



# State CIO Awards Packet

2026

*"Recognizing excellence in technology leadership is essential to driving innovation and progress. The Oregon State CIO Awards honor innovation and excellence in the use of information technology in state government. By celebrating the achievements and the impacts on the lives of Oregonians, we inspire future advancements and reinforce our commitment to excellence in public service."*

**- Terrence Woods, Oregon State Chief Information Officer**

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## Overview

The State Chief Information Officer awards honor innovation and excellence in information technology in state government. Submitting your project shows your team that hard work pays off and receiving recognition is meaningful. Nominations articulate what you did and why it mattered, promotes awareness of transformative, results-oriented projects.

### 2026 Awards Categories *(in order of priority)*

Categories	Description
Artificial Intelligence/GenAI/Agentic AI/Machine Learning	Governance, policies, use cases, security, privacy, workforce skills, data quality, ethical use, overall adoption
Cybersecurity and Risk Management	Governance; budget and resource requirements; security frameworks; data protection; training and awareness; insider threats; third-party risk; whole-of-state cybersecurity
Budget/Cost Control/Fiscal Management Digital Government/Digital Services	Managing budget reduction; managing federal funding; strategies for savings; reducing or avoiding costs; dealing with inadequate funding and budget constraints
Modernization	Enhancing, renovating and replacing legacy platforms and applications; business process improvement; governance
Digital Government/Digital Services	Framework for digital services; portal; accessibility; identity management; crowd sourcing; security; cross-agency collaboration; privacy; cost/benefit analysis
Accessibility	Ensuring state services, policies, websites, communications, publications and tools are accessible; ensuring accessibility is considered in the state procurement process; compliance with DOJ rules
Identity and Access Management	Supporting citizen digital services; workforce access; access control; authentication; credentialing; digital standards
Data Management and Analytics	Data governance; data architecture; strategy; business intelligence; predictive analytics; big data; roles and responsibilities
Consolidation/Optimization	Centralizing, consolidating services, operations, resources, infrastructure, data centers; communications and marketing “enterprise” thinking
Cloud Services	Cloud strategy; selection of service and deployment models; scalable and elastic services; governance; service management; security; privacy; procurement

## Eligibility Criteria

- Projects being nominated should have been implemented within the past 24 months. “Emerging and Innovative Technologies projects may be in beta phase”.
- Must adhere to the Project Nomination Guidelines outlined in this document.
- Each team will select the categories that best fit the description of their project. Also indicate if it is a small (no oversight-oversight level 1), medium (oversight level 2), or large (oversight level 3) project.
- Nominations and submissions are due by the deadline.
- Projects must be state-focused (not federal/local/regional).
- Project may be a phase of a larger initiative (only the benefit of the specific phase will be evaluated and recognized).

## Nomination Guidelines

- File name must follow the naming convention of AgencyAbbreviation\_Category (ex. EIS\_Accessibility).
- Submissions must be provided as a PDF that is no more than seven pages.
- Cover Page (page one): Include state, agency, awards category, project title, project dates, and contact information.
- Pages two – seven: Executive summary and project narrative broken down by idea, implementation, and impact.
- Nominations may reference private sector partners but must not include logos in the document or company/product names in the submission title.

## Review and Judging Process

Nominations are reviewed for alignment with the award category and the nominator will be notified of any issues and granted five days to resolve the situation. The nominations are judged by a volunteer panel of IT professionals. We will make every effort to avoid potential conflicts of interest. The judges will use the Project Narrative (idea, implementation, and impact) outlined in this document as the basis for their scores. While a project may align with several categories, it will only be judged in one category.

The judges will review the submissions during the judges scoring period and prepare any questions for the nominees ahead of the presentations. Each submission team will deliver a presentation to be delivered to the judges. The presentations will be scheduled for 30 minutes, 20 minutes to present and 10 minutes for questions. We encourage the nominees to bring the key players of their team to the presentation to help any questions.

After the presentations, the judges will then complete the scoring process and reach out to the nominees with any questions needed for clarification. The judges will then submit their final score sheets to the State CIO for review of possible NASCIO Award nominations. All state nominees will be invited to an award ceremony hosted by the State CIO in June of 2026.

