



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

Explanatory note for the 2019 call for nominations



A. Background

1) What is ESD?

“ESD empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity. It is about lifelong learning, and is an integral part of quality education. ESD is holistic and transformational education which addresses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment. It achieves its purpose by transforming society.” ([UNESCO Roadmap for implementing the Global Action Programme on ESD, 2014](#))

2) Establishment of the Prize

Within the framework of the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD, the UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development honours individuals, institutions, organizations or other entities for outstanding projects or programmes in the field of ESD. The Prize was established by the UNESCO Executive Board at its 195th session, and officially announced at the UNESCO World Conference on ESD (November 2014, Aichi-Nagoya, Japan). It consists of three annual awards of US \$50,000 for each recipient, and was awarded for the first time in November 2015.

B. Nominations

Nominations can be made by Governments of UNESCO Member States via their **Permanent Delegation to UNESCO**, and by **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in official partnership** with UNESCO. Nominations must focus on a specific ESD project or programme of the nominee. Each Permanent Delegation or NGO can make up to three nominations for any edition of the Prize. 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:

- 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 GAP (advancing policy; transforming learning and training environments; building capacities of educators and trainers; empowering and mobilizing youth; accelerating sustainable solutions at local level).

Eligible projects will then be assessed by the jury on the basis of the following three criteria:

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

ESD is transformative education in that it 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 for 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.