

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

IN HOSTING CONSULTATION MEETINGS 2023-2024 FOR THE DRAFTING OF THE INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES ON PEOPLE CENTRED SMART CITIES

1. Background

UN-Habitat is inviting Member States, national and local governments, academia and other entities to express their interest in hosting Expert Group Meetings and Regional Consultation Meetings for the development of International Guidelines on People-centred Smart Cities, taking place between 2023 and early 2025.

As requested by Member States in the Resolution HSP/HA.2/Res1 on international guidelines on people-centred smart cities¹, adopted at the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly in 2023, UN-Habitat has initiated the development of international guidelines on people-centred smart cities. The guidelines will be a non-binding framework to inform the development of national and local smart city regulations, plans and strategies, which would ensure that digital urban infrastructure and data contribute to making cities and human settlements sustainable, inclusive and prosperous and respectful of human rights. Once completed, the international guidelines will be presented for approval by Member States in 2025.

To respond to the Member States' request to UN-Habitat to ensure that the guidelines are developed through an inclusive consultation process, UN-Habitat will hold a series of consultations including through its regional and country offices, Member States, members of United Nations specialized agencies, national and international associations and organizations of local authorities recognized by the United Nations, relevant United Nations organizations, international finance institutions, development agencies, non-governmental organizations, academia, civil-society organizations, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders.

2. Objective

A series of three Expert Group Meetings and several Regional Meetings lasting **respectively three and two days** will be held as per the information in the table below, to ensure relevant interaction and exchange between key stakeholders as part of the consultation process.

Meeting	Date (tentative)
EGM 1	February/March 2024
EGM 2	October 2024
Regional Consultation Meeting 1	Between January and May 2024
Regional Consultation Meeting 2	Between January and May 2024
Regional Consultation Meeting 3	Between June and December 2024
Regional Consultation Meeting 4	Between June and December 2024
Regional Consultation Meeting 5	Between January and March 2025
EGM 3	March 2025

¹ <https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2023/06/2310561e.pdf>

Each EGM will have a dedicated agenda, goals, and specific objectives, as further detailed below. Regional consultations will serve to provide inputs into the global consultation process.

Meeting	Goal	Deliverables
EGM 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define the scope of the guidelines - Review the draft findings of the global smart cities assessment - Refine the workplan and roadmap for the work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defined scope of the EWG - Reviewed global assessment (preliminary results) - Roadmap and work plan - Review of consultation plan - Skeleton and outline of the guidelines
EGM 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share knowledge, studies and materials in the key domains - Consider the results of ongoing consultations - Present the first draft guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewed first draft of the guidelines - Inputs on further consultations as needed - Reviewed global assessment results
EGM 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present the final draft of the guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewed final draft of the guidelines - Designed implementation and monitoring plan

3. Participants

UN-Habitat takes the lead in inviting and mobilizing participants across the United Nations system, international organizations, civil society and other relevant stakeholders to attend the EGM and regional consultations. Participants can include, but are not limited to representatives of national, regional and local governments, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, professionals, research institutions and academics, the private sector, development finance institutions, foundations, media, United Nations organizations, and other international agencies.

A dedicated Expert Working Group, made of 30-35 experts, appointed by the UN-Habitat Executive Director to support the drafting of the international guidelines, will participate in the three EGMs.

The host entity of the EGM and of the Regional Consultation Meeting works with UN-Habitat to organize the programme and mobilize participants. The host provides in-kind or financial contribution to UN-Habitat for the mobilization of the international community and other stakeholders to ensure that the event receives global visibility.

Details on commitments, roles and responsibilities of UN-Habitat and the host will be outlined in a contribution agreement which will be signed by all parties involved.

4. Selection process and criteria

The selection of the host for each of the three EGMs and the Regional Consultation Meetings will be made by a UN-Habitat internal committee. The selection criteria will be guided by the following:

- Demonstration of good practice within the host entity relating to the themes related to smart cities, digitalization and urban development
- Geographical balance amongst the meetings
- Demonstration of ability and financial commitment to meet the conditions outlined above and provided in more detail in the attached hosting guide
- Experience of hosting international events, including events relevant to cities

- Accessibility and connectivity of the city for international participation

The selection process consists in the steps listed below with the related deadlines

