

**Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO
Government of India
Ministry of Education
Department of Higher Education**

UNESCO has called for nominations for UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education, 2026

The deadline for submission of nominations for the Prize to UNESCO is 12th May, 2026

Applications may be forwarded to the Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO (INCCU) latest by 5th May, 2026 at the following address for further consideration and onward transmission to UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France by 12th May, 2026 : -

Ms. Madhu Bala Soni
Under Secretary to the Government of India
Ministry of Education
Department of Higher Education
Work Hall No. 21020,
Kartavya Bhawan-2, New Delhi
E-mail: inc.edu@nic.in

Ref.: CL/4537

Subject: **Call for nominations for the 2026 UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education**

Dear Minister,

It is my pleasure to invite your Government to submit nominations for the 2026 edition of the UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education.

Supported by the People's Republic of China for more than ten years, this Prize will be awarded to two laureates in 2026, each of whom will receive US\$50,000.

Each Government may present up to three nominees for the Prize. UNESCO encourages Member States to implement a national selection process and to publicly announce their selected nominees.

Nominations must be submitted in English or French by midnight **12 May 2026 at the latest** (UTC+1, Paris time) via an online platform available from **6 March onwards** at the following address: <http://unesco.org/gwe>.

The Prize Secretariat (e-mail: GWEP Prize@unesco.org) is at your disposal for any further information you may require.

Yours sincerely,



Khaled El-Enany
Director-General

Enclosures:

- Statutes of the UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education
- Flyer "UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education: Call for Nominations 2026"

cc: National Commissions for UNESCO
Permanent Delegations to UNESCO
Field Offices of UNESCO
UNESCO Institutes for Education



STATUTES OF THE UNESCO PRIZE FOR GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Article 1 – Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the 'UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education' is to reward the outstanding efforts of individuals, institutions, organizations or other entities engaged in activities promoting girls' and women's education. The Prize contributes to two Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' (Goal 4) and 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls' (Goal 5). The Prize rewards in particular activities that are innovative and/or have far-reaching sustainable impact.

1.2 The objective of the Prize is in conformity with UNESCO's policies and is related to the Programme of the Organization in the field of Education. The Prize is considered to be of high relevance to the programme of UNESCO and would directly contribute to the four Strategic Objectives in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy 2022–2029 (41 C/4), Strategic Objective 1 of UNESCO's Global Priority Gender Equality Framework, and the UNESCO Strategy for Gender Equality in and through Education (2019–2025, and forthcoming 2026–2029).

Article 2 – Designation, amount and periodicity of the Prize

2.1 The Prize shall remain entitled 'UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's education' for the duration of the third cycle.

2.2 The Prize shall be funded by the Government of the People's Republic of China and shall consist of US\$200,000 per year for five-year period (2026–2030), which shall cover both the monetary value of the Prize and the costs of administering the Prize. Any interest that may accrue shall be added to the overall contribution.

2.3 All funds received and the interest accrued thereon shall be kept in a special interest-bearing account for the Prize (see financial regulations in Annex II).

2.4 The full staff cost will be borne by the People's Republic of China. Additional operating/management cost of the Prize, including all costs related to the award ceremony and public information activities, estimated at US\$100,000, shall also be fully covered by the People's Republic of China. The Director-General will determine a mandatory overhead cost amount to be applied and charged against the funds in the special account, which is to be established under the financial regulations for the Prize.

2.5 The Prize shall be awarded annually, over five years, starting from its 2026 edition. The Prize amount will be equally divided between two winners (US\$50,000 for each).

2.6 Prize money is granted with the expectation that it be used to directly further the work of the recognized project of the individual or organization.

Article 3 – Qualifications of candidates

Candidates shall have made outstanding innovation in and significant contributions to supporting and/or promoting girls' and women's education. Prizes may be conferred upon individuals, institutions, other entities or non-governmental organizations that have effectively promoted the advancement of girls' and women's education.

Article 4 – Designation/Selection of the prize winners

The prize winners shall be selected by the Director-General of UNESCO on the basis of the assessments and recommendations made to him/her by a jury.

Article 5 – Jury

5.1 The Jury shall consist of five independent members, being personalities with a recognized reputation in the field, while also taking into consideration the need for equitable geographical distribution, gender balance in the composition of the Jury and the principle of non-payment of honoraria.

