



EDUCATING CITIES' **AWARD**

2026

**GOOD PRACTICES IN EDUCATION AS A
SOURCE OF INCLUSION AND SOCIAL
COHESION**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Educating Cities

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1. Introduction and theme of the call

The Educating Cities Award aims to recognise and give international visibility to the work conducted by the Educating Cities, as well as to highlight best practices that can inspire other cities in the construction of more educating environments.

The Prize will be awarded to three innovative experiences from three different member cities, which fall under the theme:

“Education as a Source of Inclusion and Social Cohesion”.

Cities are the spaces where fragmentation, social polarization, and inequalities become evident. These inequalities often lead to exclusion, weakening the mechanisms that in the past were capable of fostering social cohesion.

Cities are also spaces of contradictions. Alongside these exclusionary processes, they are also home to some of the best inclusive initiatives aimed at supporting disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Initiatives based on education, job opportunities, participation in the city's cultural life... among other, seek to counteract these dynamics and promote more inclusive and cohesive cities that leave no one behind.

Principle 17 of the Charter of Educating Cities on “Inclusion and Social Cohesion” states:

“Cities should develop policies against the various mechanisms of violation of rights, exclusion and marginalisation.

In particular, they will attend newcomers, migrants or refugees, who in addition to the right to freedom of movement between countries, have the right to feel the city in which they arrive as their own. Their interests, specific needs, knowledge and skills should be valued to allow them to develop a recognised role in society. Cities will also dedicate efforts towards fostering social cohesion between neighbourhoods and all their inhabitants, no matter their status or condition.

With the same aim in mind, attention will also be paid to local collectives that suffer from social stigmas and marginalisation. The educating city will commit to eradicating all forms of violence and harassment, paying special attention to violence related to gender, sexual identity and orientation, origin and ethnicity, age, physical appearance, etc.”

Besides, SDG 4 sets the objective of: “Ensuring inclusive, equitable, and quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

For these reasons, the present call focuses on Education as a Source of Inclusion and Social Cohesion and is structured around the following key areas:

1. Lifelong Education

- a) Innovative initiatives aimed at promoting the integration of disadvantaged individuals and groups into the education system, as well as ensuring their continuity (e.g., second-chance schools).
- b) Mentoring and support initiatives that enable access to and completion of higher education for disadvantaged individuals and groups.
- c) Lifelong education innovative initiatives that promote well-being and personal growth among disadvantaged groups (such as people with disabilities, migrants, the elderly, etc.).
- d) Initiatives that foster gender equality in education and encourage scientific and technological vocations among girls.
- e) Initiatives aimed at creating safe, non-violent, inclusive, and high-quality learning environments.

2. Socio-Labour Integration

- a) Vocational training and employment innovative initiatives, aimed at disadvantaged groups.

- b) Initiatives that provide support for labour integration for disadvantaged groups (such as Job First initiatives, among others).
- c) Initiatives that promote entrepreneurship and the creation of cooperatives, among vulnerable groups.

3. Cultural and Community Life

- a) Innovative initiatives that promote social cohesion and inclusion of disadvantaged groups through cultural, artistic, sports, and recreational activities, etc.
- b) Initiatives that enhance participation, and active citizenship, through platforms that listen to and take into account the voices of disadvantaged groups.
- c) Innovative initiatives that encourage relationships and interactions among diverse groups, promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities, migrants, the elderly, women, etc.

Here below you will find the terms and conditions of the sixth edition of the Award. All eligible member cities are encouraged to apply.

2. Description

The Award, which is given out every two years, is the highest recognition of the International Association of Educating Cities to three successful innovative experiences from three different cities with measurable results of their impact on improving the living conditions of citizens, in keeping with the principles of the Charter of Educating Cities.

The Award will consist of a diploma that will be awarded during the 17th International Congress, which will take place in Granollers (Spain) in May 2026.

The costs of registration travel (economy class air travel) and accommodation in the host city of the Congress for the three winning cities will be covered by the IAEC (one person per city).

The IAEC will also finance the editing of a video of each of the winning experiences.

The three best practices awarded the Prize will be widely disseminated through the various communication channels of the Association and may be included in different IAEC publications. In turn, the awarded experiences will be promoted as model initiatives among the educating cities, fostering their knowledge and replication.

Technical study visits to the winning and finalist experiences will also be promoted.

3. Requirements

The requirements that initiatives must meet in order to be eligible for the Award are detailed below. Failure to comply with any of these requirements may disqualify the candidatures.

