

LATAM Smart City Awards

RULES OF PARTICIPATION

Participation in this call for entries implies full acceptance of these rules

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1. Introduction

According to United Nations projections, the world population will double from 3.4 billion in 2009 to 6.4 billion in 2050. This gives cities a highly important role in the future of our planet, as they will face challenges related to growth, climate change, traffic congestion and pollution, a lack of adequate and affordable housing, education and health, and the integration of refugees and immigrants into urban life, among many other urgent issues and inequalities.

In Latin America, 1 in 3 people lives in urban areas, which represents 80% of the region's total population. This figure is expected to increase by 2050; in fact, it will reach 90%. This exponential urban growth represents one of the greatest dichotomies in the region's development. On the one hand, it brings prosperity and opens up opportunities for development (economy, innovation and multiculturalism); however, it also poses a major challenge, as it brings with it obsolete and insufficient infrastructure, lower-quality services and public spaces, mobility problems, pollution and climate change, among other social issues such as increasing inequality.

To address this situation, smart urban management and planning can be a powerful tool for achieving the sustainability of cities and territories. In recent years, the Smart City concept has emerged as a way to tackle these challenges, with the aim of using innovation and new technologies to foster sustainable urban development and a good quality of life for residents.

2. Smart City Expo LATAM Congress

Created in 2011 by Fira Barcelona, Smart City Expo World Congress has become the world's leading event on Smart Cities. As a result of its success, many cities around the world have expressed interest in hosting their own editions of the event. This led to the creation of international SCE editions, which are now present on four continents.

The largest of all the international editions is Smart City Expo LATAM Congress, which will hold its 12th edition at Expo Santa Fe in Mexico City from March 10 to 12, 2027.



3. Call for Entries

Following the success of the World Smart City Awards organized by the Barcelona event, Smart City Expo LATAM Congress has also created an open awards call under the name LATAM Smart City Awards. The purpose of this call is to recognize the work of cities that have been implementing innovative and sustainable projects in Latin America. This year's categories, consolidated over the past six editions of the LATAM Smart City Awards, are: LATAM City, Digital Transformation, Sustainable Urban Development and Mobility, and Equitable and Collaborative Society.

The LATAM Smart City Awards are organized by Smart City Expo LATAM Congress, powered by Fira Barcelona International, with the support of the Federal Government of Mexico.

4. Who Can Participate?

The LATAM Smart City Awards are open to public- and private-sector organizations and companies that have implemented projects in Latin America: cities, companies, entrepreneurs, startups, digital innovation centers, developers, research centers, universities, civic-tech organizations, civil society representatives, non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, public-private consortia, and social activists with innovative ideas, research, analyses, studies, visions and solutions for the management and development of our cities.

5. Award Categories

The LATAM Smart City Awards feature four categories:

LATAM City Award

The LATAM City Award recognizes a city, metropolitan area, region or territory in Latin America that has implemented a comprehensive strategy and achieved notable progress reflected in improved quality of life for its residents and reduced gaps at different levels. This may have been achieved through urban projects addressing economic, social and territorial issues, such as long-term strategic city development plans; long-term sectoral plans for sustainability, climate change, mobility, water management, quality of life, etc.; as well as comprehensive plans such as neighborhood or district regeneration, socio-environmental recovery of urban spaces, smart tourism destinations, among others.



The evaluation will consider the demonstrated impact of the strategy to date and will particularly seek to recognize the cross-cutting nature of the initiatives, their citywide reach, their long-term vision, and related aspects.

Entries for the LATAM City Award may only be submitted by the governments of the cities or territories concerned. Any entry submitted by a private or non-governmental entity will be disqualified.

We recommend submitting cities that have a clear urban strategy and relevant projects across several areas, combining the different projects and initiatives developed. Alternatively, if the applicant considers it appropriate, those projects or initiatives may also be submitted individually.

Digital Transformation Award

The Digital Transformation Award recognizes organizations that have successfully designed and implemented projects in which innovation and technology serve as drivers of change in cities, accelerating transformation through new digital infrastructure that supports and advances all areas of the region's Smart City model, for example by improving governance or reducing social and economic gaps.

The proposal may address multiple urban areas or focus on a single area. The strongest proposals in this category should strike a balance between innovative features, proven impact to date and clear evidence of continued viability.

This award is intended for, but not limited to, the design and implementation of public services, hardware and/or software development, technological infrastructure and systems, buildings, parks and public spaces, and implementation policies, among others. In case of doubt, we suggest contacting the Technical Office using the email address provided in Section 14, "Questions and Suggestions."

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

Projects may be submitted by entrepreneurs, research centers, public or non-governmental organizations, or public-private entities. Participants must have implemented their projects in the public service of at least one city.



