

# European Digital Connectivity Awards 2025

EU-wide competition. Guide for applicants.



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## 1 Aim

The aim of this competition is to identify and award good practices in planning, management and implementation of the digital connectivity networks (High Capacity and Very High Capacity Networks) in Europe, as well as to facilitate exchange of expertise among project promoters. The benefit for projects participating in this competition is a wide spread visibility and promotion as a good example for the Digital Connectivity community in Europe.

## 2 Who can apply?

All types of projects advanced in their implementation, irrespective of size, location, or technologies and whether they are led by public or private organisations, local, regional, national, cross-border or international are encouraged to apply.

Target groups of the competition are public entities such as municipalities, regions and Member State administrations, communities as well as private actors such as network and service operators, utilities or other project promoters that are actively involved in rolling out high capacity and very high capacity network infrastructure.

At least **50% of the project** must be completed at the time of submitting the application. Projects with less than 50% of the project activities implemented, are not eligible to apply and will be excluded.

Has the project received national public funding and has it been assessed under the EU state aid rules? If the project has received State Aid: only projects that have received prior State Aid approval, where required, will be eligible for the Awards. You are kindly requested to pay particular attention to the questions relating to State Aid and if not sure to use the link provided where additional information and explanations can be found.

## 3 How and when to apply?

Download the application form (xlsx file) available at the [European Digital Connectivity Awards page](#). Read the guidelines and explanations (in the application form) next to the input fields and fill in the form in English. **Please fill in all fields as far as possible, choose a category where your project fits best. This will help the jury to understand and properly assess your project.** Do not make any structural changes in the application form file; only fill in the input fields. Submit the application (as .xlsx file) by the deadline via e-mail to [broadband@aconium.eu](mailto:broadband@aconium.eu). You will receive an e-mail confirmation.

**The deadline for submitting applications is 2 June 2025, 23:00 CET (end of day).**

## 4 Award categories

The projects will apply and will be awarded in one of the three award categories:

- **Category 1. Excellence and innovation in deployment of Gigabit-Ready Infrastructure.** Designed for projects that deliver high-capacity, future-proof networks, including fibre-to-the-home (FTTH), advanced 5G FWA/mobile or satellite networks, particularly if in combination with other infrastructures (cloud, edged computing, IoT, AI, 3C Networks, etc). The category fosters technological innovation, readiness for current and future demands of connectivity in combination with other digital infrastructures and technologies, promoting new business models for telecom operators.

- **Category 2. Champions in addressing digital divide in rural and remote areas.** Addressed to projects that successfully connect rural, remote, or geographically challenging areas, generating socio-economic benefits, digital divide heroes with for trailblazing projects that deal with and address digital divide by rolling out networks in most difficult to reach areas and territories. The category recognizes efforts to address one of the most challenging aspects of broadband deployment – ensuring no community is left behind
- **Category 3. Cross-border and international connectivity.** Projects in this category are rolling out digital connectivity networks in cross-border regions or multi-country contexts both within the EU or interlinking the EU with other non-EU countries or world regions. Global or regional cross-border gateways, terrestrial or submarine backbone connectivity, fixed or wireless connectivity. The category values efforts of engaging in complex transnational projects as well as delivering holistic, secure and resilience cross border connectivity solutions.

## 5 Who selects the nominees and the winners?

The jury will assess all projects and select the nominees and the winners. The jury is composed of experts in the digital connectivity sector with different professional backgrounds and from different Member States. DG Connect appoints the members of the jury.

The jury will select the nominees for each of the three award categories. The nominees will be informed and announced on the [website](#). All nominees will be invited to an Award Ceremony scheduled for October 2025 in Brussels.

## 6 Announcement of winners and the Award Ceremony

The winners will be announced and awarded at the European Digital Connectivity Awards ceremony where they will be invited to present the project. Winning projects will feature on the [website](#) as well as in a number of events across Europe.

## 7 More information

For further information and support contact:

aconium GmbH

Tel: +49 341 962103 19

E-mail: [broadband@aconium.eu](mailto:broadband@aconium.eu)

The European Digital Connectivity Awards are managed by the European Commission (DG Connect, [CNECT-B5@ec.europa.eu](mailto:CNECT-B5@ec.europa.eu)) with the support from [aconium GmbH](#).