

Literacy for All



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UNESCO International Literacy Prizes: A Guide

What are they? • Who can enter? • Selection Criteria • How to apply

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The United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) is an integral component of Education for All, providing both a platform and an impetus for achieving all six goals of the Dakar Framework for Action.

Literacy for all is a key to enabling expression of identity and participation in debate in today's knowledge-based society. Tomorrow's generation of active citizens depends on quality literacy learning for today's children.

Literacy as written communication, in the mother tongue and other languages, empowers people to express and share their own dynamic ways of knowing their realities.

Literacy enables access to bodies of knowledge from other horizons and empowers learners, both adults and children, to make a critical assessment of its usefulness and value.

Literacy is the first step towards sustainable and lifelong learning.

The guide is intended for two groups:

- Governments and international non-governmental organization that have official relations with UNESCO.
- Agencies, organizations, associations involved in adult literacy work as described on page 5 of this guide.

WHAT ARE THEY?

Official name of each prize

These prizes form part of a set of measures designed to enhance efforts and services worldwide to create literate societies in the context of learning throughout life.

There are currently 5 prizes:

UNESCO International Reading Association Literacy Award

- Created in 1979.
- Sponsored by the International Reading Association, an international NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO.
- Prize money worth US\$20,000.

UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prizes

- Two prizes awarded since 1989.
- sponsored by the Government of the Republic of Korea, named after the sovereign who invented the Hangul alphabet in 1443.
- Prize money worth US\$20,000 each.





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UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy

- Two prizes launched in 2005 sponsored by the Government of the People's Republic of China in honor of the great Chinese scholar Confucius.
- Prize money worth US\$20,000 each and a study visit to literacy project sites in China.

WHO CAN ENTER?

The prizes are open to institutions, organizations or individuals displaying outstanding merit and achieving particularly effective results in adult literacy and post-literacy activities and their integration into basic education programmes.

Presentation of candidatures and submissions of nominations

Candidatures must be presented by the Government of a Member State of UNESCO, or an international non-governmental organization (INGO) which maintains formal or operational relations with UNESCO.

A Government or INGO may nominate only two candidatures per year.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The prizes are awarded for work in adult literacy and postliteracy activities which involve any of the following aspects:

- Conducting programmes promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Direct teaching.
- Organizing literacy programmes at national or local level.
- Promoting support from the public.
- Producing teaching or learning materials or special media including ICTs for literacy programmes.
- Carrying out research in fields related to literacy — methods, languages, evaluation, social sciences among others.
- Carrying out surveys of primary importance for literacy planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- Offering youth the opportunity to take part in literacy activities.
- Carrying out non-formal educational activities of a social, cultural, economic or political nature which integrate literacy and literacy-related activities (for example, radio and television programmes, publications, press).
- Initiating innovative practices in literacy.





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Selection process

Prize winners shall be designated by the Director-General on the recommendation of a jury. The selection of prize winners shall be by a jury of at least five persons of different nationalities, appointed by the Director-General for a minimum of three years. The jury may adopt its own rules of procedure.

In addition, the following criteria will be considered

- Duration of the activity which must be sufficient to permit an assessment of results and proof of success.
- Contribution to the basic objectives of the education system of the country.
- Contribution to local and national development.
- Value of activities as an example to stimulate further action.
- Impact of the action on the possibility of mobilizing new resources for literacy.
- Contribution to the understanding and development of national society and culture.
- Contribution to the appreciation of other cultures and to international understanding.

HOW TO APPLY?

Applications are made by National Governments or international non-governmental organizations maintaining formal or operational relations with UNESCO which are requested to consider the following steps:

- Inform the public, national and local agencies or branches and others involved in literacy work about the prizes.
- Provide possible candidate(s) with a copy of this guide.
- Set up a selection committee or panel to screen candidates.
- Select the most deserving candidates and work with them to prepare their file for submission to UNESCO.

