



World Habitat Awards evaluation – Call for proposals

1. Introduction

World Habitat is issuing a call for proposals to carry out an evaluation of the World Habitat Awards (WHA). There will be a particular focus on understanding the positive role and effectiveness of the WHA and recommendations for strengthening the awards and related support activities in the future.

For 40 years the World Habitat Awards – delivered in partnership with UN Habitat – have recognised and highlighted innovative, outstanding and sometimes revolutionary housing ideas, projects and programmes from across the world.

A key part of World Habitat's new 10-year strategy is growing and strengthening our World Habitat Awards. This evaluation is seen as a key part of understanding our impact to date and the opportunities to shape our approach in the future.

Overall objectives of the evaluation:

- Understand impact of WHA and support activities
- Identify opportunities to increase impact and influence
- Provide recommendations to improve processes and activities.

2. About World Habitat

World Habitat is an independent housing foundation working across the world. Our vision is "A world where everyone has a safe and secure home." In our 10-year strategy published in 2024, we identified how we would make progress in achieving our mission by focusing our work more closely on helping innovative approaches to grow from early adopter to mainstream uptake. We express this approach in three steps:

Step 1: Find & Recognise

We find quality early adopter innovations that tackle housing challenges, in particular those which have the potential to become mainstream housing practice that contribute to housing justice.

We award the best projects through the World Habitat Awards, a global housing competition run by World Habitat in partnership with UN Habitat since 1986.

Step 2: Strengthen and Promote

We work with projects that we have awarded to help scale them up. We aim to help winning organisations develop their innovations from an early adopter stage towards mainstream uptake.

We provide capacity building support, grants and help build networks. We draw on our global network to provide tailored support to help with this process.

We promote award winning innovative models to increase the awareness and visibility of the models and the organisations that deliver them. We advocate for the changes needed to help shift global narratives towards adopting innovations.

Step 3: Transfer and Take Up

We use our position, our network, and our partnerships to promote positive housing solutions in a positive and powerful way to show what is possible.

We recognise that making positive change requires more than demonstrating evidence of good practice.

Where necessary we challenge mainstream thinking and practice, advocating and campaigning for changes in policy which are necessary for the adoption of good practice and innovative solutions.

We support our partners to advocate in their own countries and support the development of national and international networks of organisations to help strengthen and amplify the case for change.

You can find out more about World Habitat here: www.world-habitat.org.

3. The World Habitat Awards

In 1985, as a contribution to the UN International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, a long-standing partnership between UN-Habitat and World Habitat (previously BSHF) was established. Today, in 2025, the World Habitat Awards build on this legacy. The awards demonstrate how communities, individuals, and governments can adapt and innovate to meet some of the biggest housing challenges facing the world. They illustrate that it is possible for even the most vulnerable and marginalised communities to have a secure home from which they can base their lives and flourish.

Since 1985 more than 300 outstanding projects demonstrating substantial, lasting improvements in living conditions have been recognised through the World Habitat Awards. Each year, two gold winners, one from the Global North and one from the Global South, receive £10,000 each and a trophy. The World Habitat Awards also recognise silver and bronze winners.

The World Habitat Awards recognise people and organisations from a wide variety of places that are tackling a broad range of issues. Each year, we receive over 100 new projects from all the regions of the world, highlighting creative solutions to solve some of the problems in often difficult contexts.

Over the last 40 years of the Awards:

- There have been over **380 finalists** from **94 countries** from all regions in the world.
- Any type of organisation can enter the competition. Around 25% of winners are local or national NGOs, charities, or foundations. The next most represented category is grassroots organisations and self-managed projects led by residents, followed by private sector (architecture firms, private housing developers).
- There are a number of themes and categories represented in the competition. The category with most finalists since 1976 is **Community-Led Housing**. The second most represented category is **Climate Change & Planet-Friendly Living**.

- Some organisations have applied several times to the awards, and we are pleased to see how they have developed from one application to another. We welcome any organisation to apply or reapply to the awards. It should be noted that 20 organisations reached the final stage of the competition two, three or even four times.

For more information on the World Habitat Awards visit: <https://world-habitat.org/world-habitat-awards/>

Follow-up support to awardees

In order to encourage the spread of innovative housing practice around the world, we provide follow-up support to awardees in the year following the award. This has been traditionally focused on Gold awardees, but since 2025 we are extending the support to silver awardees as well.

Over the years, we have organised more than 40 in-person peer-exchange events, which was our initial model of support. Around 7 years ago we moved to another model that is more diverse, adapting to winners' needs and preferences.

Some examples of the activities carried out in recent years include:

Increasing visibility

- Contribution to international events and summits
- Communication support

Sharing practices with peers

- In situ Peer Exchanges
- Online workshops and networking events

Technical support

- Developing strategies
- Local staff support

Transitioning in governance model

More information about these activities can be found here: <https://world-habitat.org/world-habitat-awards/world-habitat-awards-exchange/>.

In our new strategy we intend to increase the organisation's focus on the support work with award winners and aim to expand and improve this work. This includes supporting more winners (beyond the traditional limit on two gold winners per year), as well as aiming for more targeted impact.

