

2026 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

NOMINATION DEADLINE AUGUST 1, 2026

Award Categories

Leadership

Marketing

Project



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SEDA's annual awards celebrate the commitment of Saskatchewan professionals and leaders in their work of building vibrant, sustainable communities and regions.

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- Community Influencer of the Year
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Awards Overview

The awards are open to all individuals, organizations, partnerships and jurisdictions within the Province of Saskatchewan. Consultants may submit an entry provided they have permission from the client organization or community.

Entries must have been produced or implemented between January 2024 and April 2026.

Please refer to the list of Frequently Asked Questions on page 10.

2026 Award Categories

1. Economic Development Project
2. Marketing and Communications Initiative
4. Leadership Awards
 - a. Professional of the Year
 - b. Community Influencer of the Year
 - c. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Influencer of the Year
5. John P. Sutherland Lifetime Achievement Award
6. Chairpersons Award

Deadlines

Call for Entries April 1, 2026

Deadline for Submissions August 1, 2026

Judging & Notifications September 30, 2026.

Awards Presentation October 27., 2026

Preparing your Entry

Entry Fees (per entry)

SEDA Members: no charge

Non-Members: \$150 plus GST. Credit Card, cheque or EFT is accepted.

How to prepare your entry:

1. Refer to the Award Category Descriptions and Judging Criteria.
2. Prepare a narrative entry using the Submission Outline provided for each Award Category.
3. Submit entry via email to seda@seda.ca along with supporting materials.

Economic Development Project

Two awards will be given based on the project's overall impact (population under 5000 and over 5000).

This award recognizes a project or program that has had a socio-economic impact on a community or region.

Examples of initiatives:

- Investment attraction
- Business retention and expansion
- Entrepreneurship
- Planning and strategic development
- Sustainable and green development
- Real estate development or downtown revitalization
- Tourist attraction and tourism product development
- Workforce development and resident attraction
- Innovation in community resiliency
- Inclusive community based initiatives and programs

Economic Development Project Judging Criteria and Entry Outline.

Include the following information in your narrative submission.

Name of Organization/Municipality/First Nation

Population Impacted

Title of Submission

Project Partners, if applicable

Contact Name

Contact Information(telephone; email address; physical address)

OBJECTIVES: State the objectives of the initiative and whether they were achieved. Use examples of qualitative and quantitative metrics if possible.

TARGET GROUP: Who was targeted to be reached/assisted and why. Use examples of qualitative and quantitative metrics if possible.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT: What were the projected impacts and was the project successful in achieving them. Were there budgetary constraints or limitations? Did it leverage other support?

UNIQUENESS: What makes this initiative unique in its design, content or delivery? Could it be a model or best practice for the industry or other communities? Did it employ new technology or environmental elements?

INCLUSIVENESS: Is the project inclusive and accessible to a broad target audience? if so, illustrate how and include partners, if applicable.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS: Please include examples of reports, links to websites or other materials that will illustrate the objectives, target group, ROI, uniqueness or inclusiveness of the initiative.

Marketing & Communications Award

Two awards will be given based on the project's overall impact (population under 5000 and over 5000).

This award recognizes marketing initiatives, campaigns or materials used to make a positive socio-economic contribution locally, regionally or provincially.

Examples of submissions:

- General or special purpose website
- Special event marketing
- Branding
- Annual Report
- Advertising
- General or special purpose brochure
- Marketing and communication campaigns

Marketing Award Judging Criteria and Entry Outline.

Include the following information in your narrative submission.

Name of Organization/Municipality/First Nation

Population Impacted

Title of Submission

Project Partners, if applicable

Contact Name

Contact Information(telephone; email address; physical address)

OBJECTIVES: State the objectives of the initiative and whether they were achieved. Use examples of qualitative and quantitative metrics if possible.

TARGET AUDIENCE Who was targeted to be reached and why. Use examples of qualitative and quantitative metrics if possible.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT: What were the projected impacts and was the project successful in achieving them. Were there budgetary constraints or limitations? Did it leverage other support?

UNIQUENESS: What makes this initiative unique in its design, content or delivery?

INCLUSIVENESS: Is the initiative inclusive in its objectives and intended impacts? Did it employ marketing channels that reached beyond the mainstream? If so, illustrate how and include partners, if applicable.



Leadership Awards

Professional of the Year

This award recognizes a Community and Economic Development practitioner in Saskatchewan. It rewards excellence in the field of economic development in the context of economic and social contribution locally, regionally or provincially.

Individuals who are engaged as a professional, technical or management or position in the field of economic development in Saskatchewan may be nominated.

Judging Criteria and Entry Outline.

Include the following information in your narrative submission.

Name of Individual being nominated

Submission prepared by:

Preparer contact Information(telephone; email address; physical address)

Submit a narrative submission no longer than three (3) pages in length double spaced. Letters of support or commendation are encouraged.

Speak to the following if appropriate:

- Business Skills and Leadership.
- Development of strong relationships and community support.
- Voluntary involvement at a local, regional or provincial level.
- Positive impact on other practitioners in economic development.

