



**TRA 2026 VISIONS
SPECIAL HONORARY AWARD
GUIDELINES**

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1. TRA VISIONS 2026 Awards

1.1 Award Types

For TRA 2026, four types of Awards will be delivered:

- **Young Researcher Awards** – Recognising undergraduate students and early-stage researchers, for their outstanding research in transport studies.
- **Senior Researcher Awards** – Acknowledging established researchers for achievements and excellence in European research projects.
- **Special Honorary Award** – Recognising a senior respected researcher in the transport sector for a noteworthy and widely acknowledged contribution to research and innovation.
- **Host Award** – Delivered to the best paper author aligned with the conference theme “Re-Generation in Transport”.

1.2 Award Categories

The TRA VISIONS 2026 Awards cover the following six transport categories, per transport mode: Road, Rail, Waterborne, Airborne, Cross-modal Passenger transport, Cross-modal Logistics.

Applicants are requested to select one of the six categories that best align with their contributions. In Table 1, award categories and an indicative list of keywords are presented.

Table 1. Award categories (per transport mode) of the TRA VISIONS 2026

TRA VISIONS 2026 Award categories (per transport mode) and keywords	
Road	Connected and Automated Vehicles; Road Infrastructure; Traffic Management, Road Safety; Shared Mobility; Active Modes; Electric Vehicles; Electrification of Road Transport; Grid Integration; Batteries; Sustainable Fuels; Circular Economy; Alternative Materials; Life Cycle Assessment; Software Defined Vehicles; Artificial Intelligence, Digitalisation
Rail	High-Speed Rail and Beyond; Rail Traffic Management, Operation; Rail Vehicles and Infrastructure; Smart Railways, Autonomous Trains; Externalities of Railways; Freight Rail and Terminals; Railways Resilience, Safety and Security; Urban, Suburban and Rural Rail Networks; Rail Passenger Experience; Railway Stations; Railways Economics and Policy
Waterborne	Use of sustainable alternative fuels in waterborne transport, Energy efficiency of waterborne transport; Electrification of waterborne transport; Digital waterborne transport (digital includes automation); Design and retrofitting of waterborne vessels; Freight transport; Passenger transport; Shipyards and equipment manufacturers; Ports and infrastructure; Safe and secure waterborne transport; Green shipping corridors; All ship types (from inland waterway transport to intercontinental)

Airborne	Air Traffic Management; Sustainable Aviation Fuels; Electric Aircraft; Hybrid Aircraft; Urban Air Mobility; Airport Innovations; Drone Systems; Decarbonization in Aviation; Air Passenger Experience
Cross-modal: Passenger transport	Public Transport; Multimodal Transport; Integrated Policy and Planning; New mobility services including Mobility-as-a-Service; Seamless Connectivity; Smart and Integrated Infrastructure; Transport Hubs; Behavioural change; Active mobility
Cross-modal: Logistics	Freight Transport decarbonization; emissions measuring and reporting, automation; Physical Internet; Interconnected Logistics; Resilient logistics networks; Ports and hubs; Intermodality/Synchromodality; Transport modes integration in logistics networks, digital technologies (AI, 5G, Digital Twins...) applications in freight transport and logistics; Data exchange and data sharing, Urban logistics, Last-mile Delivery, Integrated Passenger and Freight Systems

Applicants for the Young Researcher Awards must submit a paper to the TRA 2026 technical programme as part of their application.

Aligned with the TRA 2026 key theme, *Re-Generation in Transport*, the conference topics focus on horizontal — i.e., not mode-specific — transport challenges. Applicants must select the research topics and subtopics, as defined in the Call for Papers, that best describe their contribution (Table 2). Brief descriptions of research topics of the TRA Conference is available in Table 2. Detailed descriptions can be found in the Call for Papers.

In their statements, applicants for the Young and Senior Researcher Award(s) shall explain how their research relates to one (or more) of the research topics defined in the Call for Papers.

Table 2. Research Topics of the TRA 2026 Conference.

