

WIPO City of Innovation
Application and Selection Procedure 2026

I. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. The WIPO City of Innovation award program is open to all cities located in one of [WIPO's Member States](#). Cities of all sizes are encouraged to apply. Individual innovation and creativity stakeholders (cultural institutions, entrepreneurs, artists, etc.) are encouraged to engage with their city leader to discuss the city's potential participation in the award program.
2. For the 2026 edition, applications are open from April 1 to June 30, 2026 at 23:59 p.m. (CEST).
3. WIPO shall accept up to three applications (not from the same city) per Member State, to be submitted to WIPO through the respective country's [Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office and other international organizations at Geneva](#). If no such Permanent Mission exists, the application must be submitted *via* the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of that country. Direct applications from cities to WIPO are not accepted.
4. Each city begins the application process by completing, in one of the six UN official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian or Spanish), the online form which is available at the following link: <https://city-of-innovation.wipo.int>. The online application form has a limit of 1350 words (equivalent to three A4 pages).
5. The application form must be signed off by a duly authorized city representative (e.g. the mayor, governor, head of the city) as part of the online application.
6. Once the online application form is completed, a PDF copy of this form will be available for download. This PDF must be forwarded by the city to either the Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Geneva or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country, and must be accompanied by a request to submit the application to WIPO by June 30, 2026 at 23:59 p.m. (CEST). Please ensure that the Permanent Mission or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has enough time to process and transmit the application.
7. Member States – either through the Permanent Mission or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – must submit a maximum of three applications to WIPO within the submission deadline, that is, by June 30, 2026 at 23:59 p.m. (CEST).
8. If the Permanent Mission or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs submits more than three applications to WIPO, WIPO will admit – out of those submitted - the first three applications based on their completion timestamp in the online system.
9. By submitting an application to WIPO, the Member State certifies that the application has been signed off by a duly authorized representative of the city concerned and that, to the best of its knowledge, all information provided in the application is accurate and up to date. WIPO shall not be liable for any false, inaccurate, obsolete, incomplete or erroneous data submitted by the Member State.
10. Submission of cities' applications to WIPO must be made by the Member State concerned via a *Note Verbale*, including the city's PDF application document as an annex. No other form of submission will be considered.

11. Applications that are incomplete or received after the applicable deadline may not be considered.
12. For any inquiries regarding the application process, please [contact the WIPO Secretariat](#).

II. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The applications shall contain pledge(s) to champion innovation and creativity during a 12-month period. The pledges will be assessed based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Evaluation percentage	
Vision alignment with city profile	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pledge contains a clear, compelling vision with a woven-in strategy (rather than stand-alone initiative) on how innovation and creativity contribute to the city's economic development and impact people's lives. • The pledge presents a narrative of the city's current innovation and creative ecosystem strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. • The pledge integrates with existing city plans to champion innovation and creativity.
Ambition of pledges	60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong applications demonstrate initiatives across multiple areas, from education and IP awareness raising, to infrastructure provision and innovation support services for creators and the cultural sector. • The pledge(s) encourage collaboration between key stakeholders from academia, industry, the creative sector, legal and financial services, and community groups. • A connection to global challenges such as sustainability, climate action or inclusive growth is favourable. • Applications should indicate the intended impact of the pledges – the difference they hope to make in fostering creativity, collaboration, and innovation in their city.
Credibility of pledges	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pledge presents timelines or landmarks, demonstrates intention to track progress and specifies what resources will be committed to the pledges

The WIPO Secretariat will conduct an initial formal review of all eligible applications and will establish a shortlist of approximately 10 to 15 candidate cities based on the evaluation criteria referred to above.

The shortlisted applications will be submitted to, and assessed by, an independent international jury panel, which will evaluate each application against the defined selection criteria. The jury panel is composed of nine individuals with extensive expertise in the

cultural and creative sector, urban planning, a profound understanding of communities and fostering of innovation-driven development. Jury members have been selected by the WIPO Secretariat to ensure diverse representation across geographical regions, age groups, gender, and linguistic background.