2023 eASIA Awards Guidelines

2023 eASIA Awards Secretariat
Chinese Taipei

✂ **Table of Content** ✂

1. Introduction

The eASIA Awards are administered by the Asia Pacific Council for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (AFACT). The event aims at promoting the achievement of AFACT member countries/economies in the development of trade facilitation, electronic business policies and activities, and initiatives for bridging digital divide in the Asia-Pacific Region. The purpose of the eASIA Awards is to recognize the significance and great efforts made within AFACT community and to encourage exchange of best practices. The event also intends to develop the mutual understanding and experience sharing among member countries/economies by showcasing the shortlisted projects in the eASIA Awards Exhibition. The awarded project organizations can also play a role of consultants or trainers to be invited to AFACT member countries/economies where their HoDs deem it valuable to introduce the best practices to their relevant governmental agencies or private sectors.

The eASIA Awards program was initiated by Chinese Taipei in 2002 and commenced its first contest in 2003. Since the past 20 years, there have been totally 147 projects participating in the Awards contest, and 78 projects were selected out for their outstanding performance and showcased in AFACT EDICOM or exhibition once two years organized by the respective host members. We are proud to say that the goals of promoting good practices in informationization and electronization carried out by AFACT member countries/economies have been achieved to a great extent.

For the sake of coping with the trends of digitalization and circular economy, the Awards means to provide a more efficient channel to showcase the accomplishments of data-driven value creation and digital transformation via public-private partnership realized by open data utilization. AFACT 2023 eASIA Awards Secretariat continues to follow 2019 eASIA Awards Guidelines amended by Thailand that include the digital economy trend.

As of July 2023, the Guidelines for 2023 eASIA Awards composition and evaluation criteria are waiting to be approved by AFACT Steering Committee at the AFACT Mid-term 2023 Meeting.

2. eASIA Awards Categories[1]

There are totally three categories of 2023 eASIA Awards, namely:
- ***Smart Governance & Management***
- ***Digital Transformation for SMEs***
- ***Sustainability & Circular Economy***

Smart Governance & Management

Smart governance refers to the application of technology, data, and innovative approaches to improve the efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness of governance systems and public services. It involves leveraging digital technologies and data-driven solutions to enhance decision-making processes, service delivery, and citizen engagement.

The key components of smart governance typically include the follows: digital infrastructure, open data and data analytics, e-government, smart service, participatory governance, smart cities as well as cybersecurity and privacy. And the goal of smart governance is to leverage technology and data to streamline administrative processes, improve service delivery, increase citizen participation, and promote sustainable and inclusive development. By embracing smart governance practices, governments can enhance transparency, responsiveness, and accountability while addressing the evolving needs and expectations of their citizens.

Projects that support the implementation of smart governance and the management of the agencies to make better decisions through the combination of technology-based tools and collaborative governance will be considered for this category.

Digital Transformation for SMEs

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a major role in most economies, and they account for the majority of businesses worldwide and are important contributors to job creation and global economic development. Facing the changing business environment and unprecedented challenges following the Covid-19 Pandemic, SMEs in particular need to embrace and take advantage of digital transformation to sharpen their competitive edge.

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[1] *These categories shall be reviewed once in two years along with this guidance before official announcement of event, and amended by Steering Committee if deemed necessary.*

As such, SMEs are encouraged to adopt and integrate digital technologies and solutions into various aspects of their business operations to enhance efficiency, competitiveness, and growth. The process involves leveraging digital tools, data, and automation to improve processes, customer experience, and decision-making within SMEs.

Through digitized operations, SMEs use digital tools and platforms to streamline internal processes, such as inventory management, supply chain logistics, and production. This can include using cloud-based software for accounting, customer relationship management (CRM), project management, and collaboration tools to increase efficiency and reduce manual work. In addition, digital transformation also empowers SMEs to improve operational efficiency, expand their customer base, and respond quickly to market changes. By embracing digital technologies, SMEs can unlock new opportunities, enhance customer relationships, and position themselves for long-term success in the digital economy.

In this category, we look forward to soliciting projects with the following characteristics: 1) promoting digitized operations of SMEs with lower costs; 2) leveraging digital marketing strategies to expand a wider customer base and market reach; 3) harnessing data analytics tools to optimize business processes; 4) seeking customer experience enhancement; and 5) enabling remote collaboration and work.

