



Innovation in the
Public Sector


United Nations
Public Service
Day, Forum and
Awards

Ms. Elizabeth Niland

Governance and Public Administration Officer
Public Service Innovation Branch
Division for Public Institutions and Digital
Government

United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs



*“Public service is a critical component for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals ... we need to pioneer new approaches, work differently, take risks and **innovate**”*

- António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General.



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for transformation through enhanced creativity and innovation in the public service at all levels of governance and public administration.

How does UN DESA/DPIDG support innovation in the public sector?

The Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government supports the efforts of Member States to make the public service creative and innovative through advocacy, empirical and analytical research as well as leadership and human resource capacity development.

Work focus of the **Public Service Innovation Branch**

- UN Public Service Day and Forum
- UN Public Service Awards
- Capacity development in public service innovation
- Initiatives and work around emerging innovation issues



United Nations Public Service Day and Forum

United Nations Public Service Day and Forum

- **UN Public Service Day** is marked annually on the **23 June** and celebrates the value and virtue of public service to the community while highlighting innovation in public administration.
- The **UN Public Service Forum** is a unique capacity development global event on public governance that provides a platform to explore, discuss and learn about:
 - (i) emerging challenges, issues and trends in public governance;
 - (ii) innovative practices to address these challenges; and
 - (iii) capacity development strategies, approaches and tools in support of sustainable development.
- The Forum brings together anywhere from 400 to 1000 plus people including: world leaders, policy-makers, practitioners, innovators in governance, representatives of international and regional organizations, academia, non-profit organizations and the private sector.



United Nations Public Service Forum

- Every year the Forum focuses on a specific theme delving into critical areas of public governance and exploring different dimensions through **plenary panels, Capacity Development workshops, Ministerial Roundtable and UN Public Service Awards Ceremony.**
- Theme for **2025: 'Five years to 2030: Accelerating Public Service Delivery for a Sustainable Future'**



Recent and upcoming location and hosts:

- 2024 Incheon, Republic of Korea, Ministry of the Interior and Safety
- **2025 Samarkand, Uzbekistan, Ministry of Digital Government**
- 2026 Tbilisi, Georgia, Ministry of Justice

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United Nations Public Service Awards

United Nations Public Service Awards

The United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA) is a prestigious international recognition of **excellence in public service**. It rewards the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions that lead to a more effective and responsive public administration worldwide.

The **2026 edition of UNPSA is coming soon (call launch Spring 2025)**

Details will be published in the first quarter of 2025 on: bit.ly/UNPSAwards

Representatives of the winning initiatives will be invited to receive their prize during an **Award Ceremony** held during the 2026 United Nations Public Service Forum, a flagship event organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.



Eligibility

- Public sector institutions at the national, sub-national and local levels from all UN member States are eligible to apply.
- In the case of a partnership, the initiative must be led by a public institution and the application must be submitted by the leading public institution.
- Personal initiatives are not eligible, as UNPSA only rewards public sector institutions.
- Each UNPSA cycle defines specific Award categories. The initiative must be relevant to one of the categories selected for the current UNPSA cycle.
- The initiative must have been implemented for a minimum of 2 years.
- To avoid conflicts of interest, the initiative must not be led or implemented by the UN System.

How to Apply

- Applications must be submitted online through bit.ly/UNPSAwards
- The documents needed include:
 - A completed online application form.
 - Documents that confirm the validity of the initiative, such as project document, evaluation reports, case studies or other publications.
 - Supplementary information such as news articles, featured stories, videos, and outreach materials (optional documents).
- Applications are accepted in the six UN official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish). However, applicants are **strongly encouraged** to apply in **English or French**, the two working languages of the UN Secretariat.

United Nations Public Service Awards

CONTACT

Division for Public Institutions
and Digital Government

United Nations Department of Economic
and Social Affairs

unpsa@un.org

bit.ly/UNPSAwards



“

**There is no higher calling
than serving others.**

”

António Guterres,
United Nations Secretary-General



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Public Service Innovation Hub



<https://publicadministration.un.org/unpsa/innovation-hub/Winners/2024-winners>

The Public Service Innovation Hub is a knowledge sharing platform showcasing innovative United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA) initiatives nominated over the years and how they relate to the SDGs.

It also showcases winning initiatives since the adoption of the SDGs in 2015



Recent UNPSA Winners from Africa

(2021) Mobile ICT classes
Ghana Library Authority

(2021) Output-based Aid Programme
Water Sector Trust Fund, Kenya

(2020) ICT Integration into Teaching and Learning (e-Thuto)
North-East Region Ministry of Basic Education, Botswana

(2019) Up-scaling Basic Sanitation for Urban Poor
Water Sector Trust Fund, Kenya





Thank you!