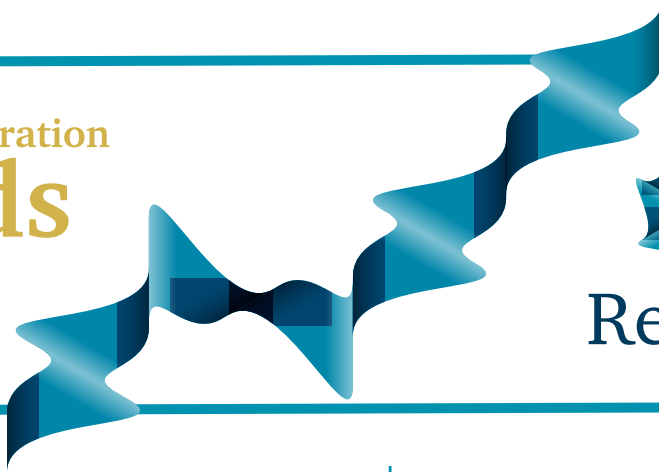


Public Administration
Awards
2026
Western Balkans &
Eastern Neighbourhood



Governing for Impact: Creating Transformative Initiatives

Are you creating transformative initiatives that improve public administration and deliver tangible benefits to citizens and businesses?



Public Administration Awards 2026: Bigger. Bolder. Intra-Regional!

ReSPA and SIGMA call on public administration champions across the Western Balkans, Ukraine, Moldova and Armenia to step forward, showcase transformative impact, and win tailored learning journeys!

Be Recognised. Be Shared. Be an Inspiration!

If your initiative is helping build **better governance and better lives for citizens**, don't keep it a secret! Apply, get recognised, and inspire public administrations across regions!

As governments navigate the complexities of the modern world, the imperative to build better public administration has never been more pressing. Achieving this aim requires that this year's fourth edition of the Public Administration Awards focus on measurable results, achievements, and improvements in public service delivery.

We are looking for bold, smart, and user-focused initiatives that make a difference through: digital transformation and technological innovation; administrative simplification and smarter procedures; inclusiveness and user-centred design; community engagement and local impact; and data-driven and evidence-based decision-making.

The 2026 Award Criteria

The 2026 Western Balkans and Eastern Neighbourhood Public Administration Awards are seeking applications that demonstrate measurable results and embrace a user-centric approach to public service delivery.

If your project embodies this user-centricity while driving positive impact for citizens and businesses, do not miss this opportunity, submit it and be assessed against and selected based on the following criteria:

- ★ Effective, Impactful & Tangible Results
- ★ Participatory, Inclusive & Collaborative
- ★ Transparency, Integrity & Accountability
- ★ Sustainability
- ★ Forward-looking & Innovative
- ★ Visibility & Public Concern
- ★ Transferability & Replicability

For more information about the Application Guide, click on the [link](#)

More precisely, we are especially keen to recognise initiatives that demonstrate clear transformative impact, with strong emphasis on:

- Measurable results and concrete achievements
- Enhanced quality, accessibility, and efficiency of public services
- Meaningful contributions to transparency, participation, inclusion, and integrity
- Innovation, particularly digital and technology-driven solutions

Whether you have improved digital public service delivery, reduced red tape for businesses, designed inclusive services for vulnerable groups, empowered citizens through community-driven governance, modernised internal systems with clear external benefits, or implemented any initiative that demonstrates direct or indirect positive impact on users, this is your moment to shine!

You are welcome to submit any initiative that demonstrates one or more of the following key characteristics:

- ▶ developed with users¹ i.e. demonstrates acknowledgement of all aspects of user needs and preferences or citizen-centred, developed around the needs and life events of citizens, including the use of immersive design (e.g., mobile government, human-centred design);
- ▶ developed in a way that includes human-centricity, i.e. expressing empathy and understanding for users' needs, including supportive features that provide help and guidance when needed;
- ▶ leverage technological innovation and emerging solutions such as AI, machine learning and automation (e.g., chatbots and virtual assistants, back-office automation of repetitive tasks, scenario modelling and simulations in planning with human oversight features), including cloud & infrastructure, data & analytics (e.g., big data, advanced analytics, real-time analytics, BI, open data platforms), cybersecurity and privacy (e.g., privacy-enhancing technologies, zero trust architecture) or other applicable technologies that contribute to a more effective and user-centred public service delivery;
- ▶ developed in relation to the digital identity and trust, with secure access to services and paperless administration;
- ▶ involves citizens in decision-making processes, fosters participatory democracy, and empowers local communities to address their own needs (e.g. participatory budgeting);
- ▶ contribute to building transparency, integrity and accountability and cultivate trust and confidence among users;
- ▶ allow informed choices through accessibility, improved exchange of information and facilitate effective communication between stakeholders;
- ▶ contribute to effective and timely service delivery with minimal processing time, predictability and visible decision-making, thus reducing administrative burden, enhancing accessibility, reducing costs, and improving reliability and consistency;
- ▶ ensure interoperability of systems and services, minimising the need for users to provide the same information across different platforms or duplicate requests (e.g. once-only principle, connected public registries, integrated service portals, cross-agency case management);
- ▶ developed in a secure and privacy-aware manner with data protection considerations and cybersecurity safeguards;
- ▶ streamline and improve internal processes and workflows within the organisation, or cross-agency exchange, enabling the organisations to elevate the quality of services provided to citizens and businesses;
- ▶ are inclusive in terms of being designed for everyone and with considerations for vulnerable and underrepresented groups;
- ▶ are quality-of-life oriented, responsive to the immediate needs of the user group, recognising social well
- ▶ promote collaboration, allow governments to tap into the collective wisdom and expertise of the community, and enable collaborative platforms/projects, thereby fostering a sense of ownership and shared responsibility (i.e., projects developed by multiple stakeholders in a collaborative effort).

