

24/09/2014

Ref.: CL/4069

Subject: **Call for nominations for the UNESCO Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science (2015)**

Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to invite your Government to submit nominations for the UNESCO Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science (2015).

Intended to honour the activities of individuals and groups in the field of ethics in science, the Prize encourages ethical reflection on questions raised by scientific and technological advances - a goal that coincides with UNESCO's priorities.

Established in 2002 by UNESCO's Executive Board on the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Prize has been awarded biennially since 2004, and it may be conferred upon individuals, institutions, other entities or non-governmental organizations.

The first Avicenna Prize was awarded to Professor Margaret Somerville, Director of the Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law at the McGill University in Montreal (Canada). The second Prize was awarded in 2006 to Professor Abdallah S. Daar, Director of the Program in Applied Ethics and Biotechnology at the University of Toronto (Canada). In 2009, the third Avicenna Prize was awarded to Professor Renzong Qiu, Emeritus Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Philosophy (People's Republic of China). In 2015, the Prize will be awarded for the fourth time.

The Prize consists of a gold Avicenna medal, a certificate and the sum of USD10,000. The Prize-winner also is invited to pay a one-week academic visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran, during which he/she will deliver speeches in the relevant academic gatherings, organized for this purpose by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Donor of the Prize.

Nominations may be submitted to me by Member States in consultation with their National Commissions, as well as by non-governmental organizations enjoying official partnership with the Organization and active in a field covered by the Prize.

Confident as I am of your Government's interest in the promotion of the ethics of science, I am sure you will give this Prize all due attention and will be in a position to propose the most qualified candidates of your country.

To Ministers responsible for relations with UNESCO

I should be grateful if your submission of candidates could be made using the attached form (Annex I), which should be completed on the basis of the provisions contained in its “Note for the Nominators”. Each candidate nomination must include an explanation of the choice on the basis of the goals and objectives clearly defined in the attached Statutes (Annex II). You are kindly requested to return the form to the address indicated on it before **2 February 2015**, for its due consideration by the Jury.

Any inquiries in regard to the nomination process should be addressed directly to the Secretary of the Prize, Ms Dafna Feinholz, Chief of the Bioethics and Ethics of Science Section in the Division of Ethics, Youth and Sport of the Social and Human Sciences Sector (UNESCO, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15; tel: +33 1 45 68 49 94; fax: + 33 1 45 68 55 15; e-mail: Avicenna.prize@unesco.org).

Information about the Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science, as well as the nomination form, can be found on the Sector’s website at [www.unesco.org/shs/Avicenna](http://www.unesco.org/shs/Avicenna).

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Irina Bokova  
Director-General

Enclosures: 2

cc: National Commissions for UNESCO  
Permanent Delegations and Observers to UNESCO  
UNESCO field offices

## ANNEX I

### THE AVICENNA PRIZE FOR ETHICS IN SCIENCE 2015

#### Nomination Form

##### A. NOTE FOR THE NOMINATORS:

1. Nominees (i.e. candidates) must be living persons or existing institutions.
2. Each government of a Member State or each non-governmental organization in official partnership with UNESCO may present a maximum of two nominations if it considers them eligible for the Prize
3. Nomination form must be completed **in full in either English or French**, which are the working languages of the UNESCO Secretariat. It is the responsibility of nominators to ensure all nominations submitted are complete and comply with the requirements as per Article 6.3 of the Statutes of the Prize. To ensure this, nominators may obtain any necessary details from the nominees.
4. Nominators are kindly invited to provide UNESCO with the following documents and information:
  - i) **The original of the nomination form**: the officials and organizations, qualified to present candidates and submit nominations for the Prize on behalf of their Government or of a non-governmental organization enjoying official partnership with UNESCO, must sign or initial every page of the original nomination form, date and place a stamp of their institution/organization on its last page. The nominators are kindly invited to send the original nomination form to UNESCO **accompanied by a cover letter**, duly signed and written on the official letter-headed paper of their institution/organization.
  - ii) At least **two letters of support**, duly signed, from an institution/personality, providing the supporters' own professional perspectives concerning the nominated achievement and emphasizing the relevance of the nomination vis-à-vis the requirements of the Prize, to accompany the nomination;
  - iii) **Additional material** (publications, video, audio and other materials), illustrating the relevance of the nomination vis-à-vis the requirements of the Prize may be attached to the nomination form or provided via e-mail. They will be presented to the Prize's Jury and will remain at UNESCO.
  - iv) If a candidate is an institution/organization, the nominator should provide UNESCO with a copy of the candidate's General Rules/Statutes (the relevant document may be sent to UNESCO by e-mail).
5. The original nominations should be sent to: **UNESCO, Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Sciences, Social and Human Sciences Sector, SHS/YES/BIO, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15.**
6. Nominations must be posted **before midnight on Monday 2 February 2015**, as attested by the date on the postmark.
7. To optimize the handling of nominations, the nominators are requested to send the advance copies of the nomination documents by electronic mail to: [Avicenna.prize@unesco.org](mailto:Avicenna.prize@unesco.org) or by fax + 33 1 45 68 55 15.