Sustainable Urban Development and Mobility Award

The Sustainable Urban Development and Mobility Award recognizes initiatives that, through plans, policies, technological solutions and collaboration among different transformation stakeholders, contribute to improving quality of life, economic development, environmental preservation, energy, resilience, safety, financing, legislation, territorial integration and the optimization of travel times in cities.

The objective is to submit a comprehensive sustainable project in the fields of mobility and urban planning and development, which may be at different stages of implementation, and which stands out for its innovative and far-reaching approach. In addition to their innovative features, initiatives will also be evaluated on the basis of their projected impact and the demonstrable feasibility of their implementation.

This award is intended for, but not limited to, the design and implementation of public services, hardware and/or software development, technological infrastructure and systems, buildings, parks and public spaces, transport planning, urban regeneration projects, new urban developments, public transport initiatives and implementation policies, among others. In case of doubt, please contact the Technical Office using the email address provided in Section 14, "Questions and Suggestions."

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

Projects may be submitted by entrepreneurs, research centers, public or non-governmental organizations, or public-private entities. Participants must have implemented their projects in the public service of at least one city.

Equitable and Collaborative Society Award

The Equitable and Collaborative Society Award recognizes projects that promote citizen empowerment and encourage people to take an active role in city transformation processes through innovative initiatives and solutions whose contribution is reflected in reduced inequality and poverty, active social participation and open government.

This recognition considers concepts that promote the development of new ideas aimed at improving quality of life and equality, reducing poverty, and fostering collaboration among



governments, companies and civil society organizations, as well as their significance and inclusion within their traditional roles.

This award is intended for, but not limited to, the design and implementation of public services, initiatives developed by and for the community, access-to-public-service initiatives, cultural projects, projects aimed at reducing inequalities, civic technology development, social innovation projects, public-space projects, cultural initiatives and implementation policies, among others. In case of doubt, please contact the Technical Office using the email address provided in Section 14, "Questions and Suggestions."

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

Participating institutions must have implemented projects in public service in Latin America in at least one city.

6. Deadline

All applications must be submitted through the platform established for this purpose by December 1, 2026, at 23:59:59 (Central America Time).

7. Evaluation Criteria

The quality of each proposal will be assessed according to the criteria set out in the rubric below. Each project will be scored on innovation, impact and feasibility. For each dimension, a score will be assigned based on the extent to which the submission demonstrably meets each of the listed criteria. Submissions consisting of innovative ideas will be evaluated using criteria that differ slightly from those applied to submissions presented as a City or Project, as quantified in the rubric on the following page.



Innovation - Criteria considered:

- Demonstration of an innovative approach.
- Identification of an unmet need or unresolved problem.
- Identification of a previously unidentified critical issue.

Impact - Criteria considered:

- Demonstration of clear, significant and tangible impacts (or potential impacts).
- Quantification of the scale of the impacts (or potential impacts).
- Focus on sustainability or citizen participation.
- Demonstration that the impacts have not been achieved by other initiatives.
- For research or comparative analyses, demonstration of a clear contribution to future action plans and decision-making processes.

Feasibility - Criteria considered:

- Demonstration of a track record of success, including the current status along the development timeline.
- Identification of collaboration among citizens and the public and private sectors within the proposal.
- Demonstration of financial and logistical feasibility.
- Not applicable to research and comparative analysis or to a more analytical and theoretical proposal.



Evaluation rubric:

Points	Innovation	Impact	Feasibility
4	> Clearly demonstrates a highly innovative perspective in relation to the prevailing paradigm, including a review of existing approaches and an explanation of why the submission is innovative by comparison. AND > Clearly defines a strong unmet need or unresolved problem being addressed.	> Demonstrated impacts (or potential impacts) are clear, tangible and significant over a defined period of time, including a focus on sustainability or citizen participation. AND > The scale of the impact / size of the population affected is demonstrably significant. AND > Demonstrates that the impacts (or potential impacts) have not been achieved through other interventions.	> (Implemented project) Has established a track record of success; clearly describes the development cycle, including information on current status; addresses questions of financial and logistical feasibility; involves the public sector, private sector and civil society. > (Proposed project) Clearly sets out the development, piloting and scaling model for the idea, including key performance indicators; addresses questions of financial and logistical feasibility; involves the public sector, private sector and civil society.
3	> Clearly demonstrates an innovative approach. AND > Clearly defines a strong unmet need or unresolved problem being addressed.	> Demonstrated impacts (or potential impacts) are clear, tangible and significant over a defined period of time; includes a focus on sustainability or citizen participation. AND > The scale of the impact / size of the population affected (or potential impacts) is demonstrably significant.	> (Implemented project) Clearly describes the development cycle, including information on current status; addresses questions of logistical and financial feasibility. > (Proposed project) Clearly sets out the development, piloting and scaling model for the idea.
2	> Demonstrates a limited or minimally innovative approach. OR > Defines an unmet need or unresolved	> Demonstrated impacts (or potential impacts) are clear and tangible, but not significant. OR > The scale of the impact / size of the population	> (Implemented project) Describes the development cycle, including information on current status, but feasibility remains uncertain or not all financial and logistical feasibility issues are