- Be a member of the IAEC (cities that are members of the Jury, the host city of the 18th Congress and the winning cities of the 2024 edition are excluded from participating).
- Be up to date with the payment of membership fees.
- Experiences should address the theme "Education as a Source of Inclusion and Social Cohesion", and should be in connection with one of the following cornerstones:
 1. Lifelong Education
 2. Socio-labour Integration
 3. Cultural and Community Life
- Experiences must have started before June 2023.

- The positive impact of the initiative should be accredited, with an evaluation to back it up.
- Must be promoted by the local government, but special value will be given to those developed jointly with civil society and/or the enterprises, mobilising different local actors.
- Explicitly state its educational aspects, that is, the educational intentionality of the experience.
- Be totally or partially transferable.
- Be endorsed by the Mayor of the Municipality, by means of a letter citing the experience/s submitted for the Award.
- Be accompanied by high quality photographs.

4. Formalities

- The IAEC Secretariat will be in charge of inviting member cities to participate, receiving the applications, sending them to the jury members and publicising the award-winning experiences.
- All member cities will receive the terms and conditions of the Award (with the participation criteria and the application form), which will also be available on the IAEC website: www.edcities.org.
- Each city may submit a maximum of 2 experiences.
- The application dossier will be submitted to the Secretariat through the online platform enabled for this purpose, accessible via the following link: <https://proposals.bidce.org/en/AW-ARD-2026>.
- Only documentation in virtual format will be accepted; physical documentation will not be admitted. In case of experiencing any problem with the application, you can contact us via email at: edcities@bcn.cat

- The application dossier for each experience must consist of:

COMPULSORILY:

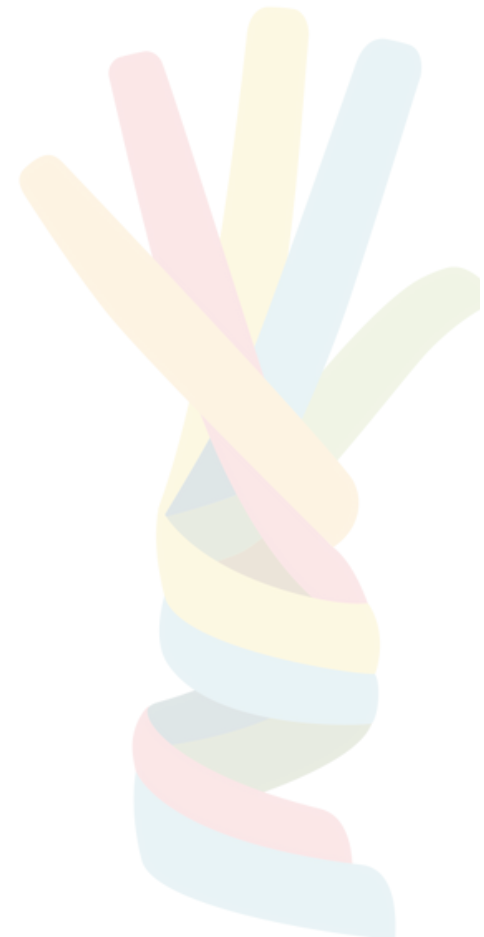
- The basic application form in English and two of the other IAEC official languages (Spanish, French and/or Portuguese).
- Letter from the Mayor of the city, written in one of the official languages of the IAEC, supporting the application (in the case of two experiences, a single letter mentioning both can be submitted).
- A minimum of 5 High quality photographs illustrating the experience(s).

OPTIONALLY:

- Videos, complementary materials, website....

- You will receive an automatic confirmation reply informing that the application has been received. However, it is the responsibility of the candidate city to ensure that all required documentation is submitted through the application.
- The Secretariat will publish the list of experiences received on the IAEC website: www.edcities.org.

- After the deadline for sending applications, cities will have a set time to correct any defects or deficiencies with respect to the required documentation. After this period, applications will be ruled out if these defects have not been corrected.
- Applications outside the theme of the Award will be discarded, as will those that arrive after the stipulated deadline.
- The Secretariat may contact the candidate cities to request further information on a certain aspect of the experience, if deemed necessary.
- In the event of force majeure, the IAEC Executive Committee reserves the right to change the place and date of the award ceremony.
- The presentation of applications and participation in the Award implies the full acceptance of the terms and conditions, as well as any rights and obligations which may arise.
- Finalists and award-winning experiences will be published on the IAEC website.
- In the event of doubts or conflicts in the interpretation of the terms and conditions, the Jury will decide the interpretative meaning of the text and the Spanish version shall prevail.



