

To NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO

**The Assistant Director-General
for Priority Africa and External Relations**

27 November 2024

Ref.: SC/PBS/RIE/24/8274

**Subject: Call for applications for the ninth edition of the UNESCO-Equatorial
Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences**

Sir/Madam,

It is my honour to invite your organization to submit applications for the 9th edition of the UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences.

Created by the Executive Board in 2008, this Prize awards projects and activities led by individuals, institutions and non-governmental organizations, contributing to the progress in the life sciences. The jury will select up to three candidates, who will share the sum of USD 300,000.

Applications should be submitted by **31 March 2025 (midnight, UTC+1)** by Member States, through their National Commissions for UNESCO, or by non-governmental organizations in official partnership with UNESCO and active in fields covered by the prize. Each Member State and non-governmental organization can submit up to five candidacies per edition.

The nomination of candidates will be online and is accessible here: www.unesco.org/egip/account-request. The Secretariat of the Prize (lifesciencesprize@unesco.org) remains at your disposal for any questions.

Please also find attached the statutes of the prize and an explanatory note on the application process.

Yours sincerely,



Firmin Edouard Matoko

Encl.: 2



STATUTES OF THE UNESCO-EQUATORIAL GUINEA INTERNATIONAL PRIZE FOR RESEARCH IN THE LIFE SCIENCES

Article 1 – Purpose

The purpose of the UNESCO Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences is to reward projects and activities of individuals, institutions or non-governmental organizations working in the life sciences leading to improving the quality of human life. The objectives of the Prize are in conformity with UNESCO's policies and are in line with the central function of UNESCO's Major Programme II: to encourage research and the setting up and further development of networks of centres of excellence in the life sciences contributing to improving the quality of human life.

Article 2 – Designation, amount and periodicity of the Prize

2.1 The Prize shall be entitled "UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences".

2.2 The Prize shall be funded by the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea and shall consist of an endowment of **\$5,200,000** over a period of six years, including support costs. The amount shall cover both the monetary value of the Prize and the cost of administering the Prize. Any interest that may accrue will be added to the overall contribution.

2.3 All funds received, and the interest accrued thereon shall be kept in a special interest-bearing account for the Prize (see Financial Regulations in Annex II to section (ii) of this document).

2.4 The full staff support and operating/management costs of the Prize, including the monetary value of the Prize, all costs relating to the jury meeting, award ceremony, communication and public information activities, the purchase of the statuette(s), as well as an external evaluation of the Prize once in every six-year period, shall be fully covered by the donor. To this end, the Director-General shall determine a mandatory overhead cost amount to be applied and charged against the funds in the Special Account, which is to be established under the Financial Regulations of the Prize.

2.5 The Prize of \$350,000 shall be awarded once a year for a six-year period, on an initial basis for three biennia. The amount of \$300,000 may be equally divided among a maximum of three laureates, each of which is considered to merit the prize. These laureate(s) shall also receive a certificate and an "*Integracion Triba*" statuette by Equatorial Guinean artist Leandro Mbomio. In addition, the remaining \$50,000 shall be granted as fellowships, equally divided among a maximum of two outstanding young African female scientists under the age of 45. The fellowship winners shall also receive a certificate and a medal.

Article 3 – Conditions/qualifications of candidates

Candidates shall have made a significant research contribution to the life sciences. The Prize may be conferred upon individuals, institutions or non-governmental organizations.

Article 4 – Designation/selection of the laureate(s) and fellowship winners

The laureate(s), maximum three, and the two fellowship winners, shall be selected by the Director-General of UNESCO on the basis of the assessments and recommendations made to him/her by an international jury.

Article 5 – Jury

5.1 The jury shall consist of five independent members, being personalities with a recognized reputation in the field of life sciences, while also taking into consideration the need for equitable geographical representation, gender balance and the principle of non-payment of honoraria. They shall be appointed by the Director-General for two-year periods for a maximum period of six years. Representatives and alternates of Members of the Executive Board cannot be appointed as jurors. Jurors involved in a real or potential conflict of interest shall recuse themselves from further deliberations or be asked by the Director-General to do so. The Director-General may replace members of the jury on legitimate grounds.

5.2 The jury shall elect its own chairperson and deputy chairperson. Members shall receive no remuneration for their work, but will receive allowances for travel and accommodation, where required. A quorum of three jurors present will be required for jury deliberations to proceed. The working languages for deliberations by the jury shall be English and French.

5.3 The jury shall conduct its business and deliberations in conformity with these Statutes and shall be assisted in the performance of its task by a member of the UNESCO Secretariat. Decisions shall be taken by consensus to the extent possible and otherwise by secret ballot until a simple majority is obtained. A member shall not take part in a vote concerning a nomination from his or her country.

5.4 The jury shall meet once every year, for two working days, in order to make its recommendations to the Director-General for the selection of the laureate(s) and fellowship winners.

5.5 The jury shall send an assessment on nominations and accompanying recommendations to the Director-General of UNESCO no later than **15 June** of each year.

Article 6 – Nomination of candidates

6.1 When UNESCO has received the funding of the Prize, as indicated in Article 2 above, the Director-General of UNESCO shall officially invite the submission of nominations to the Secretariat of the Prize by 15 March of each year from the governments of Member States, in consultation with their National Commissions, as well as from the non-governmental organizations maintaining official partnerships with the Organization and active in relevant fields covered by the Prize.

6.2 Nominations shall be submitted to the Director-General by the governments of Member States, in consultation with their National Commissions, and by non-governmental organizations maintaining official partnerships with UNESCO. A self-nomination cannot be considered.

6.3 Each nomination shall be accompanied by a written recommendation, which shall include, in English or French, inter alia:

- (a) a description of the candidate's background and achievements
- (b) a summary of the work or the results of the work, publications and other Supporting documents of major importance, submitted to the jury for consideration
- (c) a definition of the candidate's contribution to the Prize's objectives.