	problem being addressed that is limited or relatively non-urgent.	affected (or potential impacts) is limited or has been replicated elsewhere.	addressed. OR > (Proposed project) Describes the development, piloting and scaling model for the idea, but feasibility remains uncertain.
1	Does not demonstrate innovation: other projects, initiatives or strategies use a similar approach. OR Does not address an unmet need or unresolved problem.	Demonstrated impacts (or potential impacts) are minimal or not material. OR The scale of the impacts / size of the population affected (or potential impacts) is minimal or not material.	Does not make a persuasive case for feasibility.
0	Does not include information regarding the proposal's innovative characteristics. OR Does not include any information regarding the unmet need or unresolved problem being addressed.	Does not include any information regarding the impact of the proposal. OR Does not include any information regarding the scale of the impact or the size of the population affected.	Does not include any information regarding the feasibility of the proposal.



8. Evaluation Process

The evaluation process is divided into two phases:

1. Compliance and Shortlisting Rules

The Organization and a Technical Committee of experts working in the thematic areas covered by the awards will conduct an initial assessment to verify whether the proposal meets the defined requirements and selection criteria.

Proposals may be subject to requests for additional information or clarification from the Technical Committee of experts. All participants must be available to respond to any such request from the date of registration through January 7, 2027.

Three finalist candidates per category will be shortlisted. Shortlisted finalist candidates in all categories will be notified starting January 20, 2027.

On March 11, 2027, during Smart City Expo LATAM Congress, the LATAM Smart City Awards ceremony will be held, where all winners will be announced.

All selected finalists in each award category will be required to attend the awards ceremony. For organizational purposes, all shortlisted finalist candidates must confirm their participation in the ceremony by February 12, 2027.

The Organization will cover the following for each FINALIST:

- Round-trip economy-class airfare to Mexico City for one person¹
- Accommodation during the event (2 nights) in a single room*
- Airport and congress transfers at times made available by the Organization.
- 2 VIP Guest passes for all 3 days of the congress

*Not applicable when finalists are for-profit companies.

¹ Airfare caps: departures from Mexico - MXN \$5,000;
Central America-Mexico-Central America - MXN \$10,000;
South America-Mexico-South America - MXN \$15,000;
Europe-Mexico-Europe - MXN \$20,000.



The presence of a senior representative of the organization is a mandatory condition for confirmation as a finalist. If any shortlisted candidate is unavailable to attend the awards ceremony, the Organization reserves the right to select another candidate that meets all finalist requirements.

Once finalists have been notified, the Organization may request additional information about the project and the finalists for communication and promotional purposes.

In exceptional cases, proposals may be reassigned to a different category in accordance with the observations of the Technical Committee of experts. The candidate will be informed in due course.

2. Selection of Winners

A panel of international judges will evaluate the projects and select the winner in each award category from among the finalists. Proposals may be subject to requests for additional information or clarification from the jury during this final evaluation stage. Selected finalists must be available to respond to any request from January 20 to February 12, 2027, and must share audiovisual content (a 30-second video about the project or high-resolution images) for the awards ceremony.

Representatives of finalist projects undertake to keep their status as finalist or winner confidential and secret until the Organization makes the corresponding lists public. This includes a commitment not to provide information or publicly disclose finalist or winner status, particularly to the media, on social media or through any other channel. Failure to comply with this obligation will, in all cases, result in the removal of the entry from the final winner-selection process.

The winners will be announced at the LATAM Smart City Awards ceremony, to be held during Smart City Expo LATAM Congress at Expo Santa Fe, Mexico City, on March 11, 2027. The jury may decide not to grant an award in any category.



9. Awards

Smart City Expo LATAM Congress will grant the winners the following awards. All benefits apply to the 2028 edition of Smart City Expo LATAM Congress.

LATAM City Award

- 18 m² stand space in the Expo Area
- 1 speaker slot in a LATAM Congress 2028 session
- 10 passes for the 2028 edition (Congress and Expo included)
- 2 VIP passes for the 2028 edition
- Promotion of the award through the event's media channels

Digital Transformation / Sustainable Urban Development and Mobility / Equitable and Collaborative Society / Socioeconomic Reactivation Awards

- 9 m² stand space in the Expo Area
- 1 speaker slot in a LATAM Congress 2028 session
- 8 passes for the 2028 edition (Congress and Expo included)
- 1 VIP pass for the 2028 edition
- Promotion of the award through the event's media channels

10. Restrictions

Institutions represented on the jury may not participate in the LATAM Smart City Awards.



