

Background

At the 197th session of UNESCO's Executive Board ([197 EX/Decision 47](#)) in October 2015, [the UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education](#) (the Prize) was established to honour outstanding and innovative contributions made by individuals, institutions and organizations to advance girls' and women's education. It is the first UNESCO Prize of this nature and is unique in showcasing successful projects that improve and promote the educational prospects of girls and women and in turn, the quality of their lives.

Supported by the Government of People's Republic of China, the Prize is conferred annually to two laureates and consists of an award of US\$50,000 each to further their work in the area of girls' and women's education. The operating/management cost of the Prize, including all costs related to the award ceremony and public information activities, estimated at \$100,000, is fully covered by the donor.

Under the aegis of the Education Sector, the Prize is managed and administered by the Section of Inclusion and Gender Equality (ED/E30/IGE). The Government of People's Republic of China provides a full-time professional loaned expert to work in the Section of Inclusion and Gender Equality to coordinate the Prize Secretariat's activities and additional funding for administrative, communication and logistical support.

At the 210th session of the Executive Board ([210 EX/Decision 16III](#)) in September 2020, findings of the external review was submitted, and the success of the Prize in its first five-year cycle was recognized and the Prize was renewed for another five years (2021-2025) with continued support from the Government of the People's Republic of China. From 2016 to 2024, the prize awarded 18 laureates from all 5 regions, including 6 from Africa (Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe), 1 from the Arab States (Egypt), 6 from Asia and the Pacific (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand), 1 from Europe and North America (Spain), and 4 from Latin America and the Caribbean (Brazil, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Peru).

The Prize contributes to the attainment of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 on education and SDG 5 on gender equality. It also supports UNESCO's global priorities Gender Equality and Africa as included in the [Medium-term Strategy 2022-2029](#), the [UNESCO Strategy for Gender Equality in and through Education 2019-2025](#) and the [Her Education our Future Initiative](#). In the Programme and Budget (C/5) documents for 2022-2025 (termed the 41 C/5), the Prize is linked with Output 1. ED2: Gender transformative education systems empower learners, ensure safe learning environments and address the educational barriers, particularly for girls and women, exacerbated by the learning crisis.

Article 8.1 (“Sunset clause – mandatory renewal of the Prize”) of the [Prize Statutes](#) stipulates that the Director-General of UNESCO together with the donor will undertake a review of all aspects of the Prize six months prior to the agreed end of the term of the Prize and decide about its continuation or termination.

It is in this context that UNESCO is seeking a consultancy firm/institution to undertake an evaluation of the UNESCO Prize for Girls’ and Women’s Education covering the period from 2021 to 2025.

Purpose, Objectives and Use of the Evaluation

The main objectives of this evaluation are to:

- Assess the Prize’s progress and results to determine the extent to which its objectives have been achieved, including identification of pathways to impact;
- Ascertain the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of Prize activities, including the management of the Secretariat, during this period;
- Inform the decision for renewal of the UNESCO Prize for Girls’ and Women’s Education;
- Generate evidence-based recommendations to shape future Prize cycles.

The primary users of this evaluation will be the UNESCO Prize Secretariat and the donor. Senior Management of UNESCO’s Education Sector and the Division for Gender Equality in the Cabinet of the Director-General along with the members of UNESCO Executive Board are considered as secondary users.

The evaluation is to be completed in the first six months of 2025, and will be presented by the UNESCO Director-General to the 222nd session of UNESCO’s Executive Board in October 2025 to inform the decision on the Prize’s renewal for a third five-year cycle.

Scope

The evaluation should present findings, lessons learned, good practices and recommendations based on key evaluation areas and questions grouped according to the revised evaluation criteria of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Network on Development Evaluation¹, including the integration of human rights and gender equality considerations in all aspects of the evaluation.

While the time period covered by the evaluation is from 2021 to 2025 (the 6th through 10th editions of the Prize), the analysis presented will pay special attention to the conclusions and recommendations from the evaluation of the Prize’s first cycle (2016 – 2020).

The external evaluation conducted in 2020 on the first Prize cycle covered the following five key elements of the Prize: its relevance, prestige and visibility, integrity, management aspects, as well as financial considerations. The overall assessment showed that the Prize is well positioned and successfully managed, which ensured the continued prestige and integrity of the Prize. The complete report will be provided to the selected firm/institution.

