

UNITED NATIONS



Division for Public Administration and
Development Management,
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
in partnership with
the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the
Empowerment of Women
(UN-WOMEN)



UNITED NATIONS PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS

SUBMISSION RULES FOR NOMINATIONS AND EVALUATION PROCESS



United Nations

To learn more about the Awards, visit UNPAN at: <http://unpan.org/unpsa>
To submit a nomination, please go to: <http://www.unpan.org/applyunpsa2015>

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1. What is the United Nations Public Service Awards Programme?

The United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA) is the most prestigious international recognition of excellence in public service.

1.2. What is its purpose?

The overall purpose of the UNPSA programme is to reward the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions towards a more effective and responsive public administration in countries worldwide. An annual global competition that promotes the role, professionalism and visibility of public service, the programme aims to discover new innovations in governance; motivate public servants to further promote innovation; raise the image of public service; enhance trust in government; and collect and share successful practices for possible replication between and within countries. It can be translated into the following more specific objectives:

- (a) To reward service to citizens and motivate public servants worldwide to sustain the momentum of innovation and the improvement of the delivery of public services;
- (b) To collect and disseminate successful practices and experiences in public administration in order to support efforts for improvements in country level public service delivery;
- (c) Through success stories, to counterbalance any negative image of public administration, raise the image and prestige of public servants and revitalize public administration as a noble discipline on which development greatly depends;
- (d) To promote, encourage and facilitate networking among institutions and organizations relevant to public administration and strengthen the networks of the United Nations programme on public administration and development; and
- (e) To enhance professionalism in the public service in rewarding the successful experiences in innovations and excellence in the public service.

In brief, the Awards aim to:

- Discover innovations in governance;
- Reward excellence in the public sector;
- Motivate public servants to further promote innovation;
- Enhance professionalism in the public service;
- Raise the image of public service;
- Enhance trust in government; and
- Collect and disseminate successful practices for possible replication.

1.3. Who manages the UN Public Service Awards Programme (UNPSA)?

The Programme is managed by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-WOMEN).

1.4. How was the UNPSA established?

In 2000, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) endorsed the recommendation of the Group of Experts on the UN Programme in Public Administration to proclaim:

“a United Nations Public Service Day to celebrate the value and virtue of service to the community at the local, national and global levels, with prizes to be awarded by the Secretary-General for contributions made to the cause of enhancing the role, prestige and visibility of the public service.”

Three years later in 2003, the General Assembly, in its resolution 57/277, designated 23 June as United Nations Public Service Day and encouraged Member States each year to organize special events on that day to highlight the contribution of public service in the development process.

United Nations General Assembly Resolution Establishes Public Service Day

General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/ 57/277) of 7 March 2003

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 50/225 of 19 April 1996, 53/201 of 15 December 1998 and 56/213 of 21 December 2001 on public administration and development, as well as Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/45 of 20 December 2001,

Stressing the need for capacity-building initiatives aimed at institution building, human resources development, strengthening financial management and harnessing the power of information and technology,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the role of public administration in the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration;
2. Reiterates that efficient, accountable, effective and transparent public administration, at both the national and international levels, has a key role to play in the implementation of internationally agreed goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and in that context stresses the need to strengthen national public sector administrative and managerial capacity-building, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
3. Decides that 23 June will be designated United Nations Public Service Day, and encourages Member States to organize special events on that day to highlight the contribution of public service in the development process;
4. Expresses its deep appreciation for the generous offer of the Kingdom of Morocco to host the fourth Global Forum, at Marrakesh, in December 2002;
5. Welcomes the substantive support that the Secretariat has provided to the Global Forum and invites it to extend such support to any future forums of a similar kind that may take place;
6. Reiterates its appreciation for the role that the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance performs in promoting information sharing and exchange of experience and in building the capacities of developing countries to utilize information communication technologies for this purpose, and reiterates that particular emphasis should be given to the exchange of experience related to the role of public administration in the implementation of internationally agreed goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;
7. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, in the manner he deems appropriate, on the implementation of the present resolution.