Letters of support are encouraged.

If possible, please enclose relevant pictures of the nominee and their efforts.



Community Influencer of the Year and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Influencer of the Year

These two leadership categories reflect the importance of a positive influence within the community and economic development ecosystem. Submissions will be accepted by and on behalf of individuals who have made a significant impact on their peers, their industry their community and/or the overall economic development ecosystem.

Community Influencer of the Year - awarded to a community leader (elected or informal).

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Influencer of the Year - awarded to a leader or a professional who has advanced diversity, inclusion and equity in their organization and/or community or region.

Judging Criteria and Entry Outline f Influencer Award Categories

Include the following information in your narrative submission.

Name of Individual being nominated

Submission prepared by:

Preparer contact Information(telephone; email address; physical address)

Submit a narrative submission no longer than three (3) pages in length double spaced. Letters of support or commendation are encouraged.

Include:

- Examples of leadership and associated impacts
- Relationship building and engagement locally, regionally or provincially
- Voluntary involvement
- Letters of support

If possible, please enclose relevant pictures of the nominee to illustrate impact and contributions.



John P. Sutherland Lifetime Achievement Award

The late John P. Sutherland, long-time employee for the Canadian National Railway, was instrumental in the establishment of and fundraising for the Saskatchewan Economic Development Alliance (SEDA). His personal commitment to and support of the Alliance and its members have had a lasting impact on economic development in Saskatchewan.

The award recognizes lifetime achievement and excellence within the field of community and economic development in Saskatchewan.

Lifetime Achievement Award Entry Outline

Include the following information in your narrative submission.

Name of Individual being nominated:

Submission prepared by:

Contact Name

Preparer contact Information(telephone; email address; physical address)

Please submit a narrative submission no longer than three (3) pages in length double spaced. Letters of support or commendation are encouraged. Submit any supporting material digitally as appendices.

The following criteria will be considered in the adjudication process:

1. Consistent exemplary performance in the economic development profession for at least 20 years.
2. Innovative and effective business skills and leadership in executing economic development projects that have had a significant impact on communities.
3. A widespread and positive impact on other practitioners in development with whom the nominee has had contact.
4. Voluntary involvement at a local, regional or provincial level.
5. Awards and other recognition conveyed.

Chairperson's Award

SEDA extends a SPECIAL RECOGNITION award each year to recognize individuals, organizations or communities who have demonstrated a multiyear commitment to the vitality, growth and sustainability of their locale and the province.

Chairperson's Award Entry Outline.

Include the following information in your narrative submission.

Name of Organization/Municipality/First Nation/Individual being nominated:

Name of Project (if applicable):

Submission prepared by:

Contact Name

Preparer contact Information(telephone; email address; physical address)

Please submit a narrative submission no longer than three (3) pages in length double spaced. Letters of support or commendation are encouraged. Submit any supporting material digitally as appendices.

If possible, please enclose relevant pictures of the initiative or nominee to illustrate impact and contributions.

If appropriate, speak to the objectives, impacts, population served, uniqueness and inclusiveness of the initiative or efforts of the individual being nominated.



Frequently Asked Questions

Who judges the awards?

An independent panel of judges is convened every year. SEDA draws from its member and partner network provincially and nationally.

We are not a SEDA member, can we submit an entry?

Awards are open to all individuals, organizations, partnerships and jurisdictions within the Province of Saskatchewan. Consultants may submit an entry provided they have permission from the client organization or community.

Entries must have been produced or implemented between January 2024 and April 2026.

Can I submit for multiple awards?

Your organization may submit multiple submissions for the same category. A separate Entry Fee (if applicable) is required for each.

Can I use one project for multiple awards categories?

Yes, submitting an initiative in multiple categories is acceptable.

Can I submit an entry on behalf of another organization or person?

If you are submitting on behalf of another organization/person, you are required to notify the other party. The nominated organization/individual must be a SEDA member in order to have the entry fee waived.

How do I submit a project with partners?

One of the project partners must make the submission on behalf of the group and must indicate all the partners involved. If the initiative is selected for an award, SEDA will provide one award to the submitting partners. Duplicate awards can be ordered by the award recipient or project partners at an additional cost.

I am not sure which category to enter. Will this affect my submission?

If, after your submission is reviewed, it is found to be an incorrect category or better meets the criteria of a different category than originally entered, it will be moved to the appropriate one and the nominee will be notified.

How will I know that my entry has been received?

A confirmation email will be sent upon receipt of your entry.

If I am nominated but do not win, will I still be recognized at the event?

SEDA will only announce all award recipients.



Submission Support

Narrative submission outlines have been aligned with the award judging criteria. Following the outlines provided will ensure your entry receives full consideration by the panel of independent judges.

Should you require a Dropbox link to transfer large files, please contact Carmen Hesje at programs@seda.ca

Additional questions may be referred to the SEDA office at 306-242-2752 or via email at programs@seda.ca