¹ The OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation has defined six evaluation criteria – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

Evaluation criteria and preliminary key questions

The following draft questions are structured according to the OECD-DAC Evaluation criteria and are to be further refined and validated during the evaluation’s inception phase in consultation with the Evaluation Reference Group. These dimensions will be operationalized in accordance with the assessment framework for renewal studies presented in the Annex of document 196 EX/12 Part I (Renewal of Prizes).

Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the Prize contributed to promoting the advancement of international goals supported by UNESCO, notably SDG 4 and SDG 5, both globally and nationally? • To what extent has the Prize been aligned to the UNESCO Strategy for Gender Equality in and through education (2019- 2025), UNESCO’s Global Priorities (Gender Equality and Africa) and other related strategies, policies and programmes (e.g., C/4, C/5, UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth)? • What is the added value of the Prize to UNESCO’s work on gender equality in and through education? • Are the Prize’s selection criteria still pertinent; do they still reflect the evolving broader global landscape and context related to girls’ and women’s education? • How do key stakeholders (e.g., relevant ministries, nominating entities, laureates and others working in the field of gender equality) perceive the relevance of the Prize?
Coherence	<p>Internal coherence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well does the Prize align with UNESCO’s strategy on gender equality in and through education, and what are its comparative strengths/added value compared to other UNESCO prizes? • How well has the Prize promoted internal/external collaboration and networking among different stakeholders involved in girls’ and women’s education? • How has the Prize fostered linkages with UNESCO’s broader work on education for inclusion and gender equality? How has the Prize contributed to and enhanced UNESCO’s work in this area? <p>External coherence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are the Prize activities complementary to other initiatives in the field of gender equality and the promotion of girls’ and women’s education within UNESCO and externally? • To what extent has the Prize overlapped or been complementary to awards of other organizations or awards within UNESCO?

Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the planned Prize activities on track and what results/outputs have been achieved? • What were the major enabling factors and/or obstacles influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the Prize's intended outcomes? • What were the unintended effects (positive or negative), if any, of the Prize? • How has the communication, visibility and outreach of the Prize and UNESCO been ensured among key stakeholders and the target beneficiaries in the beneficiary countries and globally? • To what extent has the Prize contributed to implementing the UNESCO priority Gender Equality and strategy for gender equality in and through education 2019-2025? • To what extent has the Prize served to increase UNESCO's visibility and strengthen UNESCO's leadership and advocacy efforts on girls' and women's education? • How did the Prize change the way in which UNESCO engages with Member States or other partners? • Have the framework and mechanisms to monitor the Prize's outcomes been effective?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have the Prize activities been implemented efficiently in terms of quantity, timing, use of resources, costs, and in partnership with relevant stakeholders? • What challenges, if any, have been encountered in the administration of the prize, and how have they been addressed? • How efficient have the management structure, financial and human resources been at supporting the implementation of the Prize? • How timely have the difference stages of the Prize implementation process been? • What are the good practices and lessons learned from the administration of the Prize that could enhance its efficiency?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How, and to what extent does the Prize encourage the replication and scaling up of successful practices in the field of girls' and women's education? • Is the current structure and administration of the Prize sustainable for its ongoing and future implementation? • What opportunities are available to expand/scale up the Prize? • What mechanisms are built in and which follow-up mechanisms are in place that support the intended longer-term results of the Prize? • To what extent and how does the Prize facilitate the continuation and expansion of laureates' projects after the award period? • How good practices of laureates are collected and disseminated?

Design and Methodology

Design

The evaluation will be conducted by a consulting firm/institution and include both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Individual consultants with a legal entity are also eligible to join the bidding. Requirements, proposal submission process and selection criteria are included in Annex II of this document.

In line with [UNESCO's Evaluation Policy](#) (2022-2029), the evaluation will comply with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) [Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#), UNEG [Guidelines for Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations](#) and UNEG [Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#). The evaluation consultant company/organization will also have to ensure that ethical, human rights and gender equality principles are duly integrated in all consultations and at all stages of the evaluation process. The external evaluation team is expected to further develop the methodology and propose a customized assessment framework, in accordance with 196 EX/12 Part I (Annex) presented in an evaluation matrix to guide the evaluation exercise. An Evaluation Reference Group will contribute to the quality assurance of the evaluation methods, process and deliverables.