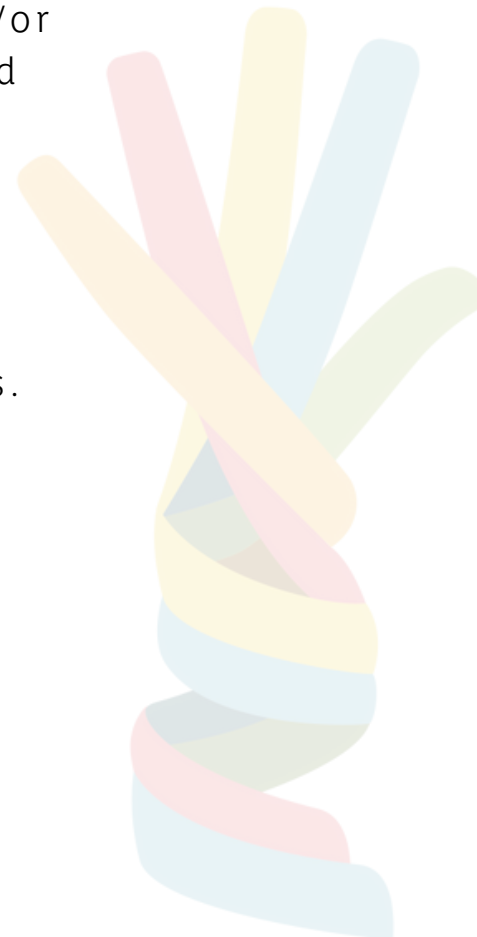
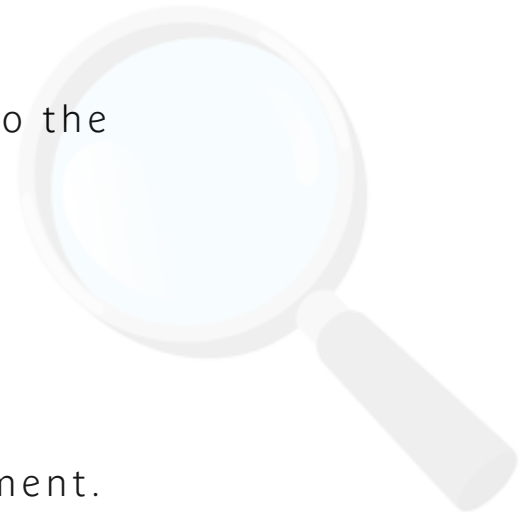
5. The Jury

- The jury will be formed by representatives from two member cities of the IAEC Executive Committee and three academics/specialists.
- The Secretary General of the IAEC or the person delegated by her will act as secretary of the jury, who will be in charge of convening the meeting of the jury, taking the minutes and informing the winning cities. The Secretary General, or person delegated by her, will participate in the process with voice but without vote.
- Executive Committee cities which are members of the Jury may not submit an application.
- The jury will vote with the presence of at least three members.
- The jury reserves the right not to hand out the Award if none of the applications meet the criteria.
- The IAEC also reserves the right to change the line-up of the jury in the event of illness, absence or any reason which makes it impossible for any of its members to attend the meeting.

6. Assessment criteria

The jury will value...

- Connection of the initiative to the theme of the Award.
- Impact of the experience.
- Scope.
- Involvement of local government.
- Collaboration between municipal areas/departments.
- Involvement of civil society and/or the enterprises in the design and implementation.
- Innovation associated with the initiative.
- Transferability to other contexts.
- Consolidation of the initiative.



7. Obligations of Award-winning Cities

- Award-winning cities must send written acceptance of the Award within the deadlines stipulated in the notification message.
- Acceptance of the Award implies participation of the Mayor, or appointed representative, in the XVIII International Congress for its collection.
- Award-winning cities will have to produce a short video (of three to five minutes) summarising the experience for its presentation at the award ceremony, its publication on the IAEC website and other channels. The IAEC will provide funding for the editing of this video.
- They must also publicise receipt of the Award on a local level.
- They undertake to share their know-how with other cities in the network, either through bilateral exchanges or study visits.

8. Calendar

Opening of call for proposals

April 2025

Deadline for submitting applications

15 October 2025

Publication of the provisional list of
received applications in
www.edcitites.org

22 October 2025

Deadline for amendments

3 November 2025

Publication of the final list of
accepted applications

11 November 2025

Jury meeting

January/February 2026

Communication of the Jury's final
decision to the participating cities

February 2026

Award Ceremony at the 18th
International Congress to be held in
Granollers (Spain)

26-29 May 2026