

UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Explanatory note for the 2025 call for nominations

#ESDfor2030

A. Background

1) What is ESD?

“ESD empowers learners with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to take informed decisions and make responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society empowering people of all genders, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity. ESD is a lifelong learning process and an integral part of quality education that enhances cognitive, social and emotional and behavioural dimensions of learning. It is holistic and transformational and encompasses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment itself. ESD is recognized as a key enabler of all SDGs and achieves its purpose by transforming society.” (*Education for Sustainable Development: A Roadmap, UNESCO 2020*)

2) Establishment of the Prize

The Prize was established by the UNESCO Executive Board in 2014, and has been awarded five times since the first edition in 2015. The Prize was renewed in November 2019 for a period of six years (2020-2025) with a biennial cycle. It consists of three awards of US \$50,000 for each recipient.

Within the framework of “Education for Sustainable Development: Towards achieving the SDGs (ESD for 2030)”, adopted by the 40th session of the UNESCO General Conference, and acknowledged by the UN General Assembly in 2019, the renewed UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development honours institutions or organizations for outstanding projects or programmes undertaken in the field of ESD. The Prize also recognizes the role of ESD as an integral element of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education, and as key enabler of all 17 SDGs.

B. Nominations

Nominations can be made by Governments of UNESCO Member States via their **Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, in consultation with the National Commission for UNESCO**, as well as by **non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or Foundations in official partnership with UNESCO**. Nominations must focus on a specific ESD project or programme. Each Member State, NGO or Foundation can make up to three nominations for any edition of the Prize. If more than three nominations are submitted by a Member State, NGO or Foundation, the submission will not be considered. Member States are invited to closely coordinate between the Permanent Delegation and the National Commission. Self-nominations are not accepted.

C. Eligibility and Selection Criteria

The three winners will be selected by the Director-General of UNESCO on the basis of recommendations made by an independent international jury, consisting of five experts from all geographical regions. To be eligible, the project/programme of the nominee must:

- be ongoing and have already been running for **at least four years**
- show presence of evidence of **results** and a **high impact** relative to the invested resources
- be **replicable and scalable**
- contribute to **one or more of the five priority action areas** of the ESD for 2030 framework (i.e. advancing policy, transforming learning and training environments, developing capacities of educators and trainers, mobilizing youth, accelerating sustainable solutions at local level).

1) Transformation: practices ESD as transformative education in support of sustainable development, leading to individual and social change

ESD empowers learners to transform themselves and the society they live in. The project/programme of the nominee should therefore enable learners to bring about changes with a view to building a more just, peaceful and sustainable world. This can mean, for example, taking action against climate change, changing one's consumption patterns, developing social entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihoods, or supporting those struggling against poverty.

2) Integration: addresses the three dimensions of sustainable development (society, economy, environment) in an integrated way

Sustainable development calls for the integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development. The project/programme of the nominee should be in line with this definition of sustainable development. It should address the three dimensions (society, economy, environment), and help learners understand the interdependence between them and act accordingly.

3) Innovation: demonstrates an innovative approach to ESD

Sustainable development requires going beyond 'business as usual' and 'out-of-the-box' thinking. The project/programme of the nominee should demonstrate an innovative and inspirational approach to ESD, be it in the themes it covers, the methodology it employs, or the way the learning environment is designed. Reaching out to sectors beyond education and working with new partners can also be a sign of innovation.

D. Submission Procedure

- The nomination form must be completed online in **English or French** via an online platform accessible at the following link: <https://unesco.sharepoint.com/sites/committees/ESD-Prize/>.
- Nominations must be submitted online by the **Permanent Delegation to UNESCO** of the concerned Member State, or by an **NGO or Foundation in official partnership with UNESCO**. * Self-nominations are not accepted.
- Attention should be paid to presenting the project/programme of the nominee in a **clear and structured way**, following the instructions given in the form and respecting the indicated word limit. All **supporting material** (e.g. publications, photos, videos) must be transmitted electronically through the online system. Kindly note that each Member State, NGO or Foundation may not submit more than three nominations.
- Nominations must be submitted in the online system by the concerned Permanent Delegations, the NGOs or the foundations, by **midnight of 18 April 2025** (UTC+1, Paris time). An automatic notification message will be sent to the official or registered e-mail address of the Permanent Delegation/the National Commission, the NGO or the foundation to this end.

**Note for Member States only:*

- **Permanent Delegations** should access the platform with their UNESCO email address (dl.countryname@unesco-delegations.org).
- It is also possible for **National Commissions for UNESCO** to access and complete the online form with their UNESCO email address (natcom.countryname@natcom.unesco.org). However, the final submission is the responsibility of the Permanent Delegation.
- On an exceptional basis, Member States may request UNESCO to provide the nominees with access to the platform so they can complete the form by themselves. These requests must be made via the application form at the following link by **31 March 2025**: <https://forms.office.com/e/VBe9m3psT4>. UNESCO will provide the nominee with access to the platform via their email address. Please note that the nominee's email address must be associated with a Microsoft account. After completion of the online form by the nominee, the concerned National Commission and Permanent Delegation will receive a notification e-mail and will be asked to review and officially submit the nomination.

**Note for NGOs or Foundations in official partnership only:*

- NGOs or Foundations in official partnership with UNESCO need to request access to the platform via the following link: <http://www.unesco.org/esdprize/register>. Please note that the email address used must be associated with Microsoft account.

Replies to Frequently Asked Questions can be found on the Prize website:

<https://www.unesco.org/en/prizes/education-sustainable-development>. For any other questions regarding the UNESCO-Japan Prize on ESD or the submission process, please contact the Secretariat of the Prize at the Education for Sustainable Development Section at UNESCO: esdprize@unesco.org.

E. Copyright for the Prize contributions

The UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development participant will submit a written piece (text) and images (videos and/or photographs), hereby called “contribution”.

All rights pertaining to the submitted contribution should be secured by the participant;

- All rights pertaining to the submitted contribution should be secured by the participant;
- The contribution, in line with UNESCO’s Open Access Policy, may be placed under a Creative Commons 3.0 IGO license when used by UNESCO;
- UNESCO may select and highlight some contributions that are of interest to its programmes. By submitting a contribution to the UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development, the selected participant agrees to grant the non-exclusive license to UNESCO (the formal Grant of Rights form will be provided for selected contributions).

Specific guidance for photo(s) and/or video(s):

- Photo(s) and/or video(s) will not be used for commercial purposes (sales to third parties) by UNESCO unless authorized by the author in a written agreement.
- Granting the non-exclusive license to UNESCO does not impinge upon intellectual property rights (rights of the photographer / director of the video or copyright owner if different). When the images are distributed by UNESCO, a credit to the rights holder will be included.
- Photos and video materials should be of high quality (preferably 300 dpi for photos and HD format for videos)
- Both photos and video materials need to tell a story and convey the impact of the project/programme.

<Summary of Application Flow>