Milestone	Date (tentative)
Opening of the Call for Expression of Interest	1/09/2023
Closing of the EoI	08/11/2023
UN-Habitat provides potential hosts with bidding package and guidelines	20/11/2023
Deadline to receive bidding proposals	15/12/2023
Bid evaluation	26/01/2024
UN-Habitat informs candidates of the results	30/01/2024
Announcement of selected hosts	30/01/2024
Signing of Contribution Agreement	05/02/2024

5. Financial contribution

The host entity is required to provide either in-kind or financial contributions which covers the following costs:

- The venue with its conference facilities;
- Travel costs and daily subsistence allowance (DSA) for, at least, the 30-35 experts of the Expert Working Group, 5 additional experts and 4 members of the UN-Habitat Secretariat;
- Services and requirements for registration and accreditation;
- IT and other services;
- Security services and equipment according to United Nations security regulations within the city, around and within the venue;
- Interpretation services for the main sessions;
- Operational and logistical needs with respective human resources in the country, city and at the venue.

6. Activities

Activities related to each EGM and Regional Consultation Meeting will be developed in line with available human and financial resources from the voluntary contribution by the host. A programme will be jointly developed with the host. UN-Habitat will provide branded online advocacy tools and kits to support the mobilization of partners and maximize outreach. Details of planned activities will be uploaded by UN-Habitat on its website and social media sites and the host and partners will be encouraged to publicize their activities widely.

7. Expression of interest

A country, city or institution wishing to express its interest to host one of the three EGMs and/or one of the Regional Consultation Meetings is required to send an official communication (on letterhead and with signature) to the UN-Habitat Innovation Unit, addressed to the UN-Habitat Executive Director, Maimunah Mohd Sharif, within the above-mentioned deadline to the following e-mail address

unhabitat-oed@un.org with copy to ig-pcsc@un.org and fill in the required information on the form available [here](#).

Please note: Any submission which does not meet the criteria, is incomplete, or received after the deadline will not be considered.

Annex 1

Hosting the Expert Group Meetings

The specific responsibilities of UN-Habitat will be as follows:

UN-Habitat will designate a focal point to work with the local focal point and organizing team. UN-Habitat shall provide the necessary backstopping and support to ensure the successful hosting of the Event by undertaking the following responsibilities:

1. Advice and support to operations and logistics

- Give guidance to the host on the preparation of the event;
- Assist with invitations of international guests;
- Support logistics and travel arrangements relating to invited and sponsored international guests from outside the host country;
- Handle online registration of international participants;
- Engage with the hosting entity to agree on the venue and setting up of the same according to requirements;
- Shipment of information and promotional materials to the venue;
- Maintain the database and disseminate all international invitations.

2. Invitations

- Invite high-level representatives of the United Nations system and relevant international organizations; civil society; representative of Member States, Mayors, members of the Expert Working Group and other relevant stakeholders;
- Invite representatives of the diplomatic community;
- Disseminate all international invitation letters, which could be jointly signed.

UN-Habitat shall invite in close collaboration and consultation with the host of the event. The host, in turn, shall invite, in close collaboration with UN-Habitat, the highest possible representative from the host Government and representatives from Ministries responsible for various aspect of urbanization and digitalization e.g., Ministries of Local Governments, Digitalization, Housing, Infrastructure, Urban Development, Regional Planning and Environment, local experts, among others, to the Event. Where possible, the invitation will be jointly signed by UN-Habitat and the hosting entity using the electronic signatures for strictly this purpose only. The parties will consult and agree on whether the electronic signature of the host will be provided to UN-Habitat for the purpose of signing the joint invitation letter.

3. Publicity

- Prepare on-line information kits and branding tools relevant statements, design posters and banners, invitation letters, the programme of the day;
- Provide information to governments and stakeholders on the theme and location of the Event through the Executive Director of UN-Habitat;
- Prepare and disseminate press releases and bring the Event to the attention of the international media;

4. Programme

- Provide guidance on the main programme and agenda for the event;
- Provide guidance on the programme of side events, workshops, roundtables, break out session at the venue on the day