1.5. What are the UNPSA categories?

The United Nations Public Service Awards for 2015 will be given in the following four categories:

- Improving the Delivery of Public Services
- Fostering Participation in Policy-making Decisions through Innovative Mechanisms

- Promoting Whole-of-Government Approaches in the Information Age
- Promoting Gender Responsive Delivery of Public Services

While it is understandable that some initiatives may fall within the scope of more than one category, nominees should make sure to select **only one** category, i.e. the one that best represents and fits the initiative.

In order to ensure a level playing field for nominations from different countries, the winners are decided per region as follows:

- Africa;
- Asia and the Pacific;
- Europe and North America;
- Latin America and the Caribbean; and
- Western Asia

1.6. When and how are the UNPSA winners awarded?

The Awards are handed out every year on 23 June, day designated by the General Assembly as the [United Nations Public Service Day](#) (A/RES/57/277) to “celebrate the value and virtue of public service to the community”. The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/277, encourages Member States to organize special events on that Day to highlight the contribution of public service in the development process.

Over 500 participants are invited every year to take part in this event. In the past years, the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as well as the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs were invited to take part in this event. The Ceremony is part of a UN Public Service Forum that lasts four days and takes place every year in a different region of the world. To view past years’ events, please visit: <http://www.unpan.org/unpsa>

2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Who is eligible for nomination and who can nominate an institution?

Nominees: All public organizations/agencies at the national, state and local levels are eligible for nomination.

Nominators: Eligible nominators include Government departments and agencies; universities, non-governmental organizations, professional associations, among others, preferably an organization that has benefitted from the initiative

In order for a nomination to be qualified for the first round of evaluations, four main eligibility criteria must be fulfilled as follows.

2.1 Nomination is made by a third party

Nomination must be submitted by a third party. A third party is an individual or entity that was not directly involved in the design, implementation, monitoring or evaluation of the initiative. A third-party making the nomination must not have a direct hierarchical relationship or link with the institution being nominated e.g. a department of a Ministry nominating the same Ministry.

Who cannot nominate an initiative?

The UNPSA does not accept self-nominations: a self-nomination is when the institution being nominated and the institution making the nomination is the same, or they have a direct relationship.

Any institution or individual involved in the selection and evaluation process of UNPSA cannot nominate an initiative.

2.2 Nomination is relevant to one of the UNPSA categories

The nomination is relevant to one of the categories: that is the initiative submitted must be relevant to the UNPSA category it is submitted for and is in public administration. The programme does not accept nominations that are purely scientific innovations (e.g. in medical or environmental science), or are implemented by a non-public organization (NGO, private sector organization, private university, etc.). Once the nomination is submitted, the category cannot be changed even if it was found later that it was submitted to the wrong category. Nominators are therefore requested to pay special attention to the criteria of the various categories when choosing a category under which a nomination should be submitted.

2.3 Online Nomination Form is Complete

The on-line nomination form must be fully completed: meaning that all fields must contain the requested information. In the event that any fields used to describe the initiative ("summary", "timeframe", "narrative", etc.) are left blank, or if the answer does not directly correspond to the question asked, the initiative will not be evaluated.

NOTE: Each field should not exceed the character limit indicated for each respective question, as per the nomination form. Any characters beyond the limit will not be read by evaluators.

2.4 The Initiative has been implemented and Supporting Documents submitted for the Second Round of Evaluations

The initiative's maturity and impact will be taken into consideration. The programme requires a minimum of one year of implementation with demonstrated and documented impact in order to qualify for evaluation. An implementation plan is required for each nomination in order to qualify for evaluation. Moreover, if an initiative that passes to the second round does not provide supporting documentation within the expected timeframe, the same initiative is disqualified.

3. EVALUATION PROCESS

The UNPSA evaluation process begins with a pre-screening of nominations as per nomination eligibility criteria. The evaluation process consists of three rounds of evaluation, as well as a final verification of selected initiatives. Nominations for 2015 will be accepted from the beginning of August to the end of October 2014. The evaluation process is scheduled to begin in November and end in March or the beginning of April of each year (depending on when the Meeting of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration is convened).

