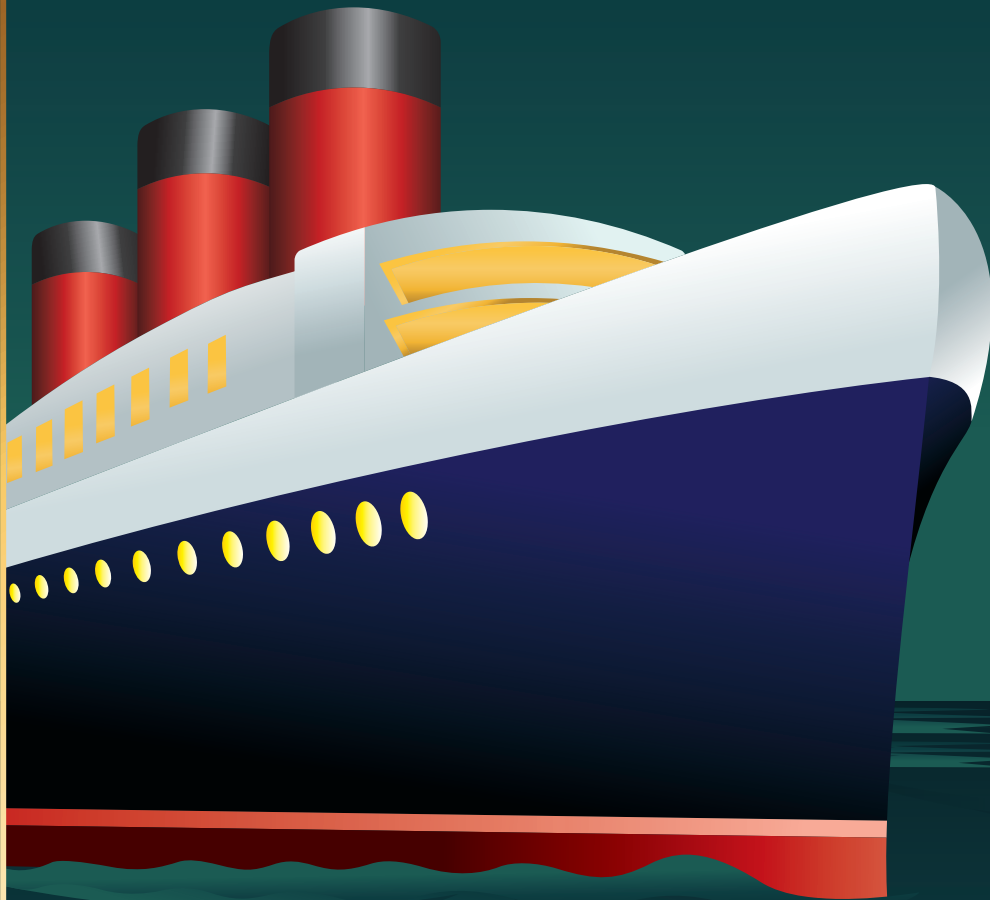


29th ANNUAL
STAR AWARDS

**LIGHTS, CAMERA...
ALL ABOARD!**
CRUISE INTO THE SPOTLIGHT



CALL FOR ENTRIES

ENTRY PERIOD

Programs must have first aired or
published online between
June 1, 2025 - May 15, 2026

Winners Announced at the STAR Awards
Awards Luncheon + Compact Symposium
on the Queen Mary, Long Beach
October 1, 2026



Deadline to enter:
May 29, 2026

Entry Period

Programs must have first aired on cable or published online between
June 1, 2025 - May 8, 2026

Winners Announced at the
STAR Awards Luncheon + Compact Symposium on the Queen Mary, Long Beach, October 1

Background

The STAR Awards were established in 1996 to recognize outstanding video programs produced by public, educational, and government access facilities serving California and Nevada communities.

Judging Process

A minimum of three judges representing video professionals will view videos.

Judges will select up to three finalists in each category.

Entries will be judged on content, creativity and technical quality.