Sustainability & Circular Economy

In 1987, the United Nations Brundtland Commission defined sustainability as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." In other words, sustainability is the concept of living and operating in a way that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It involves finding a balance between economic development, social well-being, and environmental protection.

As achieving sustainability requires collective action and collaboration among governments, businesses and individuals, this category therefore aims to recognize distinguished projects demonstrating how innovative applications or solutions make contributions to sustainable developments and to reducing carbon emissions. By embracing sustainable practices, we can create a more resilient and equitable world, where resources are preserved, ecosystems are protected, and people can thrive in harmony with

nature. In addition, this Award also means to inspire further action, share best practices, and highlight the importance of sustainability and low carbon initiatives in addressing environmental challenges and promoting circular economy.

3. Eligibility

The contest is open to any local company/organization nominated by the <u>Head of Delegation (HoD) of AFACT member countries/economies, or by the head of the department in charge of AFACT matters in the organization of National Contact Point within the due time.</u>

4. General Rules & Regulations

(1) Entries must be enrolled as projects instead of individuals or organizations.

(2) The project must be a new venture and initiated in the last three years *(between from to date) with concrete accomplishments*, which had not received eASIA Awards before. Or it is a new phase of a previous project in the last three years, which may or may not participate in the eASIA Awards contest.

(3) Each HoD from AFACT member country/economy can nominate maximal two projects for each of the three categories of the Awards.

(4) The projects can be accepted, if they are executed/implemented in any AFACT member country/economy and are forwarded by the HoD of that member country/economy only.

(5) All entries should be provided in the electronic files as a set of recommendation, application form, and project profile. Files must be submitted in PDF format.

(6) All entries presented in electronic files should be e-mailed to the email address below by **30 September 2023:**
    2023 eASIA Awards Host Secretariat
    Ms. Wendy Yang
    Email: <u>wendyyang@iii.org.tw</u>

(7) The entries will then be reviewed by the eASIA Awards Host Secretariat initially for basic criterion. The Evaluation Committee members will conduct the online evaluation to select the six finalists (two each per category) by **27 October 2023**.

(8) By participating in the awards program, it is expected that the participant has granted the eASIA Awards Host Secretariat and AFACT Secretariat permission to use their project name and abstract

for publicity purposes, for this or similar promotions, without compensation.

(9) The organizer will not be responsible for any loss of intellectual property rights that may result from submitting the project or attending that year's eASIA Awards event.

(10) The organizer will not be responsible for applications not being received due to the following reasons:
  a) Lost, failed, delayed or interrupted connections or miscommunications, or other electronic malfunctions; and
  b) Lost, late mutilated, illegible, incomplete, postage delay or misdirected mailed applications.

(11) The organizer will not be responsible for incorrect or inaccurate entry information, caused by persons or by any of the equipment, or programming associated with or utilized in the program, or by any human error which may occur in the processing of the applications.

(12) The submissions would convey no intellectual property rights to the organizer and sponsors. All entries will become the property of the organizer and will not be returned.

(13) The Evaluation Committee is composed of members from AFACT Steering Committee and specialists recommended by eASIA Awards Host Secretariat. The decisions made by the Committee will be final. In case any member of the Evaluation Committee fails to turn up, eASIA Awards Host Secretariat will substitute him/her with an eminent local expert.

(14) The project leads and/or representatives of the Finalist Projects will have to make physical oral presentations for the Final Evaluation in front of the Evaluation Committee on the day of the Awards Ceremony. A stall/booth will also be provided for each Finalist to showcase its project on the sideline of the Awards Ceremony.

(15) In 2023, the Final Evaluation will be held in early December, when a total of six Finalist Projects will be recognized and awarded publicly at the Awards Ceremony.

(16) The 2023 eASIA Awards Host Secretariat decides to sponsor one person from each Finalist Project hotel accommodation for two nights so that each Project can be presented orally and showcased at the AFACT EDICOM or exhibition.