5.2 The Jury shall be appointed by the Director-General for an initial two-year period, with the possibility of renewal for the remainder of the five-year period of the Prize. Representatives and alternates of Members of the Executive Board cannot be appointed as jurors. Jurors involved in a real or potential conflict of interest shall recuse themselves from further deliberations or be asked by the Director-General to do so. The Director-General may replace members of the Jury for reason.

5.3 The Jury shall elect its own chair and deputy chair. Members shall receive no remuneration for their work, but will receive allowances for travel and accommodation, where required. A quorum of three jurors present will be required for jury deliberations to proceed. The working languages for deliberations of the Jury shall be English and French.

5.4 The Jury shall conduct its business and deliberations in conformity with these Statutes and shall be assisted in the performance of its task by a member of the UNESCO Secretariat designated by the Director-General. Decisions shall be taken by consensus to the extent possible, and otherwise by secret ballot until a simple majority is obtained. A member shall not take part in a vote concerning a nomination from his or her country.

5.5 The Jury shall meet once every year.

5.6 The Jury shall send an assessment of nominations and accompanying recommendations to the Director-General of UNESCO no later than three months before the planned Prize award ceremony.

Article 6 – Nomination of candidates

6.1 When UNESCO has received the funding of the prize, as indicated in Article 2 above, the Director-General of UNESCO shall officially invite the submission of nominations to the Secretariat of the Prize by 30 May, from the governments of Member States, in consultation with their National Commissions, as well as from non-governmental organizations maintaining official partnerships with the Organization and active in relevant fields covered by the Prize.

6.2 Nominations shall be submitted to the Director-General by the governments of Member States, in consultation with their National Commissions, and by non-governmental organizations maintaining official partnerships with UNESCO. A self-nomination cannot be considered.

6.3 All nominations must be submitted via an online platform made available for this purpose by the UNESCO Secretariat. All nominations shall be accompanied by a recommendation in the form of a formal validation of the nomination form submitted via the online platform from the nominating Member State or NGO in official partnership with UNESCO in order to be considered complete and eligible.

Article 7 – Procedure for the awarding of the Prize

7.1 The Prize shall be awarded by the Director-General at an official ceremony held for that purpose at UNESCO Headquarters or elsewhere, as agreed with the donor. UNESCO shall officially announce the names of the prize winners.

7.2 If a work being rewarded has been produced by two or three persons, the Prize shall be awarded to them jointly. In no case may a prize amount be divided between more than three persons.

7.3 The prize winners, if possible, shall give a lecture on a subject relevant to the work for which the Prize has been awarded. Such a lecture shall be organized during or in connection with the Prize ceremony.

7.4 The work produced by a person since deceased shall not be considered for the Prize. If, however, a prize winner dies before he/she has received the Prize, then the Prize may be presented posthumously (awarded to relatives or institutions).

7.5 Should a prize winner decline the Prize, the Jury shall submit a new proposal to the Director-General.

Article 8 – Sunset clause – mandatory renewal of the Prize

8.1 Six months prior to the agreed end of the term of the Prize (five years), the Director-General of UNESCO together with the donor will undertake a review of all aspects of the Prize and decide about its continuation or termination. The Director-General will inform the Executive Board of UNESCO about the results of this review.

8.2 In case of termination of the Prize, any unspent balance of funds shall be returned to the donor(s) unless otherwise agreed, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Special Account for the Prize.

Article 9 – Appeals

No appeals shall be allowed against the decision of UNESCO with regard to the award of the Prize. Proposals received for the award of the Prize may not be divulged.

Article 10 – Amendments to the Statutes of the Prize

Any amendment to the present Statutes shall be submitted to the Executive Board for approval.



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UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education

Call for nominations 2026

Deadline: 12 May 2026

The UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education honours outstanding and innovative practices advancing **girls' and women's education**, and in turn, improving the quality of their lives. Established in 2015, it is funded by the Government of the People's Republic of China and consists of two US \$50,000 awards to help further the work of laureates in this field. The Prize directly contributes to Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 5.

Who can nominate?

Governments of UNESCO Member States via their Permanent Delegations to UNESCO, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in official partnership with UNESCO can make up to 3 nominations. Self-nominations are not accepted.

Who can be nominated?

Individuals, institutions or organizations advancing girls' and women's education through an established and ongoing project or programme which has been running for at least 2 years. Visit the Prize's website for more details.

How to nominate?

Nominations must be submitted in English or French by a UNESCO Member State or an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO, via an online platform, no later than 12 May 2026 (midnight, Paris time). Contact us for more information.

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More information



<https://on.unesco.org/gwe-prize>



GWEPrize@unesco.org



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