Work assignments The consulting firm/institution will have to take the following steps below and the evaluation methods may include, but should not be limited to:

Assignment	Purpose	Source/method	Tools
1. Scoping meeting	A meeting with UNESCO to understand the context and ensure a common understanding of the objectives, scope and expected results of the evaluation, as well as the scope of the work plan evaluation	Online meeting	Discussion
2. Inception report	To present a clear approach for the evaluation, with a precise timeline and distribution of tasks among the team members. The inception report will include the refined evaluation questions and evaluation matrix, the proposed methodology, including sampling strategies, data collection tools, methods and techniques of data processing and analysis, as well as possible limitations and how these will be addressed	Based on the TORs and review matrix	Paper
3. Inception meeting	To present and discuss the proposed approach to the	Online meeting	Discussion

Assignment	Purpose	Source/method	Tools
	members of the Evaluation Reference Group		
4. Review of documents, data and online resources	To obtain data and information from the Prize Secretariat, as well as relevant stakeholders, to respond to the evaluation questions To gain an overview of UNESCO's action for gender equality	Documentation and data (e.g., programme and budgetary and reports from the Prize Secretariat)	Research questions drawn from the evaluation matrix
5. Online focus group discussions/ Online interviews	To gather in-depth information directly from selected individuals selected from the following groups through purposive sampling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online interviews with Prize Secretariat staff (3 interviews with programme coordinators and associates) • Online interviews with laureates (up to 5 discussions with representatives of laureates) • Online interviews with jury members (3-5 interviews) • Online interviews with key partners such as permanent delegations, National Commissions, NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO (6 interviews) • Online interviews with key staff from the ED Sector's Senior management team and the Section on Education for Inclusion and Gender Equality (3-5 interviews) 	Semi-structured interviews	Online focus group discussions/ online interviews A list of general interview questions based on the evaluation matrix
6. Draft report	First findings and draft recommendations	Analyse, writing-up and structure findings according to the requirements of the final report	Report
7. Presentation of the draft report	A workshop with the UNESCO team to present the draft findings and recommendations and to gather feedback	Presentation based on draft report	Online workshop

Assignment	Purpose	Source/method	Tools
8. Production of the final report	Finalization of the evaluation report	Taking into account the observations made during the workshop as well as written feedback provided on the draft by UNESCO and partners	Report

Roles and Responsibilities

The evaluation will be overseen by the Director of the Division for Education 2030 at UNESCO Headquarters and managed by the Chief of the Section of Education for Inclusion and Gender Equality (ED30/IGE) where the Prize Secretariat is housed. The Prize Secretariat will serve as the Evaluation team’s focal point and will work closely with the consultant firm/institution to manage and coordinate the evaluation processes, guide their work, and provide necessary information and administrative support.

A reference group, which will be managed by the evaluation manager and composed of representative staff members from, the Division of Internal Oversight Services, the Division for Gender Equality, the Executive Office of Education Sector, the Section of Inclusion and Gender Equality and Prize Secretariat will be established. The group’s purpose is to guide and provide feedback on the evaluation process and deliverables is agreed with the firm/institution as well as to provide comments and feedback on the inception report and subsequent drafts of the final report to ensure its quality as well as its coherence and alignment with UNESCO evaluation requirements.

The selection criteria for the consultant firm/institution are attached in Annex II.

Deliverables and Timeline

Deliverable	Due Date
Scoping meeting	14 January 2025
Review matrix with key questions as adjusted by consultant	21 January 2025
Inception report including tools, protocols for data collection	03 February 2025
Inception meeting (online)	10 February 2025
Review documents, data, and online resources Agenda of online focus group discussions and online interviews	17 February 2025
Draft report of the evaluation (8,000- 10,000 words, excluding annexes)	31 March 2025
Online workshop to present draft report and recommendations	4 April 2025
Final draft report of the Evaluation (8,000- 10,000 words, excluding annexes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive summary (5 pages max.) • Introduction and description of the Prize • Purpose and scope of the Evaluation • Review methodology and methods of data collection and analysis • Verification of the Prize criteria and selection procedure • Key findings in the five areas in light of the evaluation questions in the research matrix • Conclusions and Recommendations. • Annexes (including interview list, evaluation matrix, data collection instruments, key documents consulted, Terms of Reference). 	30 April 2025

