

Ref.: CL/4536

Subject: Call for nominations – 2026 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education

Dear Minister,

It is my pleasure to invite your Government to submit nominations for the 2026 edition of the UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education.

Supported by the Kingdom of Bahrain for more than twenty years, the Prize rewards projects that use new technologies to enhance learning and teaching.

The 2026 edition focuses on the theme **“Reimagining creativity and critical thinking with artificial intelligence”**. Selected programmes must demonstrate how, across diverse contexts, teachers and learners are engaging with AI systems in ways that preserve their capacity for reasoning, discernment and imagination.

Two prize-winners will be chosen based on the recommendations of an international jury. Each laureate will receive a diploma and a monetary award of US\$25,000.

Applications must be submitted online, in English or French, by **8 May 2026** at the latest. UNESCO encourages Member States to set up a national selection process and present up to three candidates via their National Commission.

More information about the theme of the 2026 edition and application procedures is available at the following link: <https://www.unesco.org/en/prizes/ict-education>. The Statutes of the Prize are attached for your reference and are available online.

The Secretariat of the Prize (tel.: +33 1 45 68 01 82; e-mail: ictprize@unesco.org) remains at your disposal for any queries.

Yours sincerely,



Khaled El-Enany

Enclosure: Statutes of the UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education

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



ANNEX I

STATUTES OF THE UNESCO KING HAMAD BIN ISA AL-KHALIFA PRIZE FOR THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION

Article 1 – Purpose

The purpose of the UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education (ICT) is to reward projects and activities of individuals, institutions, other entities or non-governmental organizations for excellent models, best practice, and creative use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance learning, teaching and overall educational performance. The objective of the Prize is in conformity with UNESCO's mandate and policies and with the Organization's Strategic Objectives 1, 2, and 9, as laid out in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021. In line with SDG 4 – Education 2030 as well as the Qingdao Declaration and Beijing Consensus on Artificial Intelligence and Education, the Prize advocates for the ethical use of technologies to accelerate the achievement of inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all.

Article 2 – Designation, amount and periodicity of the Prize

2.1 The Prize shall be entitled “UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Education”.

2.2. The Prize shall be funded by the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain and shall consist of a one-time contribution sum of US \$758,600, which shall cover both the monetary value of the Prize and the costs of administering the Prize. Any interest that may accrue will be added to the overall contribution. As determined by the Director-General and in consultation with the Donor, the Prize shall consist of a sum of US \$50,000 to be equally divided between two prize-winners.

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 support and operating/management costs of the Prize, including all costs related to the award ceremony and public information activities, estimated at a maximum of US \$458,600, shall be fully covered by the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain. To this end, the Director-General shall 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 of the Prize.

2.5 The Prize shall be awarded every year for a six-year period, starting from the 2021 edition of the Prize, it being understood that this period may be adjusted to take into consideration fluctuations in administration costs.

Article 3 – Conditions/Qualifications of candidates

Candidates shall have made a significant contribution to the creative use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance learning, teaching and overall educational performance. Prizes may be conferred upon individuals, institutions, other entities or non-governmental organizations.

Article 4 – Designation/Selection of the prize-winners

The two prize-winners shall be selected by the Director-General of UNESCO on the basis of the assessments and recommendations made to 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 covered while also taking into consideration the need for equitable geographical distribution, gender equality and the principle of non-payment of honoraria. They shall be appointed by the Director-General for a period of two-years, eligible for re-election for a maximum term of three consecutive two-year periods. 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.

5.2 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 by the Jury shall be English and French.

5.3 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.

5.4 The Jury shall meet once every year.

5.5 The Jury shall send an assessment of nominations and accompanying recommendations to the Director-General of UNESCO no later than 14 days after the completion of the deliberations of the Jury.

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 15 October every year from the governments of Member States, in consultation with their National Commissions, as well as from the non-governmental organizations maintaining official partnerships with the Organization and active in the field covered by the Prize. It is understood that the deadline may be adjusted to take into consideration unprecedented crises or emergencies.

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 Each nomination shall be accompanied by a written recommendation, which shall include, in English or French, *inter alia*:

- (a) a description of the candidate's background and achievements;
- (b) a summary of the work or the results of the work, publications and other supporting documents of major importance, submitted for consideration;
- (c) a definition of the candidate's contribution to the Prize's objectives.

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 online based on the agreement with the Government of

Bahrain no later than 31 March, the date to be mutually agreed upon. UNESCO shall present to the prize-winners a cheque for the amount of the Prize as well as a diploma. UNESCO shall officially announce the names of the prize-winners.

7.2 If a work being rewarded has been produced by two or more 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 or she has received the Prize, then the Prize may be presented posthumously.

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, 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 unless otherwise agreed, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of 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.