5. Specific responsibilities of the host will be as follows:

- The Host will designate a focal point and organizing team who will be working with UN-Habitat;
- The Host shall provide UN-Habitat with the list of international participants whom the Host wishes to invite to the Event for onward dissemination by UN-Habitat;
- The Host may invite all identified personalities, i.e. Mayors or experts from the host country to attend the Event while sharing the contacts with UN-Habitat;
- The Host shall provide UN-Habitat with in-kind financial support as per above and any additional resources to cover travel costs and promotion material at the venue 30 days after the Legal Agreement has been finalized for the support provided by UN-Habitat for the event hosted;
- The Host shall provide all required logistical and IT services for stable Wi-Fi within the venue and cover all local costs related to the preparation and organization of the event;
- The Host shall, at no cost to UN-Habitat, provide the necessary material and logistical support, including printing of merchandise, printing of badges, provision of photographers and videographers for the Event;
- The Host shall, at no cost to UN-Habitat, provide the necessary premises for the Event and related activities, which shall take place at the host, including the conference and workshops rooms, working areas, office space and equipment, media room and press conference room;
- The Host shall ensure stable Wi-Fi connection at no cost throughout the venue, including all premises dedicated to the Event, for all participants and provide internet high speed LAN connection to also enable linking to other locations to the world via the internet for live transmission, as well as all technical equipment for live streaming via UN Web TV, and Zoom or similar software. It further shall make arrangements to provide free interpretation services (including equipment) to all meetings of the Event in at least the two working languages of the Event, that is, English and local language if different from English and add, as appropriate, for the opening/ closing sessions, other United Nations Official languages or other language(s) that may apply in case of high-level attendance from such country. It is also advisable to provide sign language to make the Event fully inclusive;
- The Host shall work in partnership with UN-Habitat in all aspects related to the realization of the Event and will provide at no cost to UN-Habitat a venue, which should be accessible for Persons with Disabilities, for the celebration of the event with the following facilities:
 - Main hall for the celebration of the event with sufficient seating for invited guests and a raised podium for speakers;
 - At least two with up to four rooms for roundtables, technical discussions or side events at the venue, if this is included in the day's programme with live streaming capacity via UN Web TV, as well as Zoom or similar software;
 - Press conference room;
 - Photography and video coverage of the Event and other bilateral meetings of the Executive Director with dedicated photographer;
 - Space for the Exhibition;

- Registration, information desk and branded photo wall;
 - An office, with front office and waiting area, for the UN-Habitat Executive Director for bilateral meetings set-up with executive furniture (desk, swivel chair, sofa set/chairs, coffee table) for meetings with up to 6 persons including coffee/tea/snacks throughout being served;
 - An office with similar set up like for the Executive Director in case of a confirmed high-level guests;
 - A designated suitable car with driver for the Executive Director for the duration of Event;
 - An office for UN-Habitat staff (8 pax) with a large boardroom table and 3-4 offices for 4 pax each (with stationery and printer) including coffee, tea and snacks throughout being served;
 - An office for the Host and other UN-Habitat staff and a dedicated office for UN Web TV staff (all with standard setup);
 - Luncheon for invited guests and international guests; and refreshments (e.g. water) during meetings; coffee/tea snacks during breaks;
 - Public Announcement system and equipment for PowerPoint, video presentations and Internet Connectivity in each room;
 - Interpretation facilities from English to the local language if different from English and vice versa; and additional languages as by confirmed delegates;
 - Dedicated branding throughout the venue and build as backdrop in the main hall and other rooms;
 - Security for delegates;
 - 5 flag poles with the provision of UN flag and Country flag, especially if a Minister (or higher) from the host Country is in attendance
- The Host shall provide adequate medical facilities with English/local language speaking personnel for First Aid in emergencies within the Event's area. For serious emergencies, the Host shall ensure immediate transportation and admission to a hospital. All medical expenses incurred thereafter shall be borne by participants. UN-Habitat as an invitee to the Event shall not in any way be liable for any medical expenses of any participant;
 - The Host shall ensure the availability of adequate public or private transportation on a reasonable commercial basis for all the Event's participants and UN-Habitat officials to and from the airport before, during and after the Event, as well as to and from the principal hotels and the Event premises for the duration of the Event;
 - The Host shall ensure the availability of adequate hotel accommodation on a reasonable commercial basis and distance from the venue for the 30-35 experts of the Expert Working Group, 5 additional experts and 4 members of the UN-Habitat Secretariat);
 - The Host is committed to implementing the activities and providing the services outlined under the Agreement through its organizational structure and by using appointed professionals in accordance with its specific needs as identified by the Host;
 - The Host shall engage and provide, at its expense, local staff and volunteers, who will work in close collaboration with the staff of UN-Habitat and under the overall coordination of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat or persons designated by her;
 - The Host shall ensure that local staff shall be available for work throughout the entire period of the Event and, where necessary, before the Event;
 - The Host may, at the request of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat or any person designated by her, arrange for additional numbers of the local staff as may be required by UN-Habitat.

- The Host may put up street banners, and branding, at strategic locations.