

## Frequently Asked Questions

### A. General Questions

#### 1. What are the categories of the Prize?

The Zayed Sustainability Prize awards 6 categories:

#### **HEALTH**

This category recognises organisations that have demonstrated innovative, impactful and inspirational sustainability solutions in the areas of health that include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring access to essential and affordable healthcare
- Ensuring access to maternal and newborn healthcare
- Ending epidemics (AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis etc.)
- Preventing and treating water-borne, communicable and non-communicable diseases
- Reducing illness from pollution, hazardous chemicals and contamination

Organisations must also demonstrate a clear vision and long-term plan to further deploy their solution and scale up their impact, as well as inspiring others to follow suit by advancing sustainable and human development.

To be eligible for this category, organisations must be a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) or a non-profit organisation (NPO).

The Prize fund for this category is US \$1,000,000.

#### **FOOD**

This category recognises organisations that have demonstrated innovative, impactful and inspirational sustainability solutions in the areas of food that include, but are not limited to:

- Decreasing hunger and malnutrition
- Increasing agricultural or other food processing productivity
- Ensuring sustainability of food systems
- Enhancing sustainable food production

Organisations must also demonstrate a clear vision and long-term plan to further deploy their solution and scale up their impact, as well as inspiring others to follow suit by advancing sustainable and human development.

To be eligible for this category, organisations must be a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) or a non-profit organisation (NPO).

The Prize fund for this category is US \$1,000,000.

#### **ENERGY**

This category recognises organisations that have demonstrated innovative, impactful and inspirational sustainability solutions in the areas of energy that include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring access to affordable and reliable clean energy
- Increasing production of clean energy
- Improving energy efficiency and energy infrastructure
- Implementing clean energy technology innovation

Organisations must also demonstrate a clear vision and long-term plan to further deploy their solution and scale up their impact, as well as inspiring others to follow suit by advancing sustainable and human development.

To be eligible for this category, organisations must be a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) or a non-profit organisation (NPO).

The Prize fund for this category is US \$1,000,000.

## **WATER**

This category recognises organisations that can demonstrated innovative, impactful and inspirational sustainability solutions in the areas of water that include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring access to safe and affordable drinking water
- Ensuring access to sanitation and hygiene
- Increasing water use efficiency

Organisations must also demonstrate a clear vision and long-term plan to further deploy their solution and scale up their impact, as well as inspiring others to follow suit by advancing sustainable and human development.

To be eligible for this category, organisations must be a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME), or a non-profit organisation (NPO).

The Prize fund for this category is US \$1,000,000.

## **CLIMATE ACTION**

The category recognises organisations that have demonstrated innovative, impactful and inspirational solutions producing positive results in the following areas:

- Climate Adaptation and resilience building
- Sustainable Land Use and Forest Conservation
- Nature-based solutions for conserving/restoring ecosystems and natural resources or carbon removal
- Carbon Capture, Usage and Storage

The solution may be an approach, service and/or product that can be directly attributed to a quantifiable positive impact pertaining to the areas mentioned above.

Organisations must also demonstrate a clear vision and long-term plan to further deploy their solution and scale up their impact, as well as inspiring others to follow suit by advancing sustainable and human development,

To be eligible for this category, the nominated organisation must be a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME) or a non-profit organisation (NPO).

The Prize fund for this category is US \$1,000,000.

## **GLOBAL HIGH SCHOOLS**

The Global High Schools category recognises high schools or secondary schools, from six global geographic regions that propose innovative, impactful and inspirational sustainability projects in the areas of health, food, energy and/or water. The proposed project could be in one area (e.g. water) or a combination of areas (e.g. health, food, energy, water and climate action).

The Prize is intended to encourage students to develop and implement their sustainability ideas and is not aimed at administrative projects or educational reforms at the school.

The award in this category is not given for past achievements but will enable students from winning high schools to implement sustainability projects in their own schools. These student-led projects must demonstrate innovative approaches to address sustainability challenges and inspire students to take active roles in sustainable development.

The application must be submitted by the students and supported by the school management. The projects must:

- demonstrate how they meet the three criteria: impact, innovation, inspiration, as explained in the Evaluation Criteria section of this page;
- be able to be implemented and operational within one to two years; and
- benefit the school community and/or their local/regional community for several years.