8. Any inquiries concerning how to fill in the nomination form should be addressed directly to the Secretariat of the Prize: (information tel.: + 33 1 45 68 38 22 or + 33 1 45 68 38 57; e-mail: [Avicenna.prize@unesco.org](mailto:Avicenna.prize@unesco.org); fax: + 33 1 45 68 55 15).

**B. INFORMATION ABOUT THE NOMINATOR  
(I.E. THE INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION PRESENTING THE CANDIDATE):**

**1.1. Nomination may be submitted by either Member States or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in official partnership with UNESCO.**

**1.1.1. Member State:**

Country:	
Nominator: (Please indicate the name and title of the officials and organizations, qualified to submit the nomination for the Prize on behalf of their Government.):	

**The nomination is submitted in consultation with the National Commission for UNESCO of:**

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(Taking into account that, in conformity with Article 6.3 of the Statutes, nominations shall be submitted by the governments of Member States in consultation with their National Commissions for UNESCO, please indicate the [National Commission\(s\)](#) of which UNESCO Member States have been consulted on the nomination.

If the nominator(s) and the nominee (i.e. candidate) are nationals of different Member States, it is recommended that the Permanent Delegation to UNESCO and the National Commission for UNESCO of the candidate's Member State be informed of the nomination.

The officials and organizations, qualified to submit nominations for the Prize on behalf of their Government, are kindly invited to forward the original nomination form to UNESCO through the National Commission for UNESCO and via the [Permanent Delegation to UNESCO](#) of their country, whenever possible).

**Or**

**1.1.2. NGO in official partnership with UNESCO:**

Country:
Responsible person: (Please indicate the name and title of the official qualified to submit nomination on behalf of the NGO.)

**1.2. Contact details** (for all qualified nominators)

<p>Full postal address: (street, house number, post code, city, country)</p>	
<p>Name and function of person(s) in charge:</p>	
<p>Telephone and Fax: (please indicate country and city codes)</p>	<p>Tel.:</p>
	<p>Fax:</p>
<p>Email:</p>	
<p>Internet:</p>	

**C. INFORMATION ABOUT THE NOMINEE (I.E. THE CANDIDATE):**

**2.1. The candidates for the Prize may be individuals or institutions (or other entities or non-governmental organizations).**

**2.1.1. For institutional candidates**

<b>Name and acronym:</b>	
<b>Date and place of creation</b> (please provide a copy of the General Rules/Statutes):	
<b>City and country of the headquarters:</b>	
<b>Field of activity:</b>	
<b>Financial sources:</b>	

or

**2.1.2. For individual candidates**

**Form of address**

(e.g. Mr/Mrs/Ms, title, function, etc.)

**Surname/last/family name(s)**

**First/given and middle  
name(s)**

**Date and place of birth:**

**Nationality:**

**Education:**

**Profession:**

**2.2 For institutional and individual candidates: contact details**

**Full postal address:**

(street, house number, post code, city,  
country)

**Name and function, if  
appropriate, of contact  
person(s):**

**Telephone and Fax:**

**Tel.:**

(please indicate country and city  
codes)

**Fax:**

**Email:**

**Internet:**

**3. Presentation of the candidate**

- 3.1** A description of the candidate's academic background and achievements extending over several years (not more than one A4 page).

- 3.2** A summary of the nominee's work submitted for consideration, including publications and other relevant documents of major importance, etc. (not more than one A4 page).

- 3.3** A review of the way in which the work submitted has contributed to the development of research in the field of ethics of science and technology (not more than one A4 page).

**3.4 Conclusion** (not more than one A4 page) (Please outline the reasons for the nomination of the candidate for the UNESCO Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science (2015) and include two to four succinct paragraphs, using words that a person with no scientific expertise could readily understand, which describe the nature, impact and importance of the nominee’s achievement, for use in publicity if required.):

**3.5 Referees** (Please provide the names of three persons, not related to the candidates by relative or direct professional (supervisor/subordinate) links, who are familiar with his/her/their/its work, except the nominator):

(i) **Name:**

**Profession:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Tel:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(ii) **Name:**

**Profession:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Tel:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**(iii) Name:**

**Profession:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Tel:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3.6** Please indicate whether the candidate has been informed about his/her/their/its nomination for the UNESCO Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science (2015), and whether the candidate would be ready to accept it if a relevant decision is taken (please tick, several options are possible) :

- The candidate was informed by the nominator:
  - Directly in person / Video conference;
  - Orally by telephone
  - In writing (letter, electronic mail, sms, etc.)
  - Through a third party
  - Other (please indicate): \_\_\_\_\_
- The candidate was not informed
  - Please indicate, if possibly, why: \_\_\_\_\_
- In case of a relevant decision, the candidate:
  - would be able to accept the Prize and the invitation to undertake the academic visit specified in Article 7.3 of the Statutes;
  - Other (please indicate): \_\_\_\_\_

**3.7 For statistical purposes only:**

Please indicate where you as the nominator learned about the call for nominations for the UNESCO Avicenna Prize (please tick, several options are possible):

- Circular Letter received directly from UNESCO
- UNESCO website
- E-mail received directly from UNESCO
- Information provided by partners
- Other (please indicate): \_\_\_\_\_

**3.8 Date, signature and stamp of the nominator**

Date: _____
Signature: _____
Name and Function: _____
Stamp:

## **ANNEX II**

### **STATUTES OF THE UNESCO AVICENNA PRIZE FOR ETHICS IN SCIENCE**

#### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of the UNESCO Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science is to reward the activities of individuals and groups in the field of ethics in science. The objective of the Prize is in conformity with UNESCO's policies, and is related to the programme of the Organization in the field of ethics of science and technology.

