

# UNESCO International Literacy Prizes

## Frequently Asked Questions

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## 1) Who can apply/nominate for the Prize?

### 1.1 - Who can be nominated?

Eligible for the Prize are individuals, institutions and organizations that:

- are promoting literacy through effective and innovative projects or programmes.
- have a proven record of innovative work in the field of literacy for at least two years
- have not been awarded the UNESCO International Literacy Prizes in the past five years.

You can find the [detailed selection criteria](#) here.

### 1.2 - I meet the eligibility criteria; can I apply directly for the Prize?

Direct applications to UNESCO are not accepted. All candidates have to be nominated by:

- ⇒ The government of a UNESCO Member State, via their National Commissions to UNESCO.  
We advise you to contact first your country's National Commission for UNESCO (see list [here](#)). OR
- ⇒ An NGO or Foundation in official partnership with UNESCO ([see question 1.3](#)). You may wish to contact an NGO working in your field (see list [here](#)).

Each Member State/Organization can nominate up to 3 candidates for the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize and up to 3 candidates for the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy.

Member States/Organizations can decide on their own national/internal selection process, deadlines and criteria to decide whom to nominate for the Prize. UNESCO cannot and does not influence these decisions or processes in any way.

### 1.3 - My NGO has worked with UNESCO before; can I submit a nomination?

Please note that only “NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO” can submit nominations for the Prize ([see question 1.4](#)). The nominations submitted must be for other organizations or individuals. Self-nominations are not accepted.

However, any NGO that meets the eligibility criteria can be nominated for the Prize ([see question 1.1](#)).

### 1.4 - What is an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO? How can my NGO become one?

The terms “NGO in official partnership with UNESCO” and “Foundation maintaining official relations with UNESCO” refer to a particular partnership concluded with UNESCO, following a long collaboration and a formal application process. You can find the list of organizations currently maintaining official relations with UNESCO [here](#).

- If you want to apply to become an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO, you will need to contact the External Relations Sector of UNESCO. This is a lengthy process and requires that common projects with UNESCO already exist. Further information can be found [here](#).
- An NGO does not need to be an official partner to be nominated for the Prize. ([see question 1.2](#)).

### 1.5 - We are an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO; can we participate in the Prize?

As an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO, you can nominate up to three candidates for the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize and up to three candidates for the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy, for each edition of the Prize ([see question 2.4](#)).

- If your Organization has several branches or international offices, the nomination must be submitted by headquarters.
- Self-nominations are not accepted; this means an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO cannot nominate itself for the Prize. Should you wish your NGO to be nominated for the Prize, we advise you to contact the government of a UNESCO Member State or a partner Organization maintaining official relations with UNESCO ([see question 1.2](#)).

### 1.6 - Can the same project be nominated by several Member States/NGOs?

Joint nominations (submitted jointly by several Member States or NGOs) are not possible. Different Member States or NGOs can decide to nominate the same project in distinct nominations, but this will not raise applicants' chances compared to their nomination by a single Member State/NGO.

### 1.7 - Can the same individual/organization be nominated several times for different projects?

Each nomination must focus on one specific Literacy project ([see question 1.1](#)). However, it is possible to nominate the same candidate for different projects in distinct nominations in the same or in the following year(s).

## 2) How do I complete and submit the nomination form?

### 2.1 - When can I complete/submit the nomination form?

Every year, the call for nominations is launched in April, with a deadline in June. Outside this period, no nominations can be accepted. The call for nominations and other dates are announced on the [Prizes home page](#).

### 2.2 - I cannot access the online nomination platform; how do I get a user name and password?

You can request your user account through this link [www.unesco.org/ilp/account](http://www.unesco.org/ilp/account). You will then be able to proceed to the online application form. In case you still have not obtained your user account and the access to the online application form, please do let the Secretariat know ([literacyprizes@unesco.org](mailto:literacyprizes@unesco.org)).

### 2.3 - Frequent problems to be avoided while filling in the form

- Please be aware that the best internet browsers for accessing your application are: Chrome and Internet explorer 11. Some applicants have expressed difficulty using browsers such as Safari and Firefox. Using a mobile phone to access your application may also cause additional difficulty.
- Please respect the word limits indicated for each question in the application, as exceeding the designated word limit will inhibit you from submitting your application.

## 2.4 - Saving the draft application form

Please fill in the required fields -- marked with the star (\*) -- in the first section "GENERAL INFORMATION OF THE APPLICANT". Doing this will allow you to save your application so that you can complete it later, if needed.

## 2.5 - As a UNESCO Member State government, how do I submit a nomination?

Nominations by Member States must be submitted by their National Commissions to UNESCO through the online nomination platform.

The National Commission to UNESCO will receive a notification by email (associated to its UNESCO account) every time applicants wish to nominate a programmes. A National Commission is able to nominate up to three applications for the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize and up to three applications for the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy.

## 2.6 - As an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO, how can I submit a nomination?

If solicited, a NGO in official partnership with UNESCO can review the candidature(s) and send a letter of nomination to the chosen applicant(s) directly.