In each of the following six global regions, one school will win US \$150,000:

1. The Americas
2. Sub-Saharan Africa
3. Middle East & North Africa
4. Europe & Central Asia
5. South Asia
6. East Asia & Pacific

## 2. What is the Prize Fund, per category?

The total prize fund is US \$5.9 million, distributed as follows:

- Health US \$1,000,000
- Food US \$1,000,000
- Energy US \$1,000,000
- Water US \$1,000,000
- Climate Action US \$1,000,000
- Global High Schools\* US \$900,000

\*Divided amongst six schools; awarding each US \$150,000:

*Regions:*

The Americas  
Europe & Central Asia  
Middle East & North Africa  
Sub-Saharan Africa  
South Asia  
East Asia & Pacific

## 3. Where does the Zayed Sustainability Prize funding come from?

The Prize fund comes from the Abu Dhabi Government as a way to honour and continue the sustainability and humanitarian legacy of the founding father of the United Arab Emirates, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

Masdar, Abu Dhabi's renewable energy company, manages the Zayed Sustainability Prize. A dedicated team works on the Prize all year round.

## 4. What are the assessment criteria of the Prize?

For Health, Food, Energy and Water categories, the criteria are:

### **INNOVATION: 40%**

Innovation refers to a novel solution or a transformation of an existing solution that solves a challenge or a need, generates value and brings significant positive impact.

A solution can be a technology, a service or a business model.

The innovation criterion requires organisations to demonstrate that their solution:

- has a unique value proposition;
- is disruptive or transformative;
- is technically and commercially viable; and
- is adopted by the market.

The Prize does not award early-stage start-ups, demonstration projects, prototypes or solutions that have not demonstrated any impact on the ground.

### **IMPACT: 30%**

Impact refers to a positive change that addresses social, economic, technological and/or environmental challenge(s) and has proven to make the world a better place by improving the well-being of humanity.

The impact criterion requires organisations to demonstrate that:

- their solution already has had a positive impact on the quality of peoples' lives;
- they are resilient to potential social, economic, technological, and environmental challenges;
- they have good governance by employing skilled people and establishing fair policies; and
- they have a detailed plan of how the Prize money would be used to further increase their impact.

### **INSPIRATION: 30%**

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founding father of the UAE, was a pioneering advocate of global sustainability and human development. Leading by example, he placed great value in the pursuit of socio- economic development that meets the needs of both current and future generations. Continued through the Prize, Sheikh Zayed's legacy is a source of inspiration for the entire world.

The inspiration criterion requires organisations to demonstrate that their solution:

- reflects Sheikh Zayed's core values – sustainability and human development that were central to his own approach and actions;
- can inspire and influence others to advance sustainable and human development; and
- can further inspire sustainable actions from the wider community by instigating behavioural changes.

For Climate Action category, the evaluation criteria are:

### **INNOVATION: 40%**

Innovation refers to a novel solution or a transformation of an existing solution that solves a challenge or a need, generates value and brings significant positive impact.

A solution can be an approach, technology, a service, or a product.

The innovation criterion requires organisations to demonstrate that their solution:

- has a unique value proposition;
- is disruptive or transformative;
- is technically and commercially viable; and
- is adopted by the market.

The Prize does not award early-stage start-ups, demonstration projects, prototypes or solutions that have not demonstrated any impact on the ground.

### **IMPACT: 30%**

Impact refers to a positive change that addresses social, economic, technological and/or environmental challenge(s) and has proven to make the world a better place by improving the well-being of humanity.

The impact criterion requires organisations to demonstrate that:

- their solution is reducing climate risk and vulnerability;
- they are resilient to potential social, economic, technological, and environmental challenges;
- their solution has resulted in measurable positive impact on beneficiary communities;
- they have good governance by employing skilled people and establishing fair policies; and
- they have a detailed plan of how the Prize money would be used to further increase their impact.

### **INSPIRATION: 30%**

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founding father of the UAE, was a pioneering advocate of global sustainability and human development. Leading by example, he placed great value in the pursuit of socio- economic development that meets the needs of both current and future generations.

Continued through the Prize, Sheikh Zayed’s legacy is a source of inspiration for the entire world.

The inspiration criterion requires organisations to demonstrate that their solution:

- reflects Sheikh Zayed’s core values – sustainability and human development that were central to his own approach and actions;
- can inspire and influence others to advance sustainable and human development; and
- can further inspire sustainable actions from the wider community by instigating behavioural changes.

For Global High Schools category, the evaluation criteria are:

### **INNOVATION: 30%**

Innovation refers to a creative idea, proposed by students, which solves a challenge or a need for the school and/or local community in the areas of health, food, energy and/or water.

