

2026 Competition - Public Television Categories

1. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A compilation clip with 3-5 events. May be any public service announcement locally produced by the station, a public service activity coordinated by the station or any form of gratis community outreach which is a public service of the station to serve its local community. Entry must include a maximum 200-word explanation of events. Stations may include video/audio reel summarizing events that is no longer than five minutes in length.

Criteria: Production, creativity, and community impact.
Entries Allowed: One

2. CONTINUING COVERAGE

Coverage of current events over an extended number of reports. Entries should include an up to 30 minute composite of your best coverage of a continuing current event. The entry may include a maximum 200-word explanation of coverage.

Criteria: Presentation of facts, thoroughness, story advancement, significance, and delivery.
Entries Allowed: Three

3. CULTURAL & PERFORMING ARTS

A single program or series primarily featuring performances. May include no more than three excerpts from a series.

Criteria: Subject portrayal, entertainment value, and effective use of audio, video and editing medium.
Entries Allowed: Three

4. CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

A cultural documentary or series that presents the arts or cultures of a community.

Criteria: Enrichment, thoroughness, production, and presentation.
Entries Allowed: Three

5. INDEPENDENT PRODUCER

An independently produced program or series that must have aired on the sponsoring public station. May only be entered by a Public Television Station.

Criteria: Presentation, production, thoroughness, and enrichment.
Entries Allowed: Three

6. MARKETING MATERIALS & PROMOTIONS

Promotion of your station or a promotional announcement for a program your station produces. Must be written, produced by your station. May be single announcement, series, or digital campaign.

Criteria: Creativity, effectiveness, and production.
Entries Allowed: Three



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7. MUSIC FEATURE OR SPECIAL

A music-focused special program, feature, interview, or feature story. Entries should include programming that is not aired as part of a regular newscast or music programming block.

Criteria: Presentation, entertainment value, creativity, and enrichment.
Entries Allowed: Three

8. MINI-DOCUMENTARY OR SERIES

Series of reports on a single topic which may be included in a regularly scheduled newscast.

Criteria: Significance, resourcefulness, comprehensiveness, thoroughness of research, and production value.
Entries Allowed: Three

9. NEWS OR PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIAL

Best locally originated news or public affairs program or series.

Criteria: Presentation, production values, interest of stories presented, and overall impact of the program.
Entries Allowed: Three

10. NEWS SPECIAL OR DOCUMENTARY

A single, self-contained report or program which is at least 30 minutes in length.

Criteria: Significance, resourcefulness, comprehensiveness, thoroughness of research, and production value.
Entries Allowed: Three

11. SPECIAL INTEREST

Public affairs program featuring issues of interest to Michigan citizens of all ages (may be children's programming, parades, etc.) at local and state levels.

Criteria: Presentation, production, comprehensiveness, and enrichment.
Entries Allowed: Three

12. SPORTS, OUTDOOR, OR RECREATION

Best locally originated outdoor or recreation program, series, or live sports coverage.

Criteria: Presentation, production values, and interest of stories presented.
Entries Allowed: Three

13. STATION EXCELLENCE (WEIGHTED CATEGORY)

A 1,000-word maximum essay explaining why the station is deserving of the overall Station of the Year title. Must include at least three testimonials or letters of support from station partners, sponsors and/or affiliates. **A station must enter this category to be considered for station of the year.**

Entries Allowed: One



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14. USE OF MULTIPLATFORM MEDIA, SHORT FORM

Stations should showcase their use of short form digital media content. Content placement examples include, but are not limited to, Reels, Instagram posts, and TikToks. Compile content into a single video up to ten minutes in length. Entry content must have been published on a digital platform.

Criteria: Innovation, creativity, and journalistic excellence.
Entries Allowed: Three

15. USE OF MULTIPLATFORM MEDIA, LONG FORM

Stations should showcase their use of long form digital media content. Content placement examples include podcasts and online-specific programming. Compile content into a single video more than ten minutes in length. Entry content must have been published on a digital platform.

Criteria: Innovation, creativity, and journalistic excellence.
Entries Allowed: Three

PUBLIC TELEVISION STATION OF THE YEAR

Only those public television stations who enter the Station Excellence category are eligible for Station of the Year. Station of the Year will be based on the total cumulative points for all awards won, with weighted points in the Station Excellence Category. The winners of both the Best and the Merit award in the Station Excellence category will receive an additional 60 points to be counted toward Station of the Year.

Tie Breaker
In the event of a tie, the station with the most Best awards will be awarded Station of the Year. If a tie remains, the station who placed Best in the Community Involvement category will be awarded Station of the Year.