TRA 2026 research topics and subtopics	
User Centered Mobility	Transport Policy; Transport Safety; Inclusive Mobility; Active Travel Modes; Shared Mobility Solutions.
Green Mobility and Decarbonization	Zero Emission Vehicles; Electrification and Alternative Fuels; Greening Freight Transport; Circular Economy; Climate Neutral and Smart Cities
Planning and Operation	Resilient Transport Systems; Urban Infrastructure Management; Innovative Logistics Solutions; Decision Support Analysis; Transportation Economics
Transport Digitalization	Automated Mobility; Connected Transport Systems; Big Data Analysis; Mobility as a Service; Predictive Transport Solutions

2. TRA VISIONS 2026 Awards Benefits

Participating in the TRA VISIONS Awards offers a unique opportunity for researchers to gain recognition, visibility, and support while showcasing their contributions to transport research and innovation. Winners and finalists benefit from a prestigious platform that enhances their professional standing, fosters networking opportunities, and provides tangible rewards to further their research and careers.

Finalists benefit from comprehensive support, including waived conference fees, a trophy and a certificate acknowledging their achievement, ensuring formal recognition of their contributions.

For the Young Researcher Awards, monetary prizes are awarded per category, with €5000 for first place, €3000 for second place, and €2000 for third place.

The table below summarises the awards, benefits, and responsibilities for each category:

Table 3. Summary of Awards and Benefits

Awards and related benefits	Partner responsible	Young Researcher Awards	Senior Researcher Awards	Special Honorary Award	Host Award
Winners categories		3 winners per category ROAD, RAIL, WATERBORNE, AIR, CROSSMODAL Passenger Transport and CROSSMODAL Logistics	1 winner per category ROAD, RAIL, WATERBORNE, AIR, CROSSMODAL Passenger Transport and CROSSMODAL Logistics	1 winner Regardless of mode	
Prizes	Sponsors	Trophy and certificate Money prizes per category: 1 st (5000€) 2 nd (3000€) 3 rd (2000€)	Trophy and certificate No monetary prize	Trophy and certificate No monetary prize	
Conference fee	CSA & TRA organisers	Waived for full conference	Waived for full conference	Waived for full conference	
Conference visibility	TRA organisers	Part of the programme Awarded at a high-profile event during the conference Acknowledged on website and social media			

3. TRA VISIONS 2026 Special Honorary Award – Process and Evaluation Criteria

- **Target group**

TRA VISIONS 2026 calls for nominations for the Special Honorary Award, first introduced in the TRA VISIONS 2022 edition. This award recognises a senior researcher who has made an outstanding and widely acknowledged contribution to transport-related research and innovation. It is intended for individuals who are nearing the completion of their career or have already concluded it.

- **Evaluation Criteria**

Table 4. Special Honorary Award – evaluation criteria

Criteria	Points	Threshold
Visionary thinking of the researcher	10 pt	6 pt
Breakthrough achievements of the researcher (incl. practical implementation of the research and Impact of the research at EU policy level)	50 pt	30 pt
Research record of the applicant	20 pt	12 pt
Research leadership experience (considering the previous EU projects, PhD students, research groups)	20 pt	12 pt

- **Nomination material**

Table 5. Special Honorary Award – required nomination materials

Material	Description
Statement (max 2 pages)	<p>Please describe how the nominee throughout the years has made an outstanding and widely recognised contribution to research and innovation in their particular transport field. Text should include aspects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visionary thinking of the researcher: Describe any paradigm shifts or substantial advancements in the state of the art. • Breakthrough achievements of the researcher: Include the practical implementation of the research and its impact on EU policy, as well as its contributions to the industry. • Research record of the applicant: Include details of publications, patents, and other notable achievements. • Research leadership experience: Consider previous involvement in EU projects, mentoring of PhD students, leadership of research groups, and other relevant leadership roles.

- **Nomination and Evaluation Process**

A closed call for nominations will be launched, targeting the European Technology Platforms (ETPs) – ERTRAC, ERRAC, WATERBORNE, ACARE, ALICE, and ECTP. Only ETPs may submit nominations. Self-nominations are not permitted.

