

Voices Awards 2025

Call for Entries

Focus: Journalism

About the Voices Awards

The **Voices Awards** are an annual international competition rewarding innovative ideas and changemakers around the topics of journalism and media literacy.

The Voices Awards are organised within the [Voices Festival](#), a brand-new itinerant event co-funded by the European Commission to celebrate Journalism and Media Literacy in Europe.¹

The Voices Festival has a European focus and aims to help create a European public sphere and change the way we perceive and engage with the media. It serves as a platform for dialogue, connecting the dots between the press, media literacy experts, and European citizens. This Festival adopts a dual focus because it delves into the evolving role of journalism within our rapidly changing media landscape while simultaneously supporting citizens in critically assessing information and navigating technology meaningfully.

The Voices Awards will recognise the works of journalists, teachers and media literacy advocates that best convey the values and goals of the Voices Festival.

The **Voices Awards for Journalism** comprise **five distinct categories**²:

1. **Up-and-coming**: innovative and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence in journalism
2. **Impact**: cross-border investigative reporting
3. **Local resilience**: local reporting for European communities
4. **Remarkable youth**: promising journalists under 30
5. **Emerging talent**: The best of climate journalism

The Voices Awards for Journalism will celebrate **5 remarkable achievements**, each with a **€1,000 monetary prize**.

The prizes are inclusive of the expenses to join the **Voices Festival** in **Zagreb** on **28 February – 1 March 2025**, where the winners will be publicly awarded.

The deadline for submissions is **11:59 PM (CET)** on **15 October 2024**.

For any questions, please contact the European Festival of Journalism and Media Literacy Secretariat at voices.festival@eui.eu

¹ The Voices Festival is organised by a consortium led by the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom at the European University Institute together with prominent European organisations in the fields of journalism and media literacy: the European Federation of Journalists, the EBU-UER European Broadcasting Union, EAVI the European Association for Viewers Interests, Journalism et Citoyenneté, Lie Detectors, and Savoir*Devenir.

² Definitions of these categories can be found on page 3 of this document, together with information on the eligibility and selection criteria.

Entry procedures for all categories

- All entries must be submitted **online** through the **application form** available at [this link](#).
- Entries must be submitted in English. The material attached can be in any of the 27 EU Member States, candidate countries and potential candidates (see General Eligibility Criteria).
- Incomplete entries will not be considered.
- The entry may be submitted in one category only. For any clarifications, please contact the European Festival of Journalism and Media Literacy Secretariat at voices.festival@eui.eu
- Entries may not be submitted by the members of the Selection Committee nor the Voices Consortium.
- By submitting an entry, the applicant agrees to the processing and sharing of data in accordance with the [EUI Privacy Policy](#).
- Receipt of an entry dossier will be acknowledged by an automated message.

General eligibility criteria for all entries

Entries for the Voices Awards may only be submitted from applicants legally residing or established in the 27 EU Member States, candidate countries and potential candidates: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine ([more information here](#)).

Applicants may be natural persons or legal entities (public or private bodies).

Entries may be submitted by media outlets³, freelance journalists, students at schools of journalism and trainee journalists for their published works and operations that support public interest journalism.

Online retailers, search services, portal sites and advertising sites are not eligible.

Anonymous submissions will not be accepted.

³ Media outlets are inclusive of all types: websites, micro sites, blogs, podcasts and all digital platforms where journalists publish original content.

Awards Categories

1. Up-and-coming: innovative and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence in journalism

Purpose

The ability to use AI tools to enforce journalistic objectives and **maintain journalistic ethical standards** is a crucial aspect of this category.

Eligibility criteria

- Entries must be submitted by **journalists** and **media outlets**. Media outlets must be legal entities officially established at least one year before the publication of this call for entries.
- Entries must focus on legacy or digitally native newsrooms **using Artificial Intelligence (AI) completely or partially to deliver high-impact journalism**.
- Entries must show their application of (generative) AI to **develop and disseminate news**. This can be in the form of content development or adaption, newsgathering strategies or data reporting.

Documentation to be submitted together with the application form

- Personal references and/or references to the work of applicants are welcomed.

Selection criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- Relevance for the thematic focus of this category;
- Impact of the use of AI on the development and dissemination of high-impact journalism;
- Adherence to journalistic ethical standards and quality of digital reporting;
- The ability to use AI tools to enforce journalistic objectives and **maintain journalistic ethical standards**.

2. Impact: Cross-border investigative reporting

Purpose

The aim of this category is to spotlight journalists and media outlets who conducted cross-border investigations on European issues that **impact real-world change**.

Eligibility criteria

- Entries must be submitted by **cross-border investigative teams of at least two journalists (including students) and/or media outlets**. Media outlets must be legal.

entities officially incorporated at least one year before the publication of this call for entries.

- The entries must concern **cross-border investigative journalism** in Europe.⁴
- The result of the investigation must be published by **at least two media outlets in at least two different European countries** at the time of the submission.
- Investigative journalism published by independent media in **any form** is eligible, no matter whether print, online, broadcast or cross-media.

