



COMMONWEALTH
TELECOMMUNICATIONS
ORGANISATION

DIGITAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2026

*Honouring Innovation Across the
Commonwealth*



KEY DATES:



Nominations Open: 15 June 2026



Submission Deadline: 10 August
2026



Gala Ceremony: September 30,
2026

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The CTO Digital Excellence Awards 2026 recognise outstanding digital initiatives led by CTO Member Countries and Organisations that demonstrate measurable impact, innovation, and leadership in advancing digital transformation. The inaugural awards will be presented during the CTO 125th Anniversary Celebrations in September 2026.

These Awards aim to celebrate excellence, promote knowledge sharing, and showcase best practices across the Commonwealth.

The CTO Digital Excellence Awards seek to:

- Recognise outstanding ICT and digital transformation initiatives
- Promote innovation and knowledge exchange across member countries
- Highlight measurable impact and inclusive digital development
- Strengthen engagement and collaboration within the CTO membership
- Reinforce the CTO's leadership in advancing digital progress across the Commonwealth



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AWARD CATEGORIES

✓ Universal Access & Service (UAS) Excellence Award

Recognising impactful initiatives that significantly improve digital inclusion and access to ICT services for underserved or marginalised communities

✓ Digital Policy & Regulatory Excellence Award

Honouring transformative digital policies, regulatory reforms, or governance frameworks that demonstrate leadership and improve market efficiency, competition, or investment.

✓ Cybersecurity Excellence Award

Recognising initiatives that strengthen digital resilience, cybersecurity capacity, awareness, or national cyber frameworks.

✓ 21st Century Government / E-Government Initiatives Award

Celebrating digital public service initiatives that improve service delivery, transparency, citizen engagement, digital identity systems, or electronic payment platforms.

✓ Digital Applications & Innovation Award

Recognising innovative digital solutions, platforms, or emerging technologies that address developmental, societal, or sectoral challenges.



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Prepare the following information and material before opening the submission form:

- Submitting organisation name, contact person, contact email, role, and country.
- Confirmation that the submitting organisation is eligible to enter the Awards.
- Initiative title, background, objectives, implementation approach, and implementation timeline.
- Evidence of impact, such as KPIs, beneficiary reach, outcomes, policy impact, institutional impact, or sustainability indicators.
- A short abstract of the initiative, limited to 250 words where requested.
- Supporting material, such as reports, photographs, infographics, testimonials, and relevant links.

STEP-BY-STEP SUBMISSION PROCESS

Step 1 - Open the official CTO Digital Excellence Awards submission portal from the CTO website or from the link provided by the CTO Awards team.

Step 2 - Use the guided panel to prepare the content of the submission before completing the final form. The panel helps sequence the information so the final entry is easier to review.

Step 3 - Confirm organisation details, role details, eligibility, and the domain or context for the initiative. Accuracy at this stage reduces follow-up and rework.

Step 4 - Choose the category that best matches the initiative outcome and impact.

Step 5 - Provide clear summaries for the problem or opportunity, the solution approach, impact and measurable outcomes, innovation, sustainability, scalability, governance, and implementation effectiveness.

Step 6 - Upload or link supporting material using the rules in this guide. Check file names, versions, and permissions before submission.

Step 7 - Confirm that the information is accurate, approved by the organisation where required, and compliant with intellectual property and copyright requirements.

Step 8 - Review all fields before submission. Once submitted, the entry should be treated as the official version unless the CTO Awards team advises otherwise.

Step 9 - After successful submission, record the reference code displayed by the portal. The expected format is DEA-YYYYMMDD-XXXXXX. Use this reference code for follow-up queries.

Eligibility:

The Awards are exclusively open to:

- CTO Member Countries
- CTO Member Organisations

Eligibility Conditions:

- The initiative must be operational, implemented, or demonstrate measurable results.
- Initiatives must align with of the relevant award category.
- Multiple submissions are permitted where initiatives are distinct.

Submission Material

- Main entry document must be submitted as a PDF.
- Main entry document maximum size: 10 MB.
- Supporting document maximum size: 5 MB per file.
- Videos must be supplied as links. Do not upload video files directly.
- Preferred video links include YouTube, Vimeo, or another accessible platform approved by the submitting organisation.
- Ensure external links can be opened by the CTO Awards team and judges during review.
- Use clear file names that include the organisation name, initiative name, and document type where practical.



EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

Submissions must demonstrate measurable outcomes, including:

- ✓ Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- ✓ Quantitative and/or qualitative results
- ✓ Beneficiary reach
- ✓ Policy or institutional impact
- ✓ Sustainability indicators
- ✓ Supporting documentation (reports, data, media links) should be attached.

TO SUBMIT

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JUDGING PROCESS

The judging process will be conducted by an independent multi-stakeholder panel comprising: ICT industry experts

Judges will:

- Review submissions independently
- Score entries based on agreed criteria
- Ensure fairness, transparency, and conflict-free procedures

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All eligible submissions will be assessed against the following criteria:

Criteria Weighting

Impact and Measurable Results – 30%

Innovation and Creativity – 20%

Sustainability and Long-Term Value – 20%

Scalability and Replicability – 15%

Governance and Implementation Effectiveness – 15%

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & COPYRIGHT

Applicants retain full ownership of all intellectual property related to their submissions.

It is the responsibility of the submitting organisation to ensure that all materials provided:

- Do not infringe third-party intellectual property rights
- Comply with applicable copyright laws
- Have obtained necessary permissions for multimedia content

By submitting an entry, applicants grant the CTO permission to use submitted materials for promotional and communication purposes related to the Awards, unless otherwise specified.





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CONTACT INFORMATION

Send enquiries regarding
submissions to:
Awards@cto.int