Awards

The first-place winner in each category will receive the STAR Award.

Additional STARS can be ordered at the winner's expense.

Finalists will receive certificates.

Eligibility Criteria

- All entries must be submitted by a local government, such as a city, county, public school district, police, sheriff, or a non-profit organization whose scope of programming includes government access, or other entity serving local government interests in California and Nevada. Each STAR Award is granted only to the jurisdiction or organization, not to individual contributors.
- Videos must have originally aired or published online between **June 1, 2025 - May 8, 2026**
- All entries must be submitted individually through our online entry form. On the entry form, include a link to the video. (For example: YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Vimeo or your channel's On-Demand).
- Categories and Operating Budget breakdowns may be modified to accommodate the number of entries received.
- Entries received by 11:59 pm **May 29, 2026**

How to Enter

- Visit link to enter and pay entry fees capiio.awardsplatform.com
- Choose the category which best describes your program.
- Test your video link. Make sure online title and entry title match.
- Your email submission will be considered signature authorization of entry.
- A video may be entered in more than one category.
- Videos technically unable to view will be disqualified. No refunds.
- Email questions to Suzanne.Bartole@sdcounty.ca.gov OR [Samantha Hardy](mailto:Samantha.Hardy@sdcounty.ca.gov) with CAPIO at members@capiio.org

Entry Fees

CAPIO members fees - **\$65 per entry - April 15 - May 15 (EARLY BIRD)**
\$80 per entry - May 16 - 29

Non CAPIO member fees - \$95 per entry

Payment must be received by the entry deadline **May 29, 2026**

STAR AWARDS 2026 CATEGORIES



NEW & NOTABLE

GENERAL CATEGORIES

Annual Report/Budget Video
Interview/Talk Show/Podcast
General Interest Story
News or Magazine Show
State of the City/County/Town

SOCIAL MEDIA

Best Trending
Event Promotion/Recap

WATER

Water: Education & Awareness
Water: Operations & Infrastructure
Water: Conservation & Sustainability



1 Animal Services

A program or video that focuses on animal care, animal welfare, or pet adoption.

2 **NEW!** Annual Report/Budget

A video that presents an agency's annual report or budget with clear, engaging storytelling and key highlights to inform the public.

3 Arts and Entertainment

A program or video dealing with general entertainment, performing arts, and artist or artistic group profiles.

4 City/County Services Information Video

An engaging video that clearly explains a city or county service, policy, or process. Such as applying for a permit or using a city/county app.

5/6 Community Awareness - (1 full-time video staff) Community Awareness - (2 or more full-time video staff)

Program, story or segment produced to promote general awareness of community programs, services, and activities

7/8 Community Event Coverage - (1 full-time video staff) Community Event Coverage - (2 or more full-time video staff)

A compelling video that captures the spirit of a local community event, such as a parade, dedication, open house, or festival.

9 Diversity/Equity/Inclusion

A video that spotlights diversity, equity, and inclusion by addressing racism, discrimination, inequity, LGBTQ+ rights, and the experiences of marginalized communities. It should showcase initiatives that raise awareness, promote understanding, and inspire positive change.

10 Economic Development

A program or video related to the attraction, retention, or support of local businesses.

11 Education/Schools

Story or program on schools, students, teaching, or education related topics.

12 Emergency Management/Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

Coverage of emergency preparedness, response, or recovery efforts including natural disasters, severe weather events, or public safety emergencies.