11. Schedule

Important Dates	Tasks
October 5, 2026	Launch of the awards call for entries
December 1, 2026	Deadline for proposal submissions
Through January 7, 2027	All participants must be available to respond to any request for information or clarification from the Technical Committee of experts
Starting January 20, 2027	Selected finalists in all categories will be notified, and the Technical Secretariat will provide support for travel arrangements as well as participation in the final decision process and the ceremony.
By February 12, 2027	Finalists will confirm their participation in the awards ceremony
Between January 20 and February 12, 2027	All finalists should be available to respond to any request for information or clarification from the jury that will make the final decision on the winners
March 10, 2027	Opening of the 12th edition of SCEL C
March 11, 2027	The winners of each category will be announced at the LATAM Smart City Awards ceremony
March 12, 2027	Closing of the 12th edition of SCEL C

12. Intellectual and Industrial Property Rights

The participant is responsible for the authorship of the submitted proposal; the participating organization is the owner of the intellectual property rights and, where applicable, the industrial property rights.

The participant is responsible for ensuring that the submitted proposal does not infringe intellectual property rights, industrial property rights, copyright and/or image rights and assumes full responsibility with respect to third parties. The Organization is released from any liability.

If the proposal is shortlisted, the participant authorizes the Organization to disseminate, reproduce and publish the proposal in any format and through any medium for the purpose of promoting Smart City Expo LATAM Congress.



13. Information Protection

Due to the sensitive nature of the information provided, the award organizers, the coordinator, and the members of the jury and Technical Committee of experts undertake to keep confidential, outside the scope of the LATAM Smart City Awards, the identity of the participants and the content of their projects. This also includes any information concerning the current status of use or development of the project.

Once a proposal has been selected as a finalist, the award organizers may disclose any details considered public (project title, responsible organization, person in charge, websites, description, submitted images, purpose and category).

14. Questions and Suggestions

If you have any questions or suggestions, please write to the following email address: scelc.techsec@firabarcelonaint.com or call: +34 934 097 482.

15. Keywords

Please refer to this section for the topics to be covered in the 2027 edition and a guide to the main keywords that will be considered for participation in the awards.

You will need to prioritize and select only one topic to which your proposal relates. Submissions must address one or more keywords from this list. Additional keywords may also be suggested in the online form. Please do not hesitate to contact the Organization if you have any questions.



2027 TOPICS	Keywords
LATAM City	Urban strategy · Strategic plans · High-impact public policies · Urban and environmental regeneration · Accessibility · Reducing inequalities · Local economic development · Quality of life
Digital Transformation	Data · GovTech · AI · Big data · Connectivity · Cybersecurity · Privacy · IoT · Cloud computing · Industry 4.0 · Digital business · Digital infrastructure financing · Living labs · Innovation ecosystem · Technological innovation · Talent and knowledge · Entrepreneurship · Startups · Technology and innovation parks · Digital economy · Digital inclusion · 3D printing · Knowledge society · Digital participation · Collaborative economy · Open Government · WeGov · Civic technologies · Government-citizen interaction · Collective intelligence · Digitalization of public services · Training · Accessibility · Transparency
Sustainable Urban Development and Mobility	Public spaces · Urban green spaces · Land-use planning · Metropolitan management · Urban design · Green belts · Social life in cities · Culture in the streets · Universal design · Accessibility · Urbanism · Land-use planning · Metadesign · Urban redevelopment · Quality of life · Historic heritage · Historic centers · Natural and archaeological areas · Energy efficiency · Renewable energy · Urban renaturalization · Water management · Sustainable management · Green infrastructure · Transit-oriented development · Electric mobility · Accessibility and mobility · Cycling mobility · Pedestrian mobility · Mobility as a Service (MaaS) · Infrastructure · Last-mile logistics · Micromobility
Equitable and Collaborative Society	Active citizenship · Citizen participation · Reducing social and economic gaps · Equality · Education · Inclusion · Community development · Bottom-up initiatives · Social innovation · Poverty reduction · Health and education · Well-being and quality of life · Open government · Collaboration · Civil society · Accessible public services · Cultural projects · Civic technologies · Social innovation

16. Additional Information

If you are interested in commercial opportunities to strengthen the visibility of your company and/or institution's brand at Smart City Expo LATAM Congress, please contact andres.bonilla@pronus.events.



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