(17) For any queries, the eASIA Awards Host Secretariat may be contacted.

a. Recommendation Form *(To be filled by the HoD of nomination)*

Recommended Project:
Category: ☐ Smart Governance & Management ☐ Digital Transformation for SMEs ☐ Sustainability & Circular Economy *(Please select only one category for a project)*
Recommended by: (in print by the HoD)
Rational: Signature of the HoD: Date:

b. Application Form *(To be submitted by the project lead)*

Country/Economy:	Date:
Project Title:	
Organization:	
Category: ☐ Smart Governance & Management ☐ Digital Transformation for SMEs ☐ Sustainability & Circular Economy *(Please select only one category for a project)*	
Project Lead:	Job title:
Phone Number:	
Email Address:	
Contact Person:	
Mailing Address:	
Phone Number:	Fax:
Email Address:	
URL (if applicable):	
This form is completed and submitted by (in print): Signature: Date:	

5. Project Profile Template

Project Title:
Name of Project Lead:
Organization/Company:
Nominated by:

Executive Summary

This part should provide sufficient background information which allows the evaluators to understand and evaluate the work without referring to any previous publications on the topic. There should be enough data to provide an overview of the content of the project. Kindly choose references carefully to provide the most important background information.

Project Content

This part of application may include the following:
- Project scope
- Goals and objectives
- Problems and challenges
- Strategies
- Methodology
- Standards (especially developed by UN/CEFACT or other international standard organizations)
- Economic benefits, achievements and impacts
- Next step onward
- Resources (indicate the expense allocated on manpower, hardware, software, networking etc.)

Please be notified that the project profile submitted <u>should not exceed 20 pages</u>.

Nomination materials, including the Recommendation Form, Application Form and project profile, must be duly filled and submitted to eASIA Awards Host Secretariat by <u>30 September 2023</u> via the following contact:

> **2023 eASIA Awards Host Secretariat**
> **Ms. Wendy Yang**
> **Email: <u>wendyyang@iii.org.tw</u>**

After receipt of nomination materials, the eASIA Awards Host Secretariat will send an electronic acknowledgement. It should be ensured that the participants have an acknowledgement within a week of submission; otherwise they could make reference to the eASIA Awards Host Secretariat.

6. eASIA Awards Evaluation Process

All recommended projects of the three categories, namely **Smart Governance & Management**, **Digital Transformation for SMEs**, and **Sustainability & Circular Economy**, need to go through an evaluation process by the Evaluation Committee. The 2023 eASIA Awards Evaluation Committee is composed of AFACT Steering Committee Members and recommended experts. Six evaluation committee members have been elected at the 41st AFACT Mid-term meeting as follows:

1. **Dr. Shinichi Ishii**, AFACT Chair
2. **Mr. Hisanao Sugamata**, Chair of TMC
3. **Mr. Daizo Kiyotomo**, Acting HoD, Japan
4. **Dr. CH Cho**, HoD, Chinese Taipei
5. **Mr. Ian Watt**, UN/CEFACT Bureau Vice Chair
6. **Ms. Vivian Huang**, General Secretary, AFACT Secretariat

The Host Secretariat will invite the following AFACT member countries/economies to nominate additional candidates: India, Iran, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore or Thailand.

The schedule of 2023 eASIA Awards is shown as below. All members' HoDs need to sign and submit the recommended projects of the respective award categories by **30 September 2023** for the online evaluation, which will be held by **27 October 2023**.

	Item	Schedule
1	eASIA Awards Guidelines finalized by Steering Committee & Host Secretariat	11 July
2	Announcement of 2023 eASIA Awards Program	1 August
3	Deadline of submission of nomination materials to Host Secretariat	30 September

4	Preliminary evaluation on nomination materials by Host Secretariat	15 October
5	Online evaluation by Evaluation Committee	27 October
6	Announcement of six Finalists	2 November
7	Finalists confirm their availability to attend the Awards Ceremony and Exhibition	15 November
8	eASIA Awards Ceremony	Early December

The entries for the three categories shall be received by the 2023 eASIA Awards Host Secretariat within the specified time frame. These entries will be first reviewed by the 2023 eASIA Awards Host Secretariat for general eligibility, and then forwarded to Evaluation Committee members along with the evaluation criteria. The Evaluation Committee members, after the online evaluation, will send filled-up evaluation sheets to the 2023 eASIA Awards Host Secretariat. Based on the evaluation sheets received from all Committee members, the 2023 eASIA Awards Host Secretariat will choose two top-ranked projects per category and prepare the list of Finalists as per merit. Accordingly, the list of six Finalist Projects will be announced, and these projects will be invited for exhibiting their proposals on the sideline of the 2023 eASIA Awards Ceremony. All the Finalist Projects need to inform the 2023 eASIA Awards Host Secretariat by **15 November 2023** whether they are able to come to Chinese Taipei for the Awards Ceremony and Exhibition to be scheduled in early December 2023. To encourage participation, the 2023 eASIA Awards Host Secretariat will provide complimentary local accommodation to one representative of each Finalist Project for two nights.