STARAWARDS2026 CATEGORIES

- 13** **Environmental Issues**
A video about environmental impact issues, weather, recycling, green waste, or other related topics.
- 14** **Ethnic Experience**
A video that celebrates a distinct cultural tradition, showcasing the people, places, or events that embody its unique heritage, stories, or contributions to the community.
- 15** **NEW! General Interest Story**
A self-contained story or segment created to inform or engage a general audience. Content may include feature, human-interest, news-focused, or narrative storytelling that does not fit another STAR Awards category.
- 16** **Graphic Animation**
Excellence in digital imagery and animation, creating or blending visual elements such as animations, motion graphics, effects, transitions, logos, bumpers, or station IDs to enhance a story or production.
- 17** **HEALTH - Public Health / Mental Health**
An impactful video that addresses public health or mental health issues of community concern, such as mental wellness, immunizations, or disease prevention, to raise awareness or promote positive action.
- 18** **Historical**
A story or program that covers a historical related topic, event, or a story produced for a history museum exhibit.
- 19** **Homeless Solutions**
A program or story that raises awareness about unhoused individuals and highlights efforts to support them or promote a positive change.
- 20** **Human Interest**
A program or story designed to appeal to the human spirit, often creating awareness or prompting action.
- 21** **Instruction/Training**
A clear and effective video such as employee training, staff orientation, or HR policy communication, to inform and engage personnel. (Not-For-Broadcast or Social Media).
- 22** **NEW! Interview/Talk Show/Podcast**
A program primarily centered on conversations or interviews with guests. Entries may include in-studio, on-location, or virtual interviews. Pre-produced or packaged segments may be included but should not exceed 50% of the total program, with the primary focus remaining on the interview or discussion. Video podcasts are eligible in this category; **Audio-only podcasts do not qualify.**

- 23** **Library**
Program or story related to a library topic, such as author interviews, library programs, and events.
- 24** **Military/Veterans**
A program or story meant to educate the public on military or veterans' issues.
- 25** **NEW! News or Magazine Show**
A regularly produced news or magazine-style program that covers current issues, features, commentary, or informational content. Entries must consist of a single, complete episode and should reflect the overall quality, editorial approach, and production value of the program. Compilations are not permitted.
- 26** **Parks & Recreation**
Program or story about a park, rec center, athletic field, or parks related program or service.
- 27** **Profile - Department**
Highlights the resources or services of a city/county or public agency department.
- 28/29** **Profile - Employee - (1 full-time video staff)**
Profile - Employee - (2 or more full-time video staff)
Profiles a city/county or public agency employee.
- 30** **Profile - Resident, Business or Organization**
Highlights a local person, business, or organization. Not intended to cover a city/county or public agency employee.
- 31/32** **Promotion of a City/County/Public Agency - (1 full-time video staff)**
Promotion of a City/County/Public Agency - (2 or more full-time video staff)
Promotes the overall image of a city/county or public agency.
- 33/34** **Promotion of an Event/Program - (1 full-time video staff)**
Promotion of an Event/Program - (2 or more full-time video staff)
Single spot (not to exceed 2 minutes) promoting a community event or specific program.
- 35** **Public Affairs**
A compelling video with in-depth coverage of civic or governmental issues, such as a mayoral show, town hall, summit, or debate, to inform and engage the community.
- 36** **Public Information Series**
Videos having a common theme throughout the series - such as health, public safety, art, etc. The entry must consist of three (3) different segments in the series. Each excerpt should not exceed five (5) minutes in length.

- 37 Public Safety-Fire/EMS**
A video focused on fire or emergency medical services (EMS). Topics may include fire prevention, wildfire preparedness and response, EMS services, community risk reduction, or public education that promote safety awareness.
- 38 Public Safety – Law Enforcement**
A video focused on law enforcement. Topics may include police, sheriff's departments, or specialized units such as bomb squads, as well as community policing, crime prevention, public education, or other efforts that promote safety awareness.
- 39 Public Service Announcement**
Single spot (90 seconds maximum) related to a local government agency supported issue, topic, cause, or service.
- 40 Public/Community Meetings**
Gavel to gavel unedited coverage of meetings open to the public. Such as council, county board, commission, or school board meetings. No highlights may be submitted.
- 41 Seniors**
Program or segment targeting senior community or issues concerning aging.
- 42 Special Audience**
Program, story or segment targeting traditionally underserved audiences such as non-English speaking, neurodivergent or physically impaired.
- 43 Sports Programming - Edited**
A dynamic, edited program that centers on a sports theme as the primary focus. Showcase content such as a Coach's Show, sports highlights, an edited sporting event, or a compelling profile of an athlete, team, or event.
- 44 NEW! State of the City/ State of the County/ State of the Town**
A complete video program of an official State of the City, County, or Town address that highlights the community's vision, priorities, and progress. Programs may be live, live-to-tape, or have pre-produced segments within the address. Entries must be submitted as a full program; highlight reels are not permitted.
- 45 Transportation**
A video that highlights transportation as the central theme. Explore topics such as construction updates, roadways, trains, public transit, airports, or road crew efforts to inform and inspire your audience.