Documentation to be submitted together with the application form

- Links to **at least two** original publications of the cross-border investigation;
- Links, videos or other multimedia of reports on the investigation that show its impact on the public interest;
- Personal references and/or references to the work of applicants are welcomed.

Selection criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- Relevance for the thematic focus of this award;
- Cross-border aspect;
- Impact of the story on the general public and/or key stakeholders (e.g. story republished elsewhere or reaction by the general public/institutions/policies/businesses, etc.);
- Team structure and quality of the report.

3 - Local resilience: local reporting for European communities

Purpose

The aim of this category is to spotlight local media outlets based in based in the eligible countries that meaningfully serve their local or minority communities through impactful local reporting.

Eligibility criteria

- Entries must be submitted by **local media outlets** or **collaborative teams**. Media outlets must be legal entities officially incorporated at least one year before the publication of this call for entries.
- Entries must focus on **local reporting** that entails to benefit the public, especially local citizens and communities, whose interests are best served by quality, ethical,

⁴ In this category, Europe is intended as “geographical Europe” and not as EU27

and pluralistic local media.

- The reporting must focus on a **broad audience of the region/location/community concerned**.

Media outlets should already have made **journalistic content available** to the general public **at least one year before** the application deadline of this call.

Documentation to be submitted together with the application form

- Business plan/strategy or business innovation actions (e.g. diversification of revenues);
- Editorial innovation or audience engagement actions;
- Community engagement and innovative community growth plans;
- Native advertising or investment in technical tools.
- Personal references and/or references to the work of applicants are welcomed;

Selection criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- Relevance for the thematic focus of this award;
- Impact of their work to their local audience and community;
- Quality of work.

4 - Remarkable youth: Promising journalists under 30

Purpose

The aim of this category is to reward young journalists under 30 showing excellence in their field.

Eligibility criteria

- Entries must be submitted by journalists (including students) **aged 30 or less** at the time of the publication of this call for entries.
- The work submitted must have been produced **either** by enrolled students receiving academic credit for the work **or** by young journalists with experience of five years or less.

Documentation to be submitted together with the application form

- Each applicant should submit **three published or broadcast pieces of work** produced in the **12 months prior to the publication of this call for entries** for submissions. The entries can be in **any format**: print, audio, video, multimedia or a

combination or all four;

- Entries should provide an explanation of any collaboration undertaken with colleagues or external organisations on the stories they submit;
- Personal references and/or references to the work are welcomed.

Selection criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- Relevance for the thematic focus of this award;
- Impact of their stories on public debate;
- Quality of the work.

5 - Emerging talent: The best of environmental journalism

Purpose

The aim of this category is to pay tribute to the local journalists who play a unique role in providing critical information to the public on environmental issues, and connecting local stories to the broader climate crisis.

Eligibility criteria

- Entries must be submitted by **collaborative teams of journalists** or **journalists** for recognition of their impactful reporting on climate change;
- The submitted piece must address one or more topics related to climate change and its effects. Documentation to be submitted together with the application form;
- Each applicant should submit **up to three published or broadcast pieces of work** produced in the **12 months prior to the publication of this call for entries** for submissions. The entries can be in **any format**: print, audio, video, multimedia or a combination or all four;
- Entries should provide an explanation of any collaboration undertaken with colleagues or external organisations on the stories they submit;
- Personal references and/or references to the work are welcomed.

Selection criteria

The Selection Committee will assess the submitted entries in this category based on the following criteria:

- Relevance for the thematic focus of this category;
- Relevance of report to climate change and its effects;

- Impact of their stories on public debate;
- Quality of the work.

The Selection Process

- Preliminary screening of the entries against the eligibility criteria will be carried out by the Voices Festival Executive Committee, composed by representatives of the Voices consortium. The Executive Committee reserves the right to ask for additional supporting documents or information to verify the eligibility of the entries.
- Examination of the eligible entries and preparation of the shortlist for each category (up to 5 entries) for Journalism will be carried out by the Executive Committee chaired by the European Federation of Journalists.
- The Selection Committee will evaluate the shortlisted entries and make the final selection of the award winners. The Selection Committee is composed by the Advisory Board members of the Voices Festival.⁵
- In case that no entry meets the eligibility criteria or the quality selection criteria for a given category, the Selection Committee reserves the right to award two outstanding entries in another category.
- Applicants will be informed of the decision of the Selection Committee via email by 15 January 2025.

Award ceremony and visibility

- The award winners will receive a monetary award of €1,000 each.
- The public announcement of the award winners will be coordinated by the Voices Festival's Communication Team.
- The award winners will be celebrated during the first edition of the Voices Festival in Zagreb on 28 February-1 March 2025. The winners will have a dedicated space to present their work to the Festival community.
- The award winners will be contacted by the Voices Festival's Secretariat to arrange their participation in situ.
- The Voices team and its communication unit are committed to enhancing the visibility of awardees' work with ad-hoc communication activities throughout the project.
- Awardees will be asked to showcase their work by preparing a short video clip, no longer than 2 minutes, or any other suitable presentation to highlight their achievements and contributions.

⁵ The complete list of the Advisory Board members is available here <https://voicesfestival.eu/about/>

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