

Awards of the Global Network on Electoral Justice

Terms of reference 2021

Jury

The Scientific Committee of the Global Network on Electoral Justice (GNEJ) serves as a jury for the GNEJ Awards nominations and will have to decide on the winners of the different thematic categories, based on specific criteria.

The following criteria will be used to filter the nominations and choose the winners: three per thematic category and one overall winner, resulting in thirteen winners in total. The terms of reference explain these criteria.

General criteria by theme and specific criteria by stakeholder

General note for all categories

Both international organizations and academic projects must have a clear referencing system. Any form of plagiarism will be automatically disqualified.

In cases of self-nominations by scholars, these must be complemented by one letter of academic recommendation. Also, for the general award, nominations must be accompanied by one letter of recommendation, regardless of the nature of the nominated actor.

The following criteria are set out to orient the nominations and are not obligatory.

Access to electoral justice

General criteria:

- Making equal access to justice a real practice: verify a concrete and measurable increase in terms of access for one or more social groups that have previously been partially or completely excluded from the judicial-electoral process for social, cultural, educational, physical or geographic reasons.
- Perception of an increase in citizen participation in electoral issues or a reinforced democratic culture, from political dialogue and electoral campaigns, to voting and conflict resolution, with a focus on the exercise of political-electoral rights.
- The action must be original, designed and implemented based on concrete and measurable indicators of the expected result.

Courts and electoral authorities:

- An effort that exceeds routine duties and ensures that judicial-electoral protection transcends the formal, to the substantive. The judgment or program of excellence

must satisfy previously unmet legal needs or expanded services for one or more marginalized segments of the population.

- Promote the Rule of law and ensure equal access for all through institutional strengthening in terms of efficiency, transparency and accountability, inclusion and equal representation, as well as its capacity to respond to judicial-electoral needs.
- Present a methodology for evaluating the impact of its actions or measurable results to support the real and positive effect on access to justice.

International organizations:

- Through international cooperation and transnational experience, achieve the implementation of cutting-edge programs or projects in favor of institutional strengthening on issues of equal access to electoral justice, and the effectiveness, reliability, accountability and legitimacy of these institutions.
- A non-discriminatory, cutting-edge initiative that guarantees citizen participation and public access to judicial-electoral information and/or protects fundamental freedoms and rights, in accordance with best practices and international standards.
- Through a methodology of design, implementation and impact measurement, guarantee equality of conditions and reduce inequality of results, for example, through advice and advocacy that promotes inclusive policies and measures, or the monitoring of the institutions that must deliver electoral justice.

Scholars:

- A scientific basis for constructive discussion regarding equal access to electoral justice, for the consideration of judges, decision-makers, electoral experts and to motivate young people for continuous research in judicial-electoral matters.
- An important contribution to the improvement of public awareness and education in judicial-electoral matters, or to the proper functioning of electoral authorities. The research project may be in its initial stages of implementation or conclusion on the impact of a set of actions, policies, judicial decisions or administrative adjustments that have or may increase access to justice.
- Based on a comparative or comprehensive analysis, propose scientifically supported initiatives (judicial, administrative or educational) that solve a problem or injustice that affects future generations and/or to protect future generations from such challenges.
- A scholarly work must follow the principles of ethical research: originality, honesty, objectivity, integrity, openness and respect for intellectual property.

General criteria:

- To verify a concrete and measurable increase in terms of judicial independence by the jurisdictional institutions that resolve electoral disputes.
- The action, project or effort may contemplate any aspect of the concept: from the nomination of judges, to their judicial tenure, procedures and professionalism, diversity or inclusiveness, public confidence and support of lawyers, accountability in the design and execution of the budget and actions that promote judicial independence.
- The action should be original, designed and implemented based on concrete and measurable indicators of the intended outcome.

Courts and electoral authorities:

- A judgment or jurisprudence that significantly promotes the judicial independence of and within the jurisdictional-electoral structure of the country.
- An extraordinary effort that confronts an external interference in the institutional structure. It may be an internal program that builds judicial capacity or professionalism, particularly of electoral judges, increases transparency, promotes societal respect for the role of an impartial authority (the link between expectations and perceptions, and between independence and effectiveness), builds support for relevant reforms, and addresses the tension between independence and accountability.
- A mechanism that promotes accountability, such as, adjustments to internal regulations, establishment or updating of codes of ethics, procedures for investigating and resolving complaints of judges, judicial evaluation processes, and increased transparency and collaboration with the media.
- Present a methodology for evaluating the impact of its actions or measurable results to support the real and positive effect on judicial independence. It is important to highlight the approach or strategy implemented or to be implemented, as well as the contextual circumstances.

