WORLD URBAN FORUM

UN-HABITAT

Call for expression of interest

22 May 2026

Hosting of the Fifteenth Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF15) – in 2030

1. The World Urban Forum

The World Urban Forum (WUF) is the world's premier global conference on sustainable urbanization. It is a non-legislative technical forum convened by UN-Habitat since 2002 based on affirmation by the UN General Assembly through resolution A/RES/56/206.

The WUF is now the premier international gathering for exchanging knowledge, views and experiences on adequate housing and sustainable urbanization as well as global frameworks such as the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The inclusive nature of the WUF, combined with high-level participation, makes it a unique United Nations conference and the foremost global arena for interaction among policymakers, local government leaders, non-government organizations and expert practitioners, among others, in the field of sustainable urban development and human settlements.

The WUF has been held in a different host city and country biennially. Participation in the WUF has significantly increased in the recent years with attendees from all over the world, representing relevant stakeholders and sectors. WUF13 is introducing new segments, including the WUF Academy, a Practices Hub, and a full-day Ministerial Meeting, elevating the World Urban Forum as a platform for learning, discovering solutions and exchanging on globally agreed frameworks.

WUF Sessions	Location	Date	Participation
WUF1	Nairobi, Kenya	29 April – 3 May 2002	1,200
WUF2	Barcelona, Spain	13 – 17 September 2004	4,300
WUF3	Vancouver, Canada	19 – 23 June 2006	10,400
WUF4	Nanjing, China	3 – 6 November 2008	8,000
WUF5	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	22 – 26 March 2010	13,800
WUF6	Naples, Italy	1-7 September 2012	8,200
WUF7	Medellín, Colombia	5-11 April 2014	22,000
WUF9[1]	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	7– 13 February 2018	23,000
WUF10	Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates	8 – 13 February 2020	13,300
WUF11	Katowice, Poland	26 – 30 June 2022	17,000
WUF12	Cairo, Egypt	4 – 8 November 2024	25,000
WUF13	Baku, Azerbaijan	17 – 22 May 2026	49,675

2. Participation

Participants at the Forum include, but are not limited to, national, regional and local governments, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, professionals, research institutions and academies, private sector, development finance institutions, foundations, Media, United Nations organizations and other international agencies.

3. The Fifteenth Session of The World Urban Forum (WUF15) in 2030

By 2050, the world's urban population is expected to reach almost 70%, making urbanization one of the twenty-first century's most transformative trends. The WUF aims to gather participants to discuss and address the way cities and human settlements are planned, designed, financed, developed, governed and managed in a city that is globally recognized for its innovation and urban solutions in sustainable development. The WUF also explores ways and provides insights and lessons that will promote and contribute to inclusive development in all parts of the world through effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

1 WUF8 in 2016 was not called for by UN-Habitat, as it would have coincided with the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development - Habitat III in October 2016. A stakeholders Forum was organized in the margins of the Conference in Quito with similar structure to the World Urban Forum.

4. Objective of the Forum

The World Urban Forum has the following objectives:

- Raise awareness of adequate housing and sustainable urbanization among stakeholders and constituencies, including the general public;
- Improve the collective knowledge of adequate housing and sustainable urban development through targeted trainings, open discussions, sharing of lessons learned and the exchange of practices and policy solutions;
- Strengthen coordination and cooperation between different stakeholders and constituencies for the advancement and implementation of adequate housing and sustainable urbanization global priorities;
- Serve as a platform to inform the reporting of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda;
- Build global coalitions to scale knowledge, resources and impact for sustainable urbanization.

5. Strategic Orientation

In establishing the WUF in 2001, the UN General Assembly defined the WUF as a non-legislative technical forum in which experts can exchange views in the years when the governing body of the UN-Habitat does not meet. The WUF is thus UN-Habitat's main platform for stakeholder mobilization and engagement in the context of its work and mandate. In this respect the WUF15 is expected to enable the review of the progress of UN-Habitat 2026-2029 strategic plan focusing on housing, land and basic services and support the implementation of the next strategic plan.

Further, strategic continuity between sessions of the Forum would be key to leverage outcomes across sessions and continue to scale global partnerships and action for sustainable cities and communities.Leveraging coherence with other major UN and global conferences and events will also be desirable.

6. Bid process and time frame

The closing date for receiving the Expression of Interest for WUF15 is 30 November 2026. The table below outlines the time frame of important dates for the complete bidding process.

Milestones	Date
Opening of the Call for Expression of Interest	22 May 2026
Deadline to receive Expression of Interest	30 November 2026
Provide potential hosts with bidding package and guidelines	15 January 2027
Deadline to receive Bidding Proposals	15 June 2027
Bid evaluation	30 October 2027
Candidates informed of selection results	15 January 2028
Signing of Host Country Agreement	30 April 2028
Signing of the Agreement of Logistical Arrangements	30 October 2028
Official handover of selected WUF15 host at WUF14	2028

7. Financial contribution

To host the World Urban Forum a financial contribution is required. The host country for WUF15 is expected to make a minimum contribution of fifteen million US dollars (USD 15,000,000) total cash contribution to UN-Habitat. Information on the purpose of the cash contribution to UN-Habitat will be provided as part of the bidding proposal.

Additionally, the host country is required to provide an in-kind contribution of: the venue with its conference facilities; services and requirements for registration and accreditation; 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.

8. Expression of interest

A city / country wishing to express its interest to host the fifteenth Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF15) is required to send an official communication (on letterhead and with signature) to the UN-Habitat Executive Director, Anacláudia Rossbach, within the above mentioned deadline to the following e-mail address: unhabitat-wuf15bid@un.org

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