SOCIAL MEDIA CATEGORIES

46/47

Social Media - Short Form (Under 60 seconds) - (1 full-time video staff)

Social Media - Short Form (Under 60 seconds) - (2 or more full-time video staff)

Creative, engaging, and innovative use of video designed for social media that delivers a clear message and focuses on storytelling, visuals, and impact. (vertical encouraged but not required)

48/49

Social Media - Long Form (Over 60 seconds) - (1 full-time video staff)

Social Media - Long Form (Over 60 seconds) - (2 or more full-time video staff)

Creative, engaging, and innovative use of video designed for social media that delivers a clear message and focuses on storytelling, visuals, and impact. (vertical encouraged but not required)

50/51

Social Media Campaign or Series - (1 full-time video staff)

Social Media Campaign or Series - (2 or more full-time video staff)

Connected series of video social media posts that showcase creativity, storytelling, and engagement on a single topic or event. Provide a minimum of two videos in the campaign. Entry description field should include a campaign overview.

52

NEW! Social Media-Best Trending

Innovative and creative use of trending social media features, including trending audio, duets, reactions, pop culture references, or viral formats. (Vertical video encouraged but not required)

53

NEW! Social Media Event Promotion/Recap

A social media video created to promote, highlight, or recap a community event. (Vertical video encouraged but not required)

AGENCY / CONSULTANT CATEGORIES

54

Brand Awareness

An outstanding video or campaign, created by or in collaboration with an agency or consultant, designed to elevate brand awareness. Showcase creativity and impact to effectively engage audiences and strengthen brand recognition.

55

Education

An exceptional video or campaign, created by or in partnership with an agency or consultant, to drive educational content. Highlight innovative storytelling or impactful messaging to engage audiences and promote learning while elevating the brand.

WATER CATEGORIES

- 56** **NEW! Water: Education & Awareness**
A video created to inform and educate the public about water-related topics. Entries may include content focused on water sourcing, quality, safety, system basics, public outreach, or community understanding, with an emphasis on clear communication and audience engagement.
- 57** **NEW! Water: Operations & Infrastructure**
A video that highlights the systems, facilities, people, and processes involved in delivering water and wastewater services. Topics may include treatment and distribution, capital projects, maintenance, recycled water, or behind-the-scenes operations that demonstrate how water services are managed and maintained.
- 58** **NEW! Water: Conservation & Sustainability**
A video focused on water conservation, sustainability, and long-term resource management. Entries may address drought response, water reuse, efficiency programs, environmental stewardship, climate impacts, or efforts to promote responsible water use and protect future water supplies.

SPECIALTY CATEGORIES

- 59** **Content Creator of the Year (1 full-time video staff)**
Submit ten (10) unique programs or segments showcasing diverse topics that celebrate your city, county, or public entity. Entries can be individual video links or a single compilation (max 15 minutes). Highlight your creativity and community pride!
- 60** **Content Creator of the Year - (2-3 full-time video staff)**
Submit ten (10) unique programs or segments showcasing diverse topics that celebrate your city, county, or public entity. Entries can be individual video links or a single compilation (max 15 minutes). Highlight your creativity and community pride!
- 61** **Content Creator of the Year - (4 or more full-time video staff)**
Submit ten (10) unique programs or segments showcasing diverse topics that celebrate your city, county, or public entity. Entries can be individual video links or a single compilation (max 15 minutes). Highlight your creativity and community pride!
- 62** **Member Choice Award Voted on by CAPIO membership**
Share your top video of the year and let our members vote!

