



UN-HABITAT

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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

PRESS RELEASE

Applications open for the Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities

Nairobi, 12 March 2025 –The third cycle of the Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities (Shanghai Award) is now open for applications. UN-Habitat invites eligible cities worldwide to apply until **10 June 2025**.

The world continues to face unprecedented challenges, putting at risk the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development targets. In cooperation with partners, UN-Habitat emphasizes the key role that cities play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Shanghai Award, jointly established by UN-Habitat and the Shanghai Municipality, aims to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the New Urban Agenda – a framework for sustainable urban development adopted at the Habitat III conference in Ecuador, Quito, in 2016.

The Shanghai Award focuses on promoting initiatives related to Sustainable Development Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities, the localization of the SDGs, as well as incentivizing cities to find systematic solutions to urban development challenges. The Award also serves as a platform for advancing UN-Habitat’s strategic plan, flagship programmes, and the Global Urban Monitoring Framework.

The overall theme of the Shanghai Award is “Building a sustainable urban future for all”. Aligned with the topics of World Habitat Day 2025 and World Cities Day 2025, and in response to global emerging priorities, the third cycle of the Award encourages cities to showcase progress in the following key areas: Adequate housing for diverse needs; Building people-centred smart cities; Green and resilient development responding to climate change; Effective governance for vibrant cities.

To apply, visit the Shanghai Award website at shanghaiaward.org. Application guidelines in the six official UN languages as well as an application form and other resources are available on the website.

An international jury will evaluate cities based on their impact, innovation, sustainability, and adaptability to select the winners. These cities will be honored with a certificate and trophy during the World Cities Day 2025 observance. Their outstanding practices in sustainable urban development will be featured in the best practices database of the New Urban Agenda platform and the Shanghai Manual 2025. Additionally, the winning cities will have the opportunity to participate in major international events, fostering

knowledge exchange, attracting investment, and creating new avenues for local economic growth.

For further information, please contact the Shanghai Award taskforce at outreach@shanghaiaward.org.

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The Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities (Shanghai Award)

The Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities (Shanghai Award) was launched by the Executive Director of UN-Habitat at the first session of the UN-Habitat Executive Board in 2022. The first cycle was co-organized by UN-Habitat and China in Shanghai in October 2023. The second cycle was co-hosted by UN-Habitat and Egypt in Alexandria in October 2024.

About UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat is the United Nations entity working for sustainable urbanization. With programmes in over 90 countries, it supports policymakers and communities to create socially and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in urban areas through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action. To know more, visit unhabitat.org or follow us on X @UNHABITAT.

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