Deadline for submission: 31 may 2006

Candidatures must reach UNESCO in Paris by this date each year.

The submission to UNESCO must consist of a description of programme activities which must not be more than five standard pages (1600 words) and should include:

- A description of activities carried out.
- An account of the results achieved.
- An evaluation on the basis of the above-mentioned criteria.
- An appraisal or assessment by the agency presenting the candidate.

The submission must be in English or French only





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In addition, the fullest possible supporting documentation should be sent with the submission.

It is important to work with the candidates to ensure that the submission is prepared to a high standard and on time.

What to put in

1. The name, address and nationality of the institution, organization or individual proposed

2. Background

Why was the programme launched? Why was the undertaking necessary in the country or region?

- Scale and nature of the problem, historical and social context of the work.
- Origins of the programme, date of creation, duration of the activity, location of the undertaking.

3. Literacy goals

How the programme corresponds to national policy and development objectives.

- Target groups, primary beneficiaries.

4. Programme strategy

What does the programme do? How does the programme operate to achieve its intended purpose? Please include the following as appropriate:

- Operational structures/mechanisms.
- Pedagogical methodology/approach.
- How teaching/learning material is produced or procured.
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- Financing mechanisms (e.g. operating costs, sources of financing).
- Human resource management (e.g. staff employed, personnel development scheme).
- Partners.
- Public mobilization/awareness-raising activities.

5. Special characteristics

Aspects that make the work outstanding among other programmes and activities, such as:

- Concrete aspects pertaining to the alleviation of poverty, sustainable development, capacity-building, cultural relevance, and social advancement of women and girls.
- Innovations to meet the specific needs of the target populations in particular contexts, such as rural communities, women and girls, out-of-school youth, migrant populations, ethnic/linguistic minorities, refugees and displaced populations, etc.
- Ways of making the work efficient and sustainable.
- Links to other educational or development work.





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6. Achievements to date

Quantitative assessment of the results of the work such as:

- Number of people participating in the programme (by gender, age, etc.)
- Retention rates.
- Attainment of qualifications by participants.
- Increase in literacy rates, number of literates.
- Number of participants who pursued further learning in other development programmes.
- Number of teaching/learning materials, e.g., publications, radio/television programmes and software produced.
- Number of libraries and community learning centres set up.
- Amount of funding raised by the programme to ensure its sustainability.

Qualitative assessment of the results such as:

- Observed improvements in learners' lives.
- Examples of impact of the work on the village/community/society.
- Extent of the involvement of learners and the community to ensure sustainability of the work.
- Impact on other actions in the country.

7. Problems encountered

Difficulties that arose in the process such as:

- Problems that hindered the smooth operation of the programme.
- Problems that hindered effective learning.
- Strategies taken or planned to be taken to overcome the problems.

8. Plans for the future

9. Overall appraisal by the national selection committee/jury

Supplements

Supplementary material or documents should provide evidence of the merits of the candidature described in the description, for example:

- Detailed description, map, statistical data that illustrate the literacy situation in the country and the context of the programme
- Tables and graphs that demonstrate the progress made.
- Graphics, photographs, videos, audio-tapes, CD-ROMs that sketch out the programme process or learning process.
- Teaching/learning materials produced by the programme.
- Personnel training materials produced by the programme.
- Examples of work developed by learners.
- Press coverage of the programme.
- Newsletters and website of the programme.
- Testimonies from learners, facilitators and other relevant persons.





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Checklist for Governments and INGOs

Before sending your submission to UNESCO check that the following are included:

- The five-page description of the programme activities.
- A letter of endorsement from the Government or INGO.
- Supplementary materials.

Where to send the submissions

Candidates' submissions should be sent to the following address. This address can be contacted for any further information.

Literacy and Non-formal Education Section UNESCO

7, place de Fontenoy,
F 75352 Paris 07SP, France

e-mail: n.aksornkool@unesco.org

phone: +33 1 45 68 11 32 or +33 1 45 68 09 90

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