3.1. First Round Evaluation

Step 1- DPADM in collaboration with UN-Women screens and pre-selects the online nominations submitted to the online UNPSA database at: <http://www.unpan.org/applyunpsa2015>. Online nominations can be made in one of the six official United Nations languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian or Spanish). Each nomination is reviewed by two different experts independently to ensure a fair assessment of nominations. Reviewers assess each nomination according to an evaluation form designed for each category of the Award. Nominations are ranked and based on a specific threshold to pass to the second round of the competition. Short-listed candidates are then informed about the results of the first round evaluation and requested to submit additional documentation.

3.2. Second Round Evaluation

Step 2- DPADM, together with UN-WOMEN reviews and short-lists candidates on the basis of the documentation provided. All the initiatives selected from the first evaluation are evaluated by the UNPSA Evaluation Reviewers along with the supporting documentation. Each nomination is evaluated separately by 2 reviewers, according to the modalities listed above.

Reviewers are not assigned the same nominations as the ones they had to assess previously. This guarantees fairness of the process. The list of reviewed cases with a specific ranking is submitted to the CEPA sub-committee, which decides who the winners are.

Required supporting documents are as follows:

- Two letters of reference: A letter of reference is a letter written by any organization, public or private, different from the institution being nominated, pointing out the valuable achievements resulting from the implementation of the initiative submitted, and underlining the reason why this initiative and/or institution is worthy of being awarded. A reference letter cannot be written by the nominating institution.
- A minimum of two and a maximum of five supporting documents: Supporting documents are any kind of material (evaluation and audit reports, results of client/citizen surveys, books, video files, newspaper articles, etc.) the institution may wish to submit to validate and highlight its nomination.

Institutions are required to upload relevant documents through the online system on or before the advertised deadline. Initiatives with no additional documentation provided will be disqualified and will not be submitted for further review.

3.3. Third Round - Final Decision by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration

Step 3 – Decision about the winners - The short-listed candidates are evaluated by a sub-committee of the **United Nations Committee of Experts in Public Administration**, which is a subsidiary organ of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. The sub-committee is composed of seven public administration experts from all over the world. These experts are chosen not only for their vast experience and knowledge, but also based on their geographical diversity and gender balance.

The CEPA sub-committee decides on prospective awardees, bearing in mind that there cannot be more than 1 winner per category and per region. As the UNPSA considers 5 regions (Africa, Asia

and the Pacific, Europe and North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Asia) and 4 categories, the maximum number of prizes is 20 for the first place and 20 for the second place. Should the top scorer of a given region and category be poorly ranked in comparison to all nominations and not be deemed suitable, the sub-committee may decide not to award a prize. In rare instances where more than one initiative have made a significant impact, two second place winners are chosen for a region in one category.

Following the CEPA sub-committee recommendations for the UNPSA winners, a process of verification and validation is implemented to ascertain congruence between the nomination documents and what happens on the ground. The UNPSA team will gather information to substantiate the claims made by the winning nominees in its application form and supporting materials by conducting internet research and contacting UNDP offices and other international, regional and local partners. The evaluation process is strictly based on the activities and impact made by the specific initiative being awarded and not on other initiatives undertaken by the nominated institution. If the preliminary validation for a specific case reveals certain concerns e.g. mismanagements regarding their specific initiative, the case will be disqualified. In the case of absence of UNDP offices in the country, other international organizations like the World Bank or other notable NGOs working in the country will be contacted. The winners of the awards are officially announced in May of each year.

Following this process of verification, the winners of the Awards are officially announced. The Ceremony takes place every year on Public Service Day on 23 June.

4. INSTITUTION RECEIVING THE AWARD

4.1. Awards can only be conferred to public sector institutions that have ownership of the nominated initiatives. An implementing agency is not qualified to receive an award even if it was involved in implementing the initiative on a consultancy basis.

4.2. The award goes to the initiative and the institution that is responsible for implementing it, not to the individual that initiated or implemented it. An individual cannot be awarded.