The Innovation criterion requires schools to demonstrate that:

- the project is driven **by students** who work together to identify a challenge and create an innovative solution either by utilising existing technologies or by developing their own; and
- the students use project management techniques – planning, scheduling, and budgeting to implement the idea, and apply learnings at school to deliver the desired sustainability outcome.

### **IMPACT: 30%**

Impact refers to a positive change, as a result of the proposed project, that improves the well-being of the school, students and/or local community.

The Impact criterion requires schools to demonstrate that:

- the project delivers measurable sustainability outcomes – in terms of access to sustainable energy, clean water, basic healthcare and/or nutritious food in your school or wider community; and

- the project delivers benefits for both current and future students. These benefits may include, but are not limited to, opportunities for education and/or improving technical skills in the area of sustainable development.

### **INSPIRATION: 40%**

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founding father of the UAE, strongly believed that a country's greatest investment lies in building generations of knowledgeable youth. He was a firm believer of youth's active role in the development process by sharing responsibilities to lay foundations for the success of the society. Continued through the Prize, Sheikh Zayed's legacy is a source of inspiration for the young generation.

The Inspiration criterion requires schools to demonstrate that:

- the project reflects Sheikh Zayed's core values – sustainability and human development that were central to his own approach and actions;
- the project can be sustained in the long term;
- the project inspires students to become the next generation of innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders capable of addressing sustainability challenges; and
- the project further inspires responsible actions from the wider community and other schools.

### **5. Who are the previous winners?**

Previous winners can be found [here](#) in the Winners' section of the website.

### **6. How are the winners chosen?**

All submissions go through our three-tiered evaluation process.

**First stage:** Due diligence is conducted on all submissions to ensure that they meet the evaluation criteria of the Zayed Sustainability Prize.

**Second stage:** The Selection Committee reviews every entry, and the final entries are sent to the Jury for final evaluation.

**Third stage:** The Jury meets in person to deliberate on the finalists and select the winner in each category. Final decisions are unanimous. The winners of the Zayed Sustainability Prize will be announced at our annual Awards Ceremony.

## B. Questions on Submission Form

### 1. Where do I apply?

Interested applicants should submit using the [online submissions' portal](#). This can also be accessed through the homepage of the Zayed Sustainability Prize website.

### 2. Are there any fees required to submit an entry?

There are no fees to be paid as part of the submissions process.

### 3. Apart from the Online Submission Portal, is there any other way to submit an entry for the Prize (e.g. Email, Postal)?

No. All submissions for the Zayed Sustainability Prize must only be made through our [Submission's portal](#).

### 4. May I complete the submission form in any language?

The Prize accepts entries in English, Arabic, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian and Chinese (Mandarin).

### 5. When can I submit an entry?

The Zayed Sustainability Prize will open on 27 January 2025 and will remain open until 23 June 2025. Submissions will not be accepted outside of the submission period.

### 6. Is the submission deadline extendable?

To ensure all entrants have the same opportunity and timeframe, the submissions period is not extendable, under any circumstances.

### 7. Do I have to submit my entry in one sitting or am I able to come back to my application, at a later date, to complete it?

The online portal allows entrants to save the progress of their submission details and return to add or complete the entry at a later time. Applicants must remember to save their progress and can update and change the content as many times as needed, up until confident it is ready for submission. Simply log in using the credentials you used to set up your account.

Please note that once the submission deadline has passed, no further additions or changes will be allowed.

### 8. How can I modify my application after "submitting" if it is prior to the deadline?

To edit your application after submission but before the deadline, please email a request to [techsupport@zayedsustainabilityprize.com](mailto:techsupport@zayedsustainabilityprize.com). The technical support team will reopen your application for



editing within 48 hours, as long as the request is made before the deadline.

**9. Will I receive feedback on my submission, even if it does not get past the submission stage and passed on for Selection Committee review?**

All entries received during the submission period receive a receipt acknowledgement.

If your submission does not meet our eligibility requirements, it will not be further evaluated.

Unfortunately, the Prize team is unable to offer any feedback due to the volume of submissions.

**10. May I submit an entry for the Prize every year?**

Organisations or high schools may resubmit entries for the Prize. Previous winners of the Prize cannot apply for the Prize again (in any category).

**11. May I apply in multiple categories?**

Each applicant or entity may enter in one Prize category only.

**12. What is the maximum file size that can be uploaded through the Submissions Portal as an attachment to accompany the submissions form**

The maximum file size is 25 MB per attachment. Applicants may upload files in 'Other Information' section of the application.