For more detailed information, visit the [link](#)

Apply and win valuable prizes!

We will tailor an exclusive package of awards to meet the needs of the winning candidates!

- ★ Learning journeys to observe best practices in the European Union and the region
- ★ Peer learning activities
- ★ Trophies & Certificates
- ★ Special recognition of outstanding efforts



¹ The term "Users" refers to citizens, businesses, public servants working with citizens and businesses, other public administrations or entities (e.g. CSOs or academia) who interact with the specific system, project or service in question.

Additional benefits for the organisation

The 2026 Western Balkans and Eastern Neighbourhood Public Administration Awards champions will benefit from **external visibility and international recognition, thereby enabling further development (including additional funding and the scaling up of their initiatives)**.

Thanks to the Awards' multi-step assessment process, the champions will receive **valuable feedback to improve their projects**.

Submitted initiatives will be used in **ReSPA's and SIGMA** learning exchange and practice transfer activities intra-regionally and internationally.

Winning candidates will join a select **'club of excellence'** with networking opportunities in the regions and beyond.

Additional Benefits for Award-Winning Organisations

Enhanced visibility and international recognition - Award champions will gain increased exposure and international acknowledgement, opening new opportunities for organisational development, including access to additional funding and the potential to scale up their initiatives.

Actionable expert feedback - Through the Awards' multi-step assessment process, champions will receive valuable, structured feedback to further strengthen and refine their projects.

Regional and international knowledge exchange - Submitted initiatives will be featured in ReSPA and SIGMA learning, exchange, and practice-transfer activities, supporting peer learning across the region and beyond.

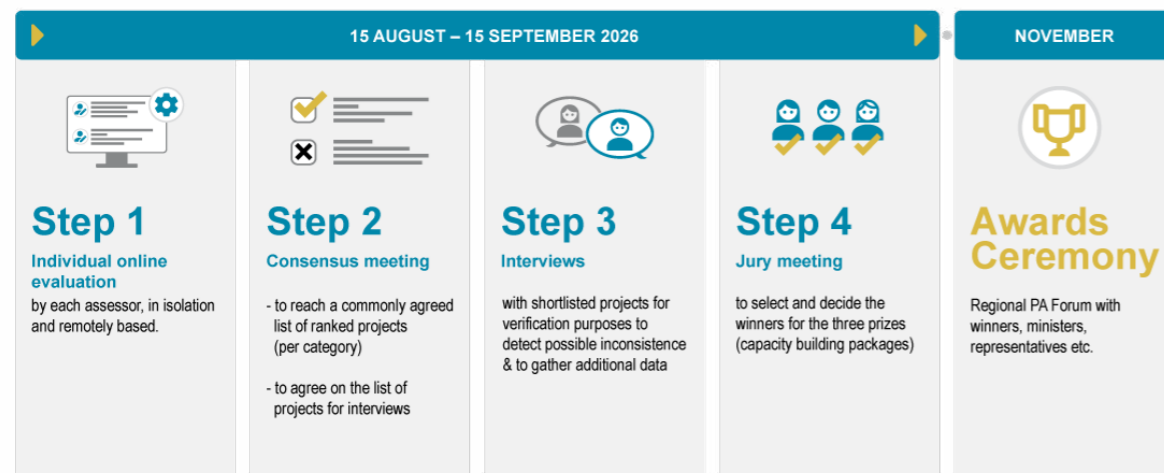
Membership in a 'club of excellence' - Winning organisations will join an exclusive network of public administration innovators, benefiting from high-level networking opportunities within the regions and internationally.

Evaluation Process

The International Experts Jury is composed of highly recognised international experts (i.e., ReSPA representatives or ReSPA-selected independent experts, SIGMA representatives and/or experts appointed by them) and will conduct the entire process.

