremony and send the required graphic material. All finalists in each prize category are required to attend the Ceremony in person in Barcelona or designate an official representative to attend on their behalf.** The presence of the finalists to the Award Ceremony is a mandatory condition to be considered as finalist. If any finalist candidate or a designated representative is unable to attend the ceremony, the organization reserves the right to select another candidate who fulfils all requirements to be a finalist.

Please note that the organization does **not provide financial support** for finalists' travel, accommodation, or visa procedures.

Proposals will be exceptionally subject to change of category according to the observations of the Experts Evaluation Committee. The candidate will be informed in due time.

2) Winners' selection

A Jury of Honor appointed by the organization will select the winner of the City Award and the two winners of the Innovation Award.

The winners of the rest of the categories will be selected taking into account the evaluation and comments of the Experts Evaluation Committee.

Proposals could be subject to additional requests of information or clarification from the Judging panel of this last stage of evaluation.

The prize winners will be announced at the **World Smart City Awards Ceremony** to be held during the Smart City Expo World Congress on **November 4th, 2026**.

Any prize award category could be declared void by the Judging panel.

11. Award Prizes

The **winners** will be awarded with the following prizes. All benefits are applicable to the 2027 edition of the Smart City Expo World Congress.

The winners of the 2026 awards will, during the 2027 edition of the Smart City Expo World Congress, have the right to:

- 1 speaking slot in the Smart City Expo World Congress, defined by the organization;
- 5 congress passes (three-day full pass to the expo and congress sessions);
- Publicity of the award via various communication media.





- Sound and use of chyrons recommended (always in English)
- Landscape format
- Final length of 1 min. - 1.30 min.

Example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6T4HDyFuH04>

As soon as the finalists are selected, the organization will provide them with a document with more specific guidelines for the short video.

The organizers may use, for their communication and publicising activities, information relating to the proposals, documents notably summaries for publication as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material that it receives from the participants (including in electronic form).

The organizers will publish the names of both the finalists and the winners, their origin, and their nature and purpose — unless they have requested to waive this publication (because disclosure risks threaten its security and safety or harm its commercial interest).

Photos and videos taken by the organizers during the award ceremony are the sole property of the Smart City Expo World Congress and might be used for branding purposes.

13. Awards Schedule

Calendar 2026	Action
June 29 th	Deadline for submitting proposals
Starting on September 21 st	Finalists from all categories will be informed
4 th November	Winners of each prize category will be announced at the World Smart City Awards Ceremony



14. Intellectual and Industrial Property Rights

The participant is responsible for the authorship of the submitted proposal; he/she is the owner of the intellectual and, where applicable, industrial property rights thereof.

The participant is accountable for the proposal submitted not violating intellectual property rights, industrial property rights, copyright and/or image rights and assumes complete responsibility with regard to third parties: the Organization is free of all liability.

Should the proposal be short-listed, the participant authorizes the Organization to disseminate, reproduce and publish the proposal in any format and using any medium to publicize the Smart City Expo World Congress.

15. Data Protection

Due to the sensitive nature of the information supplied, the award organizers, the members of the Judging panel and Expert evaluators guarantee to keep the participants' identity and the content of their project confidential outside the sphere of the **World Smart City Awards**. This also includes any information about its current state of use or development.

Once the proposal has been selected as a finalist, the organizers of this award may make public any details considered as public (submission title, organization in charge, person in charge, websites, description, sent images or pictures, short video, purpose and category).

Privacy Policy and Information on Data Protection

Controller: FIRA INTERNACIONAL DE BARCELONA, Tax Code (CIF) Q-0873006-A, and registered address Av. Reina Maria Cristina, s/n, 08004 Barcelona. Purpose: To process your data in relation to your participation in the SMART CITY EXPO WORLD CONGRESS awards 2026. Lawful basis: Legitimate interest. Recipients: Your data is not transferred to third parties except for legal obligation. Your rights: the right to access, rectify, and erase your personal data, as well as the rights of data portability and restriction of processing that are set forth in the additional information. Additional information: You can view the additional detailed information on Data Protection on our website www.firabarcelona.com "Privacy Policy".



16. Queries and Suggestions

If you have any queries or suggestions, please email to:

scewc.technicaloffice@firabarcelona.com

If you are interested in commercial opportunities to enhance your organization's profile at the Smart City Expo World Congress or Tomorrow.Mobility, please contact smartcityexpo.sales@firabarcelona.com

Entering the Call for Awards implies full acceptance of its rules
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