**13. Can I include videos to complement my submission?**

Yes. Video links are accepted.

**14. Are there specific video formats that you accept in the attachments section of the Submissions Form?**

Only video links from YouTube and Vimeo are accepted, but due to the size (MB) of actual videos, no attachments will be accepted.

**15. Which category would be most appropriate for a research organisation to enter?**

If the research organisation fits the eligibility criteria (Innovation, Impact and Inspiration) then it can be considered for any of the categories apart from Global High Schools.

**16. Can I send additional materials that will complement my submission via email?**

No. All materials relevant to your submission must be submitted through the [Submissions Portal](#).

**17. Do the response boxes in the submission form accept graphs and charts?**

The response boxes in the form accept only plain text. Therefore, candidates will be unable to include graphs and charts in these response boxes. However, there will be a separate attachment section for you to upload

Supporting documents such as graphs and charts. Please describe each attachment as an “Appendix” (i.e. Appendix A – Graphs and Charts). You may upload them as Word, PDF or JPG files.

**18. Will hyperlinks work in the answer boxes of the submission forms?**

The answer section only accepts plain text or a plain URL (e.g. <http://wikipedia.com>). Please avoid using charts, tables or hyperlinks. Should this information be critical to your submission, please include these items in a word document and attach it in the “Attachments” section of the submission form.

**19. If I have trouble completing my application, who should I contact?**

Please feel free to contact us at [techsupport@zayedustainabilityprize.com](mailto:techsupport@zayedustainabilityprize.com) for any assistance.

**20. Do I need to include any financial information?**

Yes. Financial information will need to be included. All applicants can be assured that all such information will be handled in the strictest of confidence and will only ever be disclosed to the relevant panel of judges, as required.

**21. Can I nominate someone for the Prize or submit on behalf of an organisation with which I am affiliated?**

Yes. You can nominate an SME or NPO by emailing [info@zayedustainabilityprize.com](mailto:info@zayedustainabilityprize.com).

## **C. Global High Schools category**

**1. How is the Global High Schools Category different from all the other categories?**

For the Global High Schools category, we ask schools to submit proposals for funding consideration to implement sustainability projects in their schools and/or community.

The Global High Schools award aims to inspire innovation among youth in both developed and developing nations. It is open to educational institutions serving high school students aged 11 to 19.

## **D. Post-Submission**

### **1. Will I be notified regarding the receipt of my submission?**

All entrants will receive a notification email upon submission.

If you have not submitted your application, you will also receive a reminder email to complete your submission, as we approach the deadline.

### **2. Will I receive a copy of my submission?**

Yes. You can download a copy of your submission by logging into the Submissions Portal.

### **3. Will I be notified if I have been shortlisted?**

Yes. You will be notified by email by the Prize administration team. You will also receive an email should you not make it on the shortlist.

Please note that a public announcement of the finalist candidates can only be made following the meeting of the Jury of the Prize.

### **4. Can I win the Prize more than once?**

No. In order to ensure that every year we recognise innovative, impactful and inspirational solutions, former winners (of any category) are not permitted to resubmit another entry.

### **5. Can I publicise my status as a shortlisted candidate?**

The Zayed Sustainability Prize has incorporated a non-disclosure policy on announcing shortlisted candidates before the final stage of the evaluation and the Jury Meeting is concluded.

At this time, should you or your entity be listed as one of our finalists, you are free to publicise this as well.

### **6. Will the judges visit the candidates as part of their assessment?**

The judges will not visit or communicate directly with the candidates as part of their assessment. For this reason, it is imperative that all information critical to your submission be included in the entry form.

### **7. If chosen as a finalist, how do I attend the Awards Ceremony?**

All finalists will be invited to attend the Ceremony, with flights and accommodation costs provided.

### **8. What will I be expected to use the Prize fund for, should I win?**



The winners of the Zayed Sustainability Prize are asked to sign a contract with Masdar detailing the relationship between the Prize and its winners.

The Prize fund should go towards the sustainability programme or solution described in the submission. Alternatively, dedicating the fund to new sustainability ideas is also possible, subject to details provided and agreed on, in advance, to the Prize administration.

For the Global High Schools category, the funds are to be used to implement the proposed project and satisfy the obligations (including any timing requirements) as set out in the proposal.

## **E. About the Awards Ceremony**

### **1. When does the Zayed Sustainability Prize Awards Ceremony take place?**

The winners of the Zayed Sustainability Prize will be announced at our annual Awards Ceremony.