## Award Tips

- Creativity is encouraged to help tell the story of the project- visual aids, such as photos, graphs and flowcharts may be included to support the written narrative if the nomination remains within the seven-page limit.
- Supplemental materials – links to project sites may be included, but scores are based on the written content. Please assume judges will not visit external sites. Materials attached to an entry, such as brochures or articles, will not be reviewed.
- Focus on innovation - the focus is on projects that address critical business problems, improve business processes and increase citizen engagement in state government.
- Read, reread, then read again - reading and following requirements is a given. Past that, make sure you carefully read the priority descriptions. While a project may relate to multiple priorities, the descriptions will help you find the right home.
- Tell a compelling story – nominations are limited to seven pages so use the space to draw the judge into the project. Provide context for what you're doing and highlight the difference you're making. Focus on outlining the problem (the why); what it is, who it impacts, why it's worth addressing and why the project solves it.
- Demonstrate the value – after you've shown why your project is innovative and consequential, bring on the data. Include whatever metrics are meaningful to your project.
- Throw in some flair – strategic visual aids can clarify components of your project. Screenshots, infographics, charts, etc. are allowed (and encouraged) in the nomination.
- Put a bow on it – you've worked hard, now show it off with the first thing judges see – the title! While the content is what matters most, your title sets the tone.

## Timeline

Date	Activity Summary
February 17	Awards Kickoff presentation to CIO Council
April 17	All submissions are due to <a href="mailto:cio.awards@das.oregon.gov">cio.awards@das.oregon.gov</a>
April 17- 24	All submissions are screened and any questions submitted to nominee for clarification
April 24	All submissions are delivered to the CIO Award Judges
April 24 – May 8	Judges Scoring Period
May 11 – May 22	Presentations to judges by all submitters
May 22 – May 29	The judges will use this time to resolve any questions or review updated documents from the submitters.
June	CIO Awards hosted by State CIO, Terrence Woods

## Project Narrative Scoring

Idea (25%)	Implementation (25%)	Impact (50%)
<p><b>What problem or opportunity does the project address?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Explain how the project solves a critical business problem, improves business processes, or increases citizen engagement with/access to state government.</li> </ul> <p><b>Why does it matter?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Outline the business rationale for why this problem/opportunity should be addressed and what change it will make for the agency/state/citizenry.</li> <li>· Provide relevant data for support, such as cost, human resources, size of constituent group, consequences of not addressing the issue.</li> </ul> <p><b>What makes it different?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Showcase what makes the project innovative and distinct from similar initiatives.</li> </ul> <p><b>What makes it universal?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Specifically what the project addresses that is universal to all states, such as state or federal mandates, or one of the State CIO Top Ten Priorities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What was the roadmap?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Describe how this project fits into an enterprise view.</li> <li>· Describe the project management approach.</li> <li>· Outline how the project will be assessed and what successful implementation looks like.</li> </ul> <p><b>Who was involved?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· From concept to fruition, profile the groups key to the success of the project, such as legislators, vendors, agency staff or citizens and explain their role, such as advocate, implementation, oversight, end-user or beneficiary.</li> <li>· Share how approval, buy-in, awareness, and adoption were obtained from these stakeholders and include key pieces of communications/marketing plans.</li> </ul> <p><b>How did you do it?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Outline the resources needed, such as financial, human, and time.</li> <li>· Give a brief overview of the technical architecture focusing on why it matters more than how it was delivered, such as technology is new/emerging, or the project uses leading practices or frameworks around cybersecurity, accessibility, privacy, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>What did the project make better?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Tell the story of why the project matters, connecting the results back to the business rationale.</li> <li>· Compare the environment before and after the project was completed.</li> <li>· Describe the benefits and the impact for the nominating agency and constituents.</li> </ul> <p><b>How do you know?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Include the data—quantitative and qualitative—to support the story, such as cost savings/avoidance, ROI, usage, transaction times, customer feedback, constituent experience.</li> <li>· Provide a testimony of either a citizen or business area underscoring the impact.</li> </ul> <p><b>What now?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Detail the longer-term plan for the project, including how will the project be maintained</li> <li>· Tell us why this project is worthy of the initial investment and any ongoing investment.</li> </ul>