7. eASIA Awards Final Evaluation

During the Final Evaluation to be held in early December 2023 in Chinese Taipei, a physical oral presentation will be made by the representative of each Finalist Project in front of the Evaluation Committee. Scores and rankings will be made to each project by all Evaluation Committee members. Projects will be ranked based on the total scores given by the evaluators: the highest score ranks the first and the like. The ranking order of each project will also be put into consideration should the scores

vary significantly amongst evaluators. Evaluators are reminded not to give scores for respective projects with extreme variation as all Committee members shall exchange views and determine final winners in consensus.

The two top-ranked projects of each category will each be conferred a trophy. The total six eASIA Awards Finalist Projects will be invited to share their proposals on AFACT website for promotion in the AFACT community and the region after they are revised by the project organization within 20 working days after the Awards Ceremony.

8. Evaluation Criteria for eASIA Awards

Smart Governance & Management

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Innovative and Efficient Operations ● Innovating to streamline the normal procedures of work flow and improve efficiency ● Significant deliverables on leveraging digital technologies and data-driven solutions ● Instrumental to define and build smart practices	**30**
Outstanding Performance ● Measurable business and commercial benefits have been achieved ● Measurable performance in terms of social and environmental benefits have been achieved ● Anticipated impacts caused by the implementation of this project are estimated and justified ● Revolution on simplifying, harmonizing, and automating the procedures ● Scalable improvement in increasing transparency and citizen engagement	**50**
Creativity and Systematic Approach ● Innovative application and operation ● Introduction of modern techniques for digital infrastructure, open data and smart service to facilitate convergence of digitalization, responsiveness and accountability	**20**
Total	**100**

Digital Transformation for SMEs

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Innovative and Efficient Operations ● Innovating to streamline the normal procedures of work flow and improve efficiency ● Significant deliverables on leveraging digital technologies and data-driven solutions ● Instrumental to define and build smart practices	30
Outstanding Performance ● Measurable business and commercial benefits have been achieved ● Measurable performance in terms of social and environmental benefits have been achieved ● Anticipated impacts caused by the implementation of this project are estimated and justified ● Revolution on simplifying, harmonizing, and automating the business procedures ● Scalable improvement in lowering costs, expanding market reach and enhancing customer experience	50
Creativity and Systematic Approach ● Innovative application and operation ● Introduction of modern techniques for empowerment of SMEs with digitalized business model	20
Total	**100**

Sustainability & Circular Economy

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Innovative and Efficient Operations ● Innovating to integrate sustainable development into business operation ● Significant deliverables on leveraging digital technologies to promote the sustainability and the circular economy during work process ● Instrumental to define and build the sustainability and the circular economy	30
Outstanding Performance ● Measurable business and commercial benefits have been achieved ● Measurable performance in terms of social and environmental benefits have been achieved ● Anticipated impacts caused by the implementation of this project are estimated and justified ● Revolution on building a business model that helps establish the sustainable ecosystem ● Scalable improvement in supporting the business operation to meet the goal of sustainability	50
Creativity and Systematic Approach ● Innovative application and operation ● Introduction of modern techniques for business transformation in line with sustainable requirements	20
Total	**100**

9. eASIA Awards Ceremony

Based on the results of online evaluation, the six Finalist Projects will be invited to join the Awards Ceremony where the projects will be recognized and awarded publicly. This year's Awards Ceremony will be held in early December in Chinese Taipei.

10. eASIA Awards Exhibition

The six Finalist Projects of eASIA Awards are requested to present their projects during the Exhibition event to be held in Chinese Taipei in early December 2023. These projects will be provided with exhibition space for showcase and will need to prepare their own promotional materials and posters in the sizes specified later.