5. DISQUALIFICATION OF NOMINATIONS

Institutions will be disqualified from any further evaluation for the following reasons:

- 5.1.** Failure to observe the submission rules for the nomination
- 5.2.** Any conflict of interest and non-adherence to the process by those concerned
- 5.3.** Presenting misleading and false information and supporting documents
- 5.4.** Inability to provide sufficient documentation to review the initiative when requested
- 5.5.** Unethical behaviour, including undue pressure on any person involved in the evaluation and selection process

6. REVOCATION OF AWARD

An award can be revoked by the CEPA sub-committee at any point, if it has been established that an institution has failed to observe the UNPSA rules. The decision of CEPA is final.

7. CATEGORIES AND THEIR EVALUATION CRITERIA

When reviewing each case, a set of questions intend to ascertain whether the initiative meets some or all of the category's criteria. For more information about each category's criteria, please see below.

Category 1 - Improving the Delivery of Public Services

Criteria	Description
Increases Efficiency	Streamlines processes, reduces red tape, and improves coordination and other measures resulting in increased efficiency. The increase in efficiency must be supported by quantifiable indicators, surveys, questionnaires, etc.
Provides High-Quality Service Delivery	Provides timeliness, courtesy, access and client-orientation in public service delivery. Includes the availability of government services at times and in ways that are more convenient to the public, for example, speedy processing of applications or claims, reduction in the amount of paperwork and other activities citizens must perform in order to demonstrate compliance.
Incorporates Citizens' Feed-back	Actively incorporates citizens' inputs and feed-back regarding public service delivery satisfaction.
Improves Access and Promotes Equity	Promotes equity by extending service delivery to vulnerable groups (e.g. the poor, women, minorities, the youth, elderly, the disabled and others) and/or enables service delivery to a wider population, particularly through mechanisms that promote social inclusion. Has extended services to a wider population than before.
Promotes Partnerships	Promotes partnerships between the public sector, civil society and the private sector in public service design and implementation.
Transforms Administration	Involves transformation within a large framework rather than incremental improvements. Innovative methods, tools and techniques, in the context of a given country or region, are applied to themes such as modernization, change of organizational culture, administrative reforms or the overhaul of government service delivery procedures.
Introduces a New Concept	Introduces a unique idea, distinctively new approach to problem solution, or unique policy or implementation design, in the context of a given country or region, for transparency, accountability and responsiveness in the Public Service.

Category 2 - Fostering Participation in Policy-Making Decisions Through Innovative Mechanisms

Criteria	Description
Promotes responsiveness	Enhances responsiveness of government to the demands and needs of citizens; favours the inclusion of the views of concerned sections of the community in public affairs; and demonstrates openness through consultative mechanisms with the public.
Promotes Participation through New Institutional Mechanisms	Implements new processes and institutional mechanisms to channel the demands and views of citizens. This may include decision-support systems, government networking, and consultation mechanisms leading to more effective policymaking and implementation as well as holistic and "horizontal" approaches to public service delivery and management.

Facilitates e-Participation	Enables governments – policy makers and public officials – to better interact with the public, particularly individual citizens, and allows citizens, for instance, to better express their needs, participate in and influence policy-making; comment on policy implementation; provide feedback on government services (on and off-line services); and file complaints.
Transforms Administration	Involves transformation within a large framework rather than incremental improvements. Innovative methods, tools and techniques, in the context of a given country or region, are applied to themes such as modernization, change of organizational culture, administrative reforms or the overhaul of government service delivery procedures.
Introduces a New Concept	Introduces a unique idea, distinctively new approach to problem solution, or unique policy or implementation design, in the context of a given country or region, for greater participation of citizens in policy-making decisions, particularly for the poor.