4. Evaluation and methodology

World Habitat require an experienced person/s to work on a freelance basis to carry out the follow evaluation, which will involve a range of desk-based research and online interviews with stakeholders across the globe. Whilst we are looking for the successful freelancer to develop and finalise the methodology for this evaluation, the methodology should include some or all of the following:

- Analysis of data from the World Habitat Awards from the last 10 years – including awardees and support activities carried out. Most data are already available, including awardees with contact details and information about the activities carried out. We expect the consultant to organise existing data and improve it with new data on impact.
- Interviews with key stakeholders to assess the impact of World Habitat Awards and related support activities.

This evaluation will seek to engage with the following groups:

- Former WHA winners (gold, silver, bronze).
- WHA applicants that did not reach final stage.
- UN-Habitat staff as our main Award Partner.
- Other stakeholders in the global housing sector as required

A list of interviewees will be agreed with the successful applicants and World Habitat will be able to arrange e-introductions.

5. Evaluation questions

This evaluation should seek to answer the following questions in two key areas, as stated below. The questions as outlined here are for reference only and can be modified as suggested by the interviewer.

a) Winning a World Habitat Award

Questions for award winners

- Impact of the Awards in winners – what works, what doesn't, what could be done differently. What is the main value of winning a World Habitat Award?
- What are the main challenges faced by the organisations and how do the Awards help solve these? What motivates people to apply?
- What is the experience of projects when they win an Award (gold/silver/bronze)? What happens after winning—what changed for them?
- What could we do differently to help you have more impact in terms of a) raising awareness of your work, b) enabling you to have greater impact in terms of growing your work or enabling other communities to adopt your approach?
- How was the prize money used? What difference has this made in your work? (for Gold winners only)
- Feedback on the application process.
- Were their overall expectations met? Why/why not?
- What was most valuable? What can be done differently?

Questions for all stakeholders/ interviewees on the impact of the Awards

- What works, what doesn't, what could be done differently. What is the main value of winning a World Habitat Award?

- What are the main challenges faced by the organisations and how do the Awards help solve these? What motivates people to apply?
- The WHA currently award a Gold award to Global North and one Global South project per year. Is this distinction relevant and useful? Are there any perceptions or implications about this, from the point of view of the awardees?
- Feedback on the selection process (for unsuccessful candidates). What was their experience during the application process? Is there any impact that participating in the competition had in their work? What was their motivation for applying?

b) Impact and delivery of support activities after winning the Award (for gold awardees)

- Do the support activities add value to WHA winners? What is the most significant impact? Does the support from World Habitat help them increase their impact/improve their work?
- What are the most impactful interventions, based on the work done in the last 5 years?
- What are the expectations of partners before winning the Award/after? Are these fulfilled?
- What was most valuable in their collaboration with World Habitat?
- What was their experience working with World Habitat – what was valuable and what wasn't.
- Where their expectations met?
- What could be done differently?
- We are currently testing a new approach to this part of our work – offering gold and silver winners small grants (up to 10,000 GBP) to improve their impact. What is the view of former winners about this approach?

6. Outputs

The end product of this evaluation will be a report, which we do not require to be lengthy, but with a clear focus and recommendations on the future direction of the World Habitat Awards, and some quotes from interviews regarding impact. The audience for the report will consist of World Habitat staff, trustees, and partners. A summary of the findings will be available to read on the World Habitat website once completed. The evaluator will present the research to World Habitat internally, to discuss and explain the findings.

7. Timetable

Call for proposals issued – Monday 27th January

Deadline for proposals – Monday 24th February

Possible interview dates (please confirm availability): Wednesday 26th and Thursday 27th February

Expected decision date – Monday 3rd March

Contract period – 10th March – 14th July

Kick off meeting with WH Staff – Monday 10th March

Check in with WH Staff – Wednesday 23rd April

Preliminary findings and Meeting with WH Staff – Thursday 29th May

Final report due – Thursday 10th July

Presentation to WH Staff – Week of 14th July

8. Budget

The overall budget for the delivery of the project will be a **maximum of £13,000 inclusive of VAT, all expenditure and costs**. Figures should be quoted inclusive of VAT and all expenses, but please clarify if VAT is included within your costings, and what expenses are envisaged. You will not be entitled to claim any costs or expense that may be incurred in preparing your proposal, whether or not it is successful.

9. Your proposal

Please submit your proposal in maximum 5 sides of A4. Your proposal should include:

- A description of your expertise and background
- A narrative description of how you will meet the brief, and why World Habitat should commission you to conduct this work
- Examples of relevant work you have carried out
- An outline of the methodologies you would plan to use
- Timetable of work between 10th March – 10th July
- Budget breakdown, including:
 - Apportionment of days and associated costs for the project.
 - Information about your costs per hour/day/week, so that we can see how you would construct your costs for any potential additional work.
 - Any other relevant costs.

In assessing proposals, World Habitat will consider the following issues:

- **Expertise and experience** – evidence of your capacity to fulfil the brief to a high standard.
- **Creativity and quality of proposal** – demonstration of your understanding of the task at hand and how you will deliver it to achieve maximum results.
- **Cost** – the final decision will not be taken on cost considerations alone, but value for money will be a consideration.

10. Ownership

World Habitat commissions this work in pursuit of its strategic and business objectives. Intellectual property and copyright in any materials produced under this contract rests with World Habitat.

11. Queries and where to send your proposal

If you have a query please contact Mariana Gallo, Programme Lead at World Habitat at mariana.gallo@world-habitat.org.

Please email proposals and attachments by the deadline to info@world-habitat.org.