|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Council Working Group on WSIS&SDG34th meeting – Geneva, 25 September 2019** |  |
|  |  |
|  | **Document CWG-WSIS&SDG-34/007-E** |
| **26 July 2019** |
| **English only** |

**World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes (2019-2020)**

During the WSIS Forum 2019 (8-12 April, Geneva), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) announced the top 90 winning ICT-related projects and initiatives recognized for implementing the WSIS Action Lines, competing for the prestigious [WSIS Prizes 2019](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/stocktaking/prizes/2019/). With participants emerging from across the globe, 72 champions were honoured and 18 winners awarded for each of the 18 categories in line with the WSIS Action lines and their impact on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since 2012, WSIS Prizes has been recognising remarkable efforts made by entities and organisations from around the globe that focus on accelerating socio-economic progress of the whole world as a community.

The submission phase which began from 2 July 2018 to 12 December 2018 received a record number of 1,141 project submissions, out of which 1,062 exceptional projects were nominated for WSIS Prizes 2019. More than two million online votes were cast from 21 December 2018 till 10 February 2019 for these projects and following a comprehensive review by the [Expert Group](http://www.itu.int/en/itu-wsis/Pages/focal_points_al.aspx) lead to the selection of 90 extraordinary ICT initiatives for the eight edition of the WSIS Prize contest. For a full list of this year's WSIS Prizes Awardees, click [*here*](https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/stocktaking/Prizes/2019/Champions)*.* WSIS Prizes 2019 Winners project descriptions were published in the publication *WSIS Stocktaking: Success Stories 2019*.

Due to the increased interest from the previous WSIS Prizes winners and champions, alongside with the existing policy of the WSIS Prizes process to continuously promote their achievements and track the further development of the awarded projects, WSIS Team has held a special session at the WSIS Forum 2019 with the objective to bring together the winners and champions (2012-2019). As a result of this meeting, former WSIS Prizes awardees have proposed to establish a WSIS Prizes Network, which form a key part of our global and grassroots community, with an objective to be engaged in online and community advocacy, while providing input related to the future progress of the contest and promotion of ICTs for SDGs.

For the eight year in a row, the [WSIS Prizes 2020](http://www.wsis.org/prizes) will be recognizing outstanding success stories from around the world for their part in building an inclusive information society. Our common objective is to inspire and advance sustainable development through the effective use of ICTs. Building upon the outcomes of the United Nations General Assembly Overall Review on WSIS as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the WSIS Prizes 2018 seek to reflect close linkages with achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

[ECOSOC resolution 2018/28](https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/RES/2018/28) also reiterates the importance of recognizing excellence in the implementation of the projects and initiatives that further the WSIS goals, and encourages all stakeholders to nominate their ICT-related projects for the annual WSIS Prizes contest as an integral part of the WSIS Stocktaking process ([www.wsis.org/stocktaking](http://www.wsis.org/stocktaking)).

In order to process the submission, stakeholders are requested to complete the submission form for WSIS Prize 2020 online at [www.wsis.org/prizes](http://www.wsis.org/prizes) by 22 November 2019. All stakeholders are urged to encourage their networks to join the WSIS Prizes process. The contest is organized in five phases with Nomination phase starting from 23 November and resulting with 360 nominated projects (20 projects will be nominated in each WSIS Action Line Category) for the Online Voting phase planned to start on 20 December 2019 and ending on 4 February 2020.

Based on constructive recommendations and input received from the ITU Membership and the WSIS stakeholders, we are introducing innovations to further improve the contest highlighting social, economic and environmental impact of the submitted projects. In the Submission phase, we are introducing an updated submission form in order to better guide project owners when submitting entries using more detailed questionnaire and ensuring that Rules and Guidelines are respected.

Due to a large number of nominations in 2019 (1.062) we have received an input to limit this number to a reasonable level in order for the voters to be able to review all projects and cast their votes based on social , economic and environmental impact of the projects. In this respect, the [Expert Group](https://www.itu.int/en/itu-wsis/Pages/focal_points_al.aspx), professionals working on the implementation of WSIS outcomes, will review the submitted projects in the Nomination Phase referring to the rules for project submission and nomination criteria and the outcome will be a list of nominated projects (twenty projects per category) that will be announced to the public on 21 December 2019.

Finally, following the deadline for the online voting, 24 January 2020, the voting process, will result in identifying five projects with the highest number of appreciations/votes given for project descriptions by WSIS stakeholders. The voters are encouraged to vote keeping in mind the social, economic and environmental impact of the projects. During the Selection Phase, 25 January – 7 February 2020, the Expert Group will make in-depth analyses of five most voted projects per category and will select one winning project per category, taking into account scale and impact of the project on the implementation of the WSIS outcomes and its contribution to the sustainable development. The outcome of the Expert Group’s work will be the list of eighteen winning projects that will be publicly announced during the WSIS Forum 2020 only.

Should you have any questions or need for assistance with WSIS Prizes 2020 contest, please do not hesitate to contact the WSIS Team at wsis-prizes@itu.int.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_