Article 7 – Procedure for the awarding of the Prize

7.1 The Prize shall be awarded by the Director-General at an official ceremony held on a rotating basis at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, or in another location jointly determined by UNESCO and the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. UNESCO shall present to the laureate(s) a cheque for the total amount of \$300,000 (three hundred thousand United States dollars), a certificate and the "*Integracion Tribal*" statuette. UNESCO shall officially announce the name/s of the laureate(s). Additionally, UNESCO shall present to the two fellowship winners a cheque for the total amount of \$50,000 (fifty thousand United States dollars), a certificate and a medal. UNESCO shall officially announce the name/s of the fellowship winners.

7.2 If a work being rewarded has been produced by two or three individuals, the Prize shall be awarded to them jointly. In no case may a prize amount be divided between more than three individuals.

7.3 The laureate/s and fellowship winners, if possible, shall give a lecture on a subject relevant to the work for which the Prize has been awarded. Such a lecture shall be organized during or in connection with the Prize ceremony.

7.4 The work produced by a person since deceased shall not be considered for a Prize. If, however, a laureate or fellowship winner die before he or she has received the Prize, then the Prize may be presented posthumously (awarded to relatives or an institution).

7.5 Should a laureate or fellowship winner decline the Prize; the jury shall submit a new proposal to the Director-General.

Article 8 – Sunset clause –mandatory renewal of the Prize

8.1 Six months prior to the agreed end of the term of the Prize, the Director-General of UNESCO together with the donor will undertake a review of all aspects of the Prize and decide about its continuation or termination. The Director-General will inform the Executive Board of UNESCO about the results of this review.

8.2 In case of termination of the Prize, any unspent balance shall be returned to the donor unless otherwise agreed, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Special Account for the Prize.

Article 9 – Appeals

No appeals shall be allowed against the decision of UNESCO with regard to the award of the Prize. Proposals received for the award of a Prize may not be divulged.

Article 10 – Amendments to the Statutes of the Prize

Any amendment to the present Statutes shall be submitted to the Executive Board for approval.



unesco

UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea
International Prize for
Research in the Life Sciences

9th Edition
Deadline:
31 March 2025

UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences



© PeopleImages.com - Yuri A Shutterstock*

In a rapidly changing world, science is crucial for tackling urgent challenges like emerging diseases, pandemics, biodiversity loss, diminishing natural resources, food security, climate change, and natural disasters. The life sciences, in particular, play a vital role in achieving global objectives and proposing sustainable solutions. Emerging diseases and pandemics emphasize the need for scientific research in developing vaccines and treatments. Biodiversity loss and resource depletion threaten ecosystems, requiring scientific efforts to preserve and restore them. Food security can be enhanced through improved agricultural practices and the development of resilient crops. Addressing climate change demands advancements in renewable energy, carbon capture, and sustainable living. Natural disasters necessitate scientific solutions for prediction, preparation, and response. Supporting scientific advances in these areas not only improves quality of life but also ensures a more resilient and equitable future for all.

The UNESCO–Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences aims to reward the projects and activities of individuals, group of individuals, institutions, and non-governmental organizations for their outstanding contribution to the improvement of human life.

The Prize, established by UNESCO’s Executive Board in 2008. It plays an important role in advancing knowledge and strengthening capacities for sustainable development. It directly contributes to the 2030 goals, particularly those aimed at improving the quality of human life, without leaving anyone behind. *“BETTER LIFE: SDG 1, 2, 5, 8 and 10”*.

Funded by the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, the Prize, which has a monetary value of US\$ 300,000, is divided equally among up to three laureates. The laureate(s) also receive(s) a certificate and an *“Integración Tribal”* statuette by Equatorial Guinean artist Leandro Mbomio.

Who is eligible

The Prize is awarded annually to eminent scientists or groups of scientists, institutions, and non-governmental organizations from numerous fields, such as medicine, biology, agriculture, environmental sciences, and new technologies, who have significantly contributed to improving the quality of life for individuals and communities through outstanding and transformative discoveries. These advancements include medical innovations that extend and enhance patient lives, agricultural techniques that increase crop productivity and sustainability, and environmental research that promotes ecosystem conservation and combats climate change. Additionally, new technologies continue to revolutionize our daily lives by providing innovative and sustainable solutions to global challenges.

How to apply?

Who can submit?

Candidatures endorsed by a designating authority

- UNESCO Member States through their National Commissions
- Non-governmental organizations in official partnership with UNESCO that are active in relevant fields covered by the Prize

Each Member State or Non-governmental Organization may submit up to five nominations

Application form

After registration, candidates must fill in the online application form in English or French.

Application form includes:

- Background information
- Outline of the candidate's contribution to the Prize's objectives
- Summary of the research work
- List of major scientific publications

For more information

[UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize Website](#)

Selection process

1. The Secretariat reviews all applications received before the deadline and transmits the eligible applications to the International Jury of the Prize.
2. The International Jury meets to assess the eligible applications.
3. The Director-General selects the winners based on the recommendation of the International Jury.
4. The prize is awarded to the winner(s) during an official ceremony organised by UNESCO.

How to submit an application

Applications may be submitted in two ways:

- Designating authorities can invite candidates who they wish to endorse to apply.
- Candidates must submit their application to a National Commission through the online process.

Only applications that have been officially endorsed are received by the UNESCO Secretariat.

Secretariat of the Prize

UNESCO-Equatorial Guinea International Prize for Research in the Life Sciences,
Natural Sciences Sector,
UNESCO
7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris
07 SP France
E-mail: lifesciencesprize@unesco.org

Please note that self-nominations shall not be considered as well as incomplete applications.