## 2.7 - Liaising with an NGO in official partnership with UNESCO

As an applicant who opted to submit the application via an international NGO with an official relation to UNESCO, you are requested to do the following before submitting your application. Please note that this part of the application/nomination process will take place outside the online system through your direct interaction with a NGO.

- Identify an appropriate NGO in official relations with UNESCO that is active in the related fields, notably literacy ([https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/list\\_ngos\\_official\\_partners\\_unesco.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/list_ngos_official_partners_unesco.pdf)).
- Contact the NGO identified to send, via email or mail, your application and supporting materials. The concerned NGO will review, nominate and provide a written recommendation to a successful applicant. It is important for the applicant to obtain this written recommendation (nomination letter) which must be attached to the online submission form.

## 2.8 - Submitting the complete application form (applying through NGO in official partnership with UNESCO)

Once you have received the nomination letter from the concerned NGO, please return it to the online application form ([www.unesco.org/ilp](http://www.unesco.org/ilp)) to submit your application to UNESCO.

Please go to the last section "SUBMISSION" and do the following:

- 1) Using the top menu (Attach File), upload the nomination letter from an NGO in official relations with UNESCO;
- 2) tick the box "Nomination letter attached (NGO)";
- 3) tick the box "Submit nomination to UNESCO (Via NGO)" and
- 4) click "Save" at the bottom of the page. It is only after you complete this set of actions that your application will be submitted to UNESCO.

### 2.9 - Can I send my nomination/supporting documents by e-mail or post?

All nominations and supporting documents should be submitted via the online nomination platform.

### 2.10 - Can I complete the nomination form in Spanish, Arabic or another official UN language?

Information regarding the UNESCO International Literacy Prizes and its nomination process is currently available on our website in English, French and Spanish; other UN languages might follow in the future.

However, English and French are the only two working languages of UNESCO and therefore, nominations and supporting documents must be submitted exclusively in either of these languages.

If you require assistance, contact the National Commission for UNESCO of your country. You can find the list of National Commissions [here](#).

### 2.11- What makes a good nomination?

The jury is looking particularly for innovative projects that address both the thematic focus adopted each year and the thematic focus of the prize for which you applied and some specific selection criteria ([see question 1.1](#)). You can learn about the projects of previous laureates [on the Prize website](#).

Here is some general advice on completing the nomination form:

- Carefully read and follow the instructions for each field of the form
- Write in a clear and concise way (have at least one other person proofread the nomination)
- Strictly respect the word limit
- Candidates: Contact potential nominators as early as possible, to give them time to validate and submit the nomination

## 3) What happens after the submission of a nomination?

### 3.1 - Will I receive a confirmation when my nomination has been submitted?

As nominators, UNESCO Member States (National Commissions) and NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO will receive an automatic confirmation e-mail for each nomination successfully submitted by them online.

Nominated candidates will be automatically notified by UNESCO as soon as their nominating entities have approved their applications in the system. Applicants should contact their nominating entity to enquire about the status of their nomination.

### 3.2 - Who selects the prizewinners?

All eligible nominations are examined by an [international jury](#) composed of 5 independent experts. Every year, they recommend five winners to the Director-General of UNESCO who takes the final decision. Neither UNESCO nor the governments of the republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China as the donors get involved in the assessment of nominations.

### 3.3 - When will the winners be known?

The six winners are announced every year in August through a press release and on the [Prize website](#). Only successful candidates and their Member States will be notified individually.

### 3.4 - What happens if I win the Prize?

Successful candidates will be notified by UNESCO shortly before the official announcement.

UNESCO will invite one representative of each laureate to the award ceremony, which takes place every year at the occasion of International Literacy Day on 8 September. Each UNESCO Confucius laureate will receive an award, a diploma and the sum of US\$30,000. Each UNESCO King Sejong laureate will receive an award, a diploma and the sum of US\$20,000. The funds will be transferred to their bank account later after the award ceremony.

UNESCO will continue to collaborate closely with them and highlight their work, through the [Effective Literacy and Numeracy Practices Database](#) (LitBase) of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). All the information gathered from the application forms will be compiled and put online on the database. UNESCO also encourages and supports the organization of national and regional events to showcase the winning projects, and facilitates exchange between prizewinners of current and previous years, for example through the organization of workshops and study trips.

### 3.5 - Do candidates that have not won the Prize get any recognition or feedback?

Due to the high number of nominations, the Secretariat will try as much as possible to provide individual or general feedback to candidates. The Prize Statutes do not call for publishing a short list.

However, UNESCO occasionally decides to highlight certain projects that have caught the jury's attention during the selection process on the [UIL LitBase](#) as Literacy good practices or through publications or reports such as "[Reading the Past, Writing the Future](#)", published by UNESCO at the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of International Literacy Day (2016) or via a [Trends analysis of the nominated applications](#) (2021).

### 3.6 - Can I re-apply next year?

Yes. If you meet the eligibility criteria and if the government of a UNESCO Member State or an NGO in official partnership would like to nominate your project, then it is possible to resubmit an application for the same or a different project in a future edition of the Prize.