ANNEX I

List of relevant documents and websites (non-exhaustive)

Internal documents:

- 197 EX/47: The Establishment of UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education (including Annex I and II: Statutes and Financial Regulations of the Special Account of the UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education)
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000235004> (2015)
- 210 EX/16.III: UNESCO Prizes, Part III: Reviews and Renewals of UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education (including Annex I and II: Statutes and Financial Regulations of the Special Account of the UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education)
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374354> (2020)
- Statutes of the UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education (210 EX/16.III – December 2020)
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000376711>
- From access to empowerment: UNESCO Strategy for gender equality in and through education
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000369000>
- Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS) evaluation of the UNESCO Global Priority Gender Equality
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000382573>
- 41 C/4 Medium Term Strategy for 2022-2029
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000378083>
- 40C/5 Approved programme and budget 2020-2021: second biennium of the 2018-2021 quadrennium. <https://sister.hq.int.unesco.org/index.aspx>
- UNESCO's efforts to achieve gender equality in and through education: 2022 highlights
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386879>
- UNESCO's efforts to achieve gender equality in and through education: 2021 highlights:
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384028>
- UNESCO's efforts to achieve gender equality in and through education: 2020 highlights:
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380763>
- Financial report, international narrative reports and annual donor reports on the Prize.
- UNESCO in Action for Gender Equality 2022-2023: <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-action-gender-equality-2022-2023>
- UNESCO's Global Priority Gender Equality Framework
<https://articles.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2023/11/Gender%20Framework-FULL%20PAGE-EN-Final.pdf>
- Evaluation of the UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education, Final Report 2016-2020 (Provided by the Prize Secretariat)

Evaluation-specific documents:

- UNESCO Evaluation Manual: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000383948.locale=en>
- UNESCO Evaluation Report Quality Checklist: See Guidance # 13 of UNESCO Evaluation Manual

- UNEG Guidance “Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance” (2011): <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/98057>
- UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (2020): <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/2866>
- 191 EX/12: Revised Overall Strategy for UNESCO Prizes and its Constituent Criteria <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000220226> (2013)
- 196 EX/12 Part I, Annex: Assessment Criteria for Feasibility Studies and Renewal Studies of UNESCO Prizes <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232304> (2015)
- UNESCO Internal Oversight Service: Evaluation of UNESCO Prizes <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000216100> (2012)

Websites/online tools:

- UNESCO Prize for Girls’ and Women’s Education Main Page: <https://www.unesco.org/en/prizes/girls-womens-education>
- UNESCO gender equality in and through education Main Page: <https://www.unesco.org/en/gender-equality/education>

Annex II

Requirements, proposal submission process and selection criteria

The proposed evaluation is technical and requires proven competence and excellent knowledge in the field of education and gender equality, as well as evaluation and monitoring.

The **consultant or firm/institution** should possess the following mandatory qualifications and experience. Not meeting these mandatory criteria will disqualify a proposal.

- Proven experience in project and/or programme evaluation in education and/or gender equality reflected in at least 3 assignments;
- At least 3 years of experience in designing and conducting/leading international evaluations.

Verification of these qualifications will be based on the submission of:

- A minimum of 3 web links or electronic copies of examples of recently completed evaluation reports that demonstrate experience in evaluating education programmes and experience in the field of gender equality (in English);
- A list of international evaluations conducted over the past 7 years.