Category 3 – Promoting Whole-of-Government Approaches in the Information Age

Criteria	Description
Promotes regulatory and institutional frameworks to harmonize policies, programmes, and integrate services	Develops and implements national strategies, regulatory and institutional frameworks (including infrastructure, people and processes) to harmonize policies and programmes by promoting collaboration and maximizing synergies between different government sectors in order to promote collaborative outcomes that increase public value. Aligns in a coherent way government’s holistic vision of development with inter-agency strategies, objectives, roles and responsibilities. Promotes horizontal and vertical cooperation, among different levels of government, to provide integrated services. Provides an institutional framework and mechanisms that ensure a proper balance between cross-sectoral collaboration and sectoral accountability.
Foster leadership, human resource capacities and a collaborative organizational culture	Have clear vision, political will and understanding of the ICT tools to improve government functions and human resources capacities to work across organizational boundaries through continuous learning, training and other capacity-building activities. Promotes an organizational culture that encourages collaboration to achieve shared goals and outcomes to increase public value.
Enhances organizational performance, interoperability, and open standards	Enhances organizational performance by integrating vital government services across different agencies by using open standards, open data and encourages use of shared systems such as cloud computing for seamless integration. Minimizes duplication of efforts and reduces costs through knowledge sharing and data exchange, more effective deployment of resources through integration of back-end office operations, utilization of innovative channels and tools such as ICT tools, and by providing, inter alia, one-stop shops, online and mobile sites that aggregate government services for ease of discovery and access, etc. Allows different systems to exchange information, to combine it with other information resources and to subsequently process it in a meaningful manner both horizontally and vertically. Takes into consideration privacy and security issues while achieving interoperability between systems.
Promotes social inclusiveness and collaboration among government agencies and citizens	Promotes social inclusiveness by reaching out to the vulnerable populations including (i) the poor; (ii) women; (iii) the physically challenged; (iv) the illiterate; (v) the youth; (vi) the elderly; (viii) migrants; and (viii) the indigenous people; increases communication and interaction among government agencies and citizens with the objective of improving information flow, transparency and accountability; includes channels for active participation of citizens and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of development management in co-creating public value towards public governance.
Transforms administration	Involves transformation within a large framework rather than incremental improvements. Innovative methods, tools and techniques, in the context of a given country or region, and, are applied to transform public sector organizations through the application of whole-of-government approaches to service delivery, among other things, through the strategic application of ICT in government.
Introduces a new concept	Introduces a unique idea, distinctively new policy and implementation design, approach to promoting whole-of-government approaches and/or innovation, in the context of a given country or region, for greater public sector performance and socio-economic development.

Category 4 - Promoting Gender Responsive Delivery of Public Services

Managed by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) through its Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-WOMEN)

Criteria	Description
Provides high quality service delivery for women	Provides increased access to high quality and affordable service delivery for women; Includes innovations in service delivery mechanisms that cater to the specific needs of women, in particular responding to the specific security risks, care burden, mobility and access issues faced by women.
Promotes accountability in service delivery to women	Utilizes documentation in various forms which can serve as evidence of a government's conformity to women's human rights; ensures mechanisms that support women to easily obtain information about government actions, initiate investigations or be compensated where necessary; and ensures that officials are sanctioned when women's needs are ignored or when women's rights for service delivery are not protected.
Promotes transparency in service delivery to women	Creates mechanisms to increase the ability of women to observe, monitor and analyze government decision-making and processes, including participatory budgeting and planning processes, and citizen feedback mechanisms.
Promotes responsiveness to the needs of women	Enhances responsiveness of government to the demands and needs of women, in particular those in remote rural areas; Demonstrates openness through consultative mechanisms with women and their representatives; Implements new processes and institutional mechanisms to channel the demands and views of women. This may include decision-support systems, government networking, and consultation mechanisms leading to more effective policymaking and implementation as well as multi-sectoral and "horizontal" approaches to public service delivery and management.
Promotes gender parity in public service delivery	Introduces incentives and changes in employment policies, including recruitment, promotion, training, compensation and career management policies, to increase the number of women in the public sector at all levels, including those in the front line and at decision making levels.
Transforms administration	Involves transformation of a large framework, rather than incremental improvements, to promote women's rights; Innovative methods, tools and techniques, in the context of a given country or region, and, are applied to respond to needs of women. These may include the provision of e-government services; a change in organizational culture; administrative reforms; or the overhaul of government procedures for gender responsive service delivery and the application of knowledge management processes.
Introduces a new concept for women's participation in policy making	Introduces a distinctively new approach to promoting the participation of citizens, especially poor women, in policymaking; this may be through the application of a new knowledge management technique, unique policy, or implementation design in the context of a given country or region.

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