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CEI SEEMO Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2026

The CEI SEEMO Award for Outstanding Merits in Investigative Journalism recognises excellence in investigative reporting that fosters informed public dialogue, promotes transparency and accountability, and reinforces the essential role of independent, ethical, and responsible media in democratic societies.

In line with these principles, the Award invites applications from journalists whose work demonstrates relevance, integrity, and societal value, as well as a commitment to the highest professional and ethical standards and a meaningful contribution to the public interest.

Launched in 2008 by the Central European Initiative (CEI) in cooperation with the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO), the award has steadily strengthened its regional relevance and impact over the years. It has become a leading recognition for journalism across South-East Europe and the wider CEI area, as demonstrated by the journalists awarded in [previous editions](#).

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The Call is open to nationals of the following CEI Member States: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine (according to a decision by the CEI Member States, Belarus has been suspended of its rights of representation in the CEI as of 25 March 2022).

The Award is divided into two categories:

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| 1. PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS | 4,000 EUR |
| 2. YOUNG PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS (born on/after 1996) | 1,000 EUR |

Category 1: candidates who have been actively involved in investigative reporting over the last three years and are still active in journalism. Two samples of journalistic work will be relevant for the evaluation from the jury.

Category 2: candidates who have been actively involved in investigative reporting, even in the context of training activities organised by schools/universities/NGOs and, as a result, should have published at least one investigative story meeting all professional standards. One sample of journalistic work will be relevant for the evaluation from the jury.

Print, Radio, TV, news agencies and online media are admitted.

HOW TO APPLY

Candidates shall fill in the **Online Application Form** available here:

https://www.cei.int/contact/application_cei_seemo

The following documents in **PDF format** shall be uploaded:

1. Curriculum vitae (in English).
2. Two recommendation letters (in English) written and signed by trustworthy individuals, journalism and media organisations, media companies, civil society organisations, journalism schools or universities, trade unions or other social organisations from the target countries.
3. Up to three samples of journalistic work in a single PDF document (minimum two samples in Category 1, one sample in Category 2). For online work samples, insert hyperlinks in a PDF document, or print out online articles in a PDF file. Hyperlinks need to be accessible by 15 December 2026. In the case of audio/video material, please upload the files making use of file-sharing services (e.g. WeTransfer or Dropbox) including a script or scenario. Material prepared in local languages should be accompanied by a short summary in English.

Applications that do not include all requested documentation will not be considered.

DEADLINE

Applications shall be submitted by **31 July 2026** (23:59 CEST).

SELECTION

Applications will be examined by an international jury composed of distinguished journalists and media experts from the region. The awarding ceremony will take place during the Southeast Europe Media Forum (SEEMF) to be held in Skopje, North Macedonia, on 16-17 November 2026.

Submissions will be evaluated on the basis of journalistic quality, accuracy, methodological rigor, ethical standards, relevance to the public interest, and demonstrated professional integrity. Particular consideration may be given to reporting that promotes informed public understanding, constructive societal dialogue, and regional cooperation.

FOR INFORMATION

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