International organizations:

- Through international cooperation and transnational experience, achieve the implementation of cutting-edge programs or projects in favor of institutional strengthening in judicial independence issues, and the effectiveness, reliability, accountability and legitimacy of these institutions.
- Through a methodology of design, implementation and impact measurement, guarantee sustainable judicial-electoral independence. It should contemplate local ownership or sense of responsibility for structural or institutional change, to achieve better governance, management strategies and establishment of sustainable, long-term systems.

- Monitor the administration of justice and the protection of citizens' political-electoral rights and intervene when one of them has been violated due to the lack of independence of the judicial-electoral authority. This, through advocacy, issuance of recommendations or specialized projects, for greater application of and adherence to international principles of judicial independence.

Scholars:

- A scientific basis for constructive discussion regarding judicial-electoral independence, for the consideration of judges, decision-makers, electoral experts and to motivate young people for continued research in this area.
- An important contribution to the improvement of public and educational awareness in judicial-electoral matters, or to the proper functioning of electoral authorities. The research project may be in its initial stages of implementation or conclusion on the impact of a set of actions, policies, judicial decisions or administrative adjustments that have or may increase judicial-electoral independence.
- Based on a comparative or comprehensive analysis, propose scientifically supported initiatives (judicial, administrative or educational) that resolve one or more obstacles to judicial-electoral independence, which, if left unresolved, would affect future generations and/or risk the future of the Rule of law.
- An academic work must follow the principles of ethical research: originality, honesty, objectivity, integrity, openness and respect for intellectual property.

Gender equality

General criteria:

- Actions aimed at having a concrete and measurable increase in terms of gender equality in the political life of the countries, and access to equal electoral justice.
- Direct contribution to the fulfillment of Sustainable Development Goal 5: "Gender equality", and specifically to target 5.5 "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life".

Courts and electoral authorities:

- Rulings, judicial decisions and institutional policies must promote actions and strategies that promote substantive equality between women and men in accessing the political life of the country.
- Positive actions or other mechanisms should achieve gender equality and ensure women's effective access to electoral justice.
- Institutional mechanisms should work to eradicate political violence against women.

International organizations:

- The documents¹ should contain qualitative and/or quantitative analysis and a comparative perspective of at least two countries in which the organization is represented.
- They must contain the identification of international principles and conventions on the subject and apply them to the case studies.
- They must contain a diagnosis and a series of public policy recommendations on electoral matters that may be applicable to one or more member countries of the GNEJ.

Scholars:

- The studies should contain an analysis of the effective application of public policies and identify concrete areas for improvement.
- They must contain an original contribution to the literature on the subject.
- Methodological contributions to the measurement of women's empowerment and their effective access to electoral justice will be valued.

Electoral processes in emergency situations (conjunctural)

General criteria:

- Demonstrate an outstanding effort based on new procedures, including concrete data, cultural and social values, that prioritizes public health, and has found a balance between political-electoral and health rights.
- Experience or project proposal that succeeded or will succeed in identifying unique risks and applicable mitigable solutions that will enable its leaders to make informed decisions to conduct elections under adverse circumstances, should the situation allow it.

Courts and electoral authorities:

- Electoral management plans or judicial-electoral adaptation that allowed elections to be held in emergency situations, without reducing the electoral participation rate.
- Emblematic rulings that allow guaranteeing political-electoral rights during emergency situations, or measures and programs designed and/or implemented in favor of the protection of such rights.

International organizations:

- Provide accurate information, through general documents for public dissemination and/or solid and individualized technical advice to national electoral authorities so

¹ Programs and projects could be considered, as well as the possibility of including technical assistance.

that they may carry out electoral processes or resolve electoral conflicts in emergency situations.

Scholars:

- Academic investigation or work with solid foundations, which analyzes the administrative, political and legal actions carried out by the electoral and judicial authorities in a comparative manner, seeking to achieve a balance between the right to vote and to be voted for and the other fundamental rights, in emergency situations.

Specific progress on an important topic for the RMJE (general award)

General criteria:

- A specific and substantial advance on an important topic for the Global Network on Electoral Justice, in favor of the main objectives of this international initiative and fundamental rights such as political-electoral rights and freedom of expression.
- The action of excellence must have produced a substantial, unique and measurable change in a major area of the GNEJ. It can be an initiative or product in its design, implementation or evaluation phase, as long as it can prove an objective and high probability of success.
- The nomination must be accompanied by one letter of recommendation.
- There will be only one winning actor, which can be a court, organization or scholar.