Each nomination must include a well-founded justification, demonstrating the nominee's overall impact, visionary thinking, breakthrough achievements, and track record. This shall include contributions to EU funding policies, publication records, patents, and research leadership.

A distinguished Board comprising experts from all transport modes will be established and will gather at the shortlisting workshop to select the recipient of the TRA VISIONS 2026 Special Honorary Award.

4. TRA VISIONS 2026 Special Honorary Award – Rules

1. Eligibility

- Nominees are exclusively proposed by the European Technology Platforms (ETPs).
- Previous winners are not eligible for the Special Honorary Award.
- Previous nominees may re-enter the competition.
- A nominee cannot win both the Senior and Special Honorary Awards in the same edition.

2. Nomination process and requirements

- The six Technology Platforms (ETPs) – ERTRAC, ERRAC, WATERBORNE, ACARE, ALICE and ECTP) – will be invited to nominate maximum two nominees.
- Nominations must be submitted via email with the complete form. The e-mail address is published on the TRA 2026 website (<http://traconference.eu/>).
- Any nomination must be written in clear, academic English.
- The nomination must include: a statement (max. two pages) demonstrating the nominee's overall impact, visionary thinking, breakthrough achievements, and track record. This shall include contributions to EU funding policies, publication records, patents, and research leadership.
- Incomplete or non-compliant nominations will be rejected.

3. Evaluation Process

- Eligibility check: Conducted by the TRA VISIONS organisers to verify compliance with requirements.
- Shortlisting workshop: Nominees will be reviewed in a workshop by a distinguished board comprising experts from all transport modes to determine the winner, ranking the nominees according to the evaluation criteria:
 - Visionary thinking of the researcher – 10 points (threshold 6 points)
 - Breakthrough achievements of the researcher (incl. practical implementation of the research and Impact of the research at EU policy level) – 50 points (threshold 30 points)
 - Research record of the applicant – 20 points (threshold 12 points)
 - Research leadership experience (considering the previous EU projects, PhD students, research groups) – 20 points (threshold 12 points)

4. Deadlines & Notification

- The nomination period is open from the publication of the call until 15/09/2025.
- Any nomination beyond this time will not be accepted unless an extension is granted.
- The winner will be informed of the selection at least 8 weeks before the TRA 2026 Conference.

5. Award Benefits

- The winner will be invited to:
 - Receive his/her award on the TRA 2026 stage.
- The winner will receive:
 - A trophy and a certificate recognising his/her achievement;
 - Acknowledgment on the TRA 2026 Conference website and social media.
 - A waiver for the TRA 2026 Conference attendance fee.
- Winner is responsible for organising their own accommodation, and travel to and from the TRA 2026 Conference in Budapest, Hungary.

6. Winner's duties

- The winner will be invited to attend the TRA 2026 Conference.
- Winner is expected to cooperate promptly with competition organisers for reasonable requests, including:
 - Providing additional materials.
 - Engaging in publicity efforts for the TRA 2026 Conference.
 - Participating in media activities related to his/her award.
- If the winner is unwilling to receive the award, the organisers may award the prize to another shortlisted applicant.

7. Organisers' Discretion

- The judges' decision is final in all situations, including cases not explicitly covered in these rules.
- The organisers reserve the right to have discretion regarding the rules:
 - Change deadlines if deemed necessary.
 - Not select a winner if no entries meet the required standard.
 - Cancel the Awards due to unforeseen circumstances beyond their control. In such cases, no costs will be refunded.

8. Data Protection & Confidentiality

- All submitted materials will be treated as confidential and used solely for evaluation purposes.

9. Ethical & Legal Compliance

- Anyone with a conflict of interest in the process, including during the nomination, assessment, and selection stages, shall not take part in the process.
- Nominee/Winner must comply with these rules to be eligible for awards, certificates, and financial contributions.
- The organisers are not responsible for:
 - Ineligible or fraudulent nominations.

- Late or lost nominations due to internet issues (applicants are advised to submit early).