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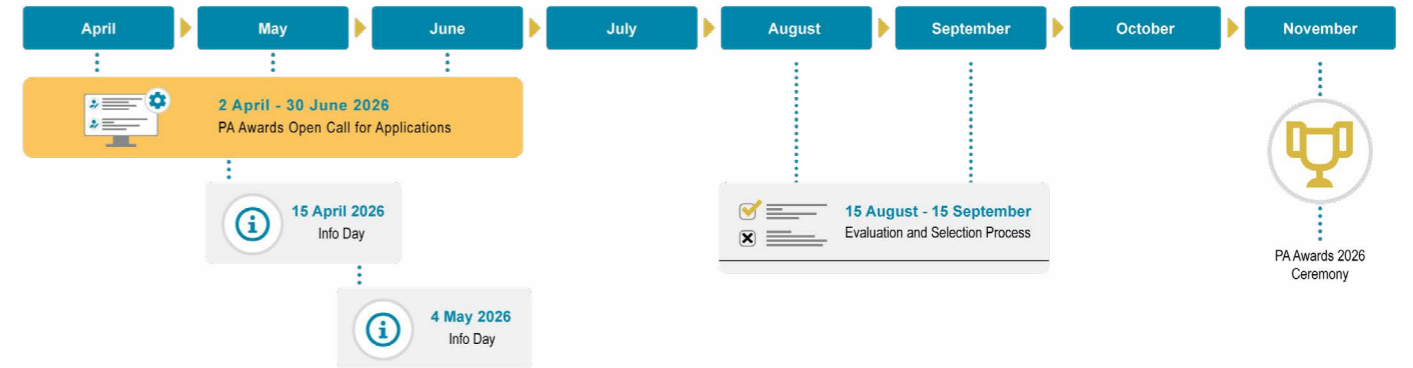
Four-step Evaluation & Selection Process after eligibility check



Time table

PA Awards 2026 | ReSPA | SIGMA

TIME TABLE PA AWARDS 2026



Meet the Champions of Public Administration Winners of the 2024 Western Balkans Public Administration Award



The 2024 Western Balkans Public Administration Awards celebrate bold ideas, digital breakthroughs, and real impact on citizens' lives. The winners are not just improving public services - they are redefining them.

Special Award - A Historic First



For the first time ever, a single institution stood above the rest. The **Office for IT and eGovernment of the Republic of Serbia** received the **Special Award for Leading by Example in Digital Transformation and Innovation in Public Service Delivery**, setting a benchmark for the entire region.

Award-Winning Initiatives



“I Protect You” Platform (cuvamte.gov.rs)

Developed by the Office for IT and eGovernment of the Republic of Serbia, this initiative provides a powerful digital platform dedicated to safeguarding children from violence - combining technology with social responsibility.

Explore the initiative [HERE](#)



SWIS, e-Social ([e-socijalni karton](#))

Led by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare of Montenegro, this system transforms social welfare through smarter data and more efficient, citizen-focused services.

Explore the initiative [HERE](#)



Digital Transformation for the Green Agenda

The Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia was recognised for integrating digital solutions with sustainability goals - advancing Serbia's contribution to the green transition.

Explore the initiative [HERE](#)

Special Recognitions - Innovation Across the Western Balkans

- ▶ **“Be Part of the Plan”**
A participatory platform that keeps citizens informed and engaged through real-time alerts (email, SMS, Viber), strengthening transparency in urban planning.
- ▶ **Public Procurement Commission of Albania**
Recognised for simplifying administrative procedures, reducing burdens, and driving efficiency through digitalisation.
- ▶ **Open Data Portal - City of Prijedor**
Opening access to vital datasets, this initiative empowers citizens, businesses, and institutions — fostering innovation and better decision-making.
- ▶ **Beneficial Ownership Register (Central Register of North Macedonia)**
Enhancing transparency in the fight against money laundering and financial crime, this initiative strengthens accountability and trust.

Explore the full list of winners and dive deeper into each initiative - and see how the Western Balkans are shaping the future of public administration [HERE](#)

Beyond the Awards: A Transformative Learning Experience

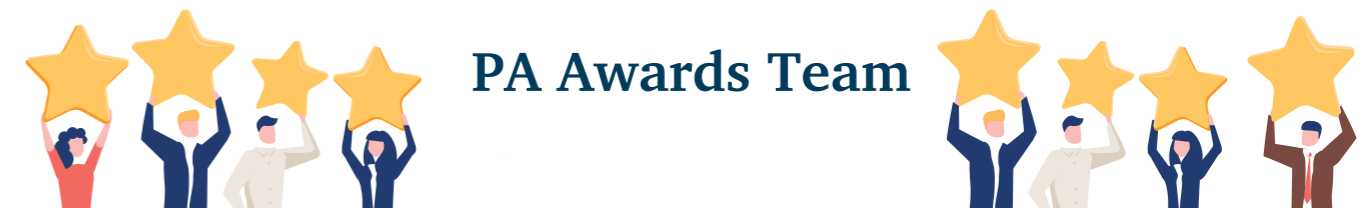


Winners embarked on an exclusive study visit to **Denmark** and **Sweden**, exploring the future of public administration firsthand. From **AI in governance and digital wallets** to the **green digital transition** and seamless e-services, participants gained cutting-edge insights from some of Europe's most advanced digital societies.

Find more [HERE](#)

Submit your application by **30 June 2026** at the latest and let your achievements shine on both the intra-regional and international stages!

We wish you every success!



PA Awards Team

If you have any questions related to the rules of the contest, eligibility and other requirements or have any difficulties with the online registration and application tool please contact:

pa-awards@respaweb.eu