#### **2. Designation, amount and periodicity of the Prize**

2.1 The Prize shall be entitled the "UNESCO Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science".

2.2 The Prize shall be funded by the Islamic Republic of Iran and shall consist of a recurrent payment of US \$65,000 in each biennium. The value of the Prize shall be determined by the Director-General in consultation with the Islamic Republic of Iran on the basis of the contribution received, the interest on the sum deposited in the special account, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of UNESCO, and the charges to be borne by the account for the cost of administering the Prize. In addition to the monetary value of the Prize as thus determined, the prizewinner shall receive a gold medal of Avicenna along with a certificate. Costs relating to the academic visit specified in Article 7.3 shall not be covered by the special account.

2.3 All funds received and the interest accrued thereon shall be kept in a special interest-bearing account for the Prize.

2.4 The full staff support and operating/management costs of the Prize, including all costs related to the award ceremony and public information activities, shall be fully covered by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The direct support and operating/management costs are estimated at US \$46,772. In addition, the Director-General will 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 for the Prize.

2.5 The Prize shall be awarded every two years, in the second year of each biennium, on an initial basis for three biennia.

#### **3. Conditions/qualifications of candidates**

Candidates shall have contributed to high-quality research in the field of ethics of science and technology. The Prize may be conferred upon individuals, institutions, other entities or nongovernmental organizations.

#### **4. Designation of the prizewinner**

The prizewinner shall be designated by the Director-General of UNESCO, on the basis of the assessments and recommendations made to him/her by a jury.

#### **5. Jury**

5.1 The jury shall consist of three independent members, being personalities of a recognized reputation in the field covered while also taking into consideration the need for equitable geographical distribution, gender equality and the principle of non-payment of honoraria. They shall be appointed by the Director-General from among the members of the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) for a period of two years, for a maximum term of three consecutive two-year periods. Representatives and alternatives 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 for reason.

5.2 The jury shall elect its own chair. Members shall receive no remuneration for their work, but will receive allowances for travel and accommodation, where required. A quorum of two 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 by a member of the UNESCO Secretariat designated by the Director-General. 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 two years.

5.5 The jury shall send an assessment on nominations and accompanying recommendations to the Director-General of UNESCO no later than 1 September of the second year of each biennium.

## **6. Nomination of candidates**

6.1 When the Secretariat has received the funding of the Prize, as specified by Article 2 above, the Director-General of UNESCO shall invite the submission of nominations to the Secretariat of the Prize, by 1 November of the first year of each biennium, from the governments of Member States, in consultation with their National Commissions, as well as from non-governmental organizations maintaining official partnerships with the Organization and active in relevant fields covered by a 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:

- (i) a description of the candidate's background and achievements;
- (ii) a summary of the work submitted for consideration, publications and other supporting documents of major importance submitted for consideration;
- (iii) a review of the way in which the work submitted has contributed to the development of research in the field of ethics of science and technology.

## **7. Procedure for the awarding of the Prize**

7.1 The Prize shall be awarded by the Director-General at an official ceremony held for that purpose in a location and on an occasion determined by him/her with due regard to their significance with respect to the ethics of science and technology. UNESCO shall present to the prizewinner a check for the amount of the Prize along with a certificate and a medal. UNESCO shall officially announce the name of the prizewinner.

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

7.3 Following the Prize ceremony, at a date to be determined by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the prizewinner shall be invited to participate in a week long academic visit to the Islamic Republic of

Iran, including the delivery of speeches in the relevant academic gatherings. Costs relating to the academic visit shall be borne directly and exclusively by the Islamic Republic of Iran and are not included in the recurrent payment specified in Article 2.2.

7.4 The work produced by a person since deceased shall not be considered for a Prize. If, however, a prizewinner dies before receiving the Prize, then the Prize may be presented posthumously.

7.5 Should a prizewinner decline the prize, the jury shall submit a new proposal to the Director-General.

### **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 Islamic Republic of Iran 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 through the submission of a document summarizing all pertinent developments in this regard in order to enable the Executive Board to adopt a decision on whether to renew or terminate the Prize.

8.2 In case of termination of the Prize, the use of any unspent balance of funds shall be determined by the Director-General, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Special Account for the Prize.

### **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 the Prize may not be divulged.

### **10. Amendments to the Statutes of the Prize**

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