



UN-HABITAT

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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

## PRESS RELEASE

# Cities worldwide invited to apply for the fourth cycle of the Shanghai Award

**Nairobi, 17 March 2026** – Applications are now open for the fourth cycle of the Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities (Shanghai Award). UN-Habitat invites eligible cities from around the world to submit their applications by 12 June 2026.

Established jointly by UN-Habitat and partners in China, the Shanghai Award recognizes cities that demonstrate outstanding progress in advancing sustainable urban development. The award aims to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda, highlighting the crucial role of cities in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The award places particular emphasis on Sustainable Development Goal 11 – sustainable cities and communities and the localization of the SDGs. It also contributes to advancing UN-Habitat’s Strategic Plan and the Global Urban Monitoring Framework, while encouraging cities to develop integrated and systemic solutions for sustainable urban development.

The overall theme of the Shanghai Award is “Building a Sustainable Urban Future for All.” Aligned with the themes of World Cities Day 2026 and World Habitat Day 2026, the fourth cycle invites cities to showcase progress in four priority areas:

- Adequate housing for diverse needs
- Urban regeneration for human settlements improvement
- Resilient infrastructure responding to climate change
- Multi-stakeholder participation to strengthen urban governance

Cities will be evaluated by an international jury based on four criteria: impact, innovation, sustainability and adaptability.

Winning cities will receive a certificate and trophy at an award ceremony during the observance of World Cities Day 2026. Their practices will be featured in the New Urban Agenda platform best practices database and in the Shanghai Manual 2026. Winners will also be invited to participate in major international events, creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, partnerships and investment.

Cities interested in applying can visit [shanghaiaward.org](http://shanghaiaward.org), where the Application Rules and Guidelines are available in the six official UN languages, along with the application form and supporting materials.

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### **About the Shanghai Award**

The Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities (Shanghai Award) was announced by the Executive Director of UN-Habitat at the first session of the 2022 UN-Habitat Executive Board. The first award ceremony was held in Shanghai in October 2023, followed by ceremonies in Alexandria in October 2024 and Bogotá in October 2025.

### **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](https://unhabitat.org) or follow us on social media @UNHABITAT.

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