The **lead consultant** is required to possess the following mandatory qualifications and experience:

Academic background

- An advanced university degree (at least Masters or the equivalent) in education, gender studies, social sciences, political sciences, economics or any related area

Professional Experience

- At least 7 years' professional experience, preferably both at international and national levels, in programme management and monitoring;
- Senior experience of at least 7 years in project and/or programme evaluation, reflected in at least 3 assignments;
- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience in education and/or gender equality; reflected in at least 3 assignments;
- Knowledge of the UN system, preferably UNESCO (reflected in at least 3 UN related work experiences/assignments)

Skills/competences

- Understanding of the application of UN mandates in Human Rights and Gender Equality; reflected in at least 3 work examples/reports
- Outstanding interpersonal skills with proven ability to work in international, multi-cultural environments and teams; reflected in at least 3 assignments;
- Proven skills in both qualitative and quantitative research, reflected in at least 3 assignments;

- Excellent written communication skills in English; reflected in at least 3 work examples/reports;
- Advanced level of IT skills, reflected in at least three 3 work examples/reports;
- No previous involvement in the activities that will be the object of this evaluation.

It is **desirable** that the lead consultant possess the following qualifications and skills:

- Familiarity with UNESCO's work and its programme cycle management; reflected in at least 3 work experiences/assignments;
- Academic qualification and/or professional experience in the field of gender equality and/or girls' and women's education;
- Working knowledge of French and/or Spanish

Verification of these qualifications will be based on the submission of:

- Curriculum Vitae
- Submission of a minimum of 3 web links or electronic copies of examples of recently completed evaluation reports that demonstrate experience in evaluating education programmes and experience in the field of gender equality (in English).

Any additional **team members** (at least 1 team member in addition to the lead consultant) will need to have the following qualifications and experience:

Academic background

- An advanced university degree (at least Masters or the equivalent) in education, gender studies, social sciences, political sciences, economics or any related area.

Professional Experience

- At least 3 years professional experience, preferably both at international and national levels, in project and programme evaluation
- Knowledge of the UN system. (reflected in at least 3 UN related work experiences/assignments)

Skills/competences

- Good skills to work in a team and ability to work in an international, multi-cultural environment; (reflected in at least 3 work experiences/assignments)
- Proven skills for both qualitative and quantitative research, reflected in at least 3 assignments
- Excellent communication skills in English; reflected in at least 3 examples of work experiences/assignments
- Excellent analytical and writing skills to produce succinct, clear documents; reflected in at least 3 examples of work/reports
- Advanced level of IT skills, reflected in at least 3 examples of work/reports
- No previous involvement in the activities that will be the object of the Evaluation.

It is **desirable** that the consultants possess the following qualifications and skills:

- Understanding and application of UN mandates in Human Rights and Gender Equality
- Familiarity with UNESCO's work and its programme cycle management, reflected in at least three examples of work)
- Working knowledge of French and/or Spanish
- Skills in Graphic design/use of data visualization software and tools, reflected in at least three examples of work)

Verification of these qualifications will be based on the submission of:

- Curriculum Vitae
- Submission of a minimum of 3 web links or electronic copies of examples of recently completed evaluation reports that demonstrate experience in evaluating education programmes and experience in the field of gender equality (in English).

At least one member of the team must be a gender specialist.

UNESCO values gender parity, inclusion and geographical balance in the composition of the consultant team. Gender balanced, inclusive and geographical diverse teams will be given priority.

A technical proposal (workplan and approach), writing samples, information on consulting firm, CVs, as well as a table outlining how you meet the selection criteria must be submitted alongside the financial proposal.

Technical proposals are to be submitted in English will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- 1) The proposal reflects an adequate understanding of the background of the assignment, its objectives and the reasons for undertaking it;
- 2) The proposal reflects a feasible and sound methodology, considering the limitations and risks of each method they may use; and
- 3) The proposal indicates a realistic workplan with specific treatment of key deliverables and priorities.

Writing samples submitted will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- 1) Relevance to the evaluation to be undertaken;
- 2) Substantive quality of writing sample;
- 3) Coherence of arguments presented;
- 4) Effectiveness of the presentation of the findings and conclusions.

Qualifications of the consulting firm, the lead researcher and team will be assessed based on how they meet the qualifications and experience laid out above.

The contract will be awarded to the offeror that receives the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria as specified below.

Technical and financial evaluation	Points Obtainable
Responsiveness to the TORs	225
Deliverables and proposed work plan	225
Personnel	250
Financial Proposal	300
Total maximum points:	1000

Please send your financial and technical proposal (workplan and approach), long with all other requested materials by 8 December 2024 23:59, Paris time to: GWEPrize@unesco.org with r.cameron@unesco.org on copy.