

# Global Development Awards Competition 2026

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## GENERAL

### Q1. What is the Global Development Awards Competition?

It is one of the largest international competitions for research on development, open to researchers and to development practitioners from non-profit Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) headquartered in low- or middle-income countries. The emphasis is on supporting promising young talent in the field of development research and rewarding innovative development projects capable of significantly impacting the local communities in the developing world.

The open competition comprises two awards:

- Japanese Award for Outstanding Research on Development (ORD)
  - This Award is for early-career researchers from low- and middle-income countries who are seeking to explore the competition theme through their research proposals in an original, innovative and policy-relevant way.
- Japanese Award for Most Innovative Development Project (MIDP)
  - This Award is for exceptional, innovative, ongoing development projects by non-profit NGOs/CSOs that have been able to implement activities with a high potential for development impact to exceptionally marginalised and disadvantaged groups located in low- and middle-income countries.

### Q2. What are the themes for the different categories of the 2026 edition?

The theme of the 2026 edition of the Global Development Awards Competition is the same for both categories: **“Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) for Peace and Human Security”**.

More information available at [www.gdn.int/gdac/2026](http://www.gdn.int/gdac/2026).

### Q3. What is the grant amount for this edition of the Awards?

#### Japanese Award for Outstanding Research on Development

The three winning projects will receive grants worth **US\$ 60,000**. The funds will be used to support the research work proposed by the winners towards the completion of their research. The first prize winner will receive a grant of **US\$ 30,000**. The second

prize and third prize winners will receive a grant of **US\$ 20,000** and **US\$ 10,000**, respectively.

Additionally, awardees will be paired with world-class academics in their area of work who will play the role of Scientific and Technical Advisors to the winners.

#### Japanese Award for Most Innovative Development Project

The winning projects will receive grants worth **US\$ 125,000**. The awards will be given to organisations whose projects embody an innovative approach to an important development need and hold the greatest promise for:

- I. responding directly to the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable, underserved groups to improve their lives, aiming at rapid results for improved livelihood.
- II. supporting initiatives that lead to developing sustainable outcomes through the scaling up of the project.

The two first prize winners will receive a grant of **US\$ 50,000 each**. The second prize will receive a grant of **US\$ 25,000**. In addition, GDN will review the suitability of the proposals winning the First Prize for a much larger grant of **up to US\$ 200,000** within the framework of the World Bank-administered [Japan Social Development Fund \(JSDF\)](#). Additionally, awardees will be paired with a Technical Advisor throughout the entire implementation of the grant.

#### **Q4. What are the special circumstances of the Awards this year?**

Finalists will be sponsored to attend the Communications Training, which will precede the presentation of their projects to the jury during the Global Development Conference to take place during December 2026 in Asia. *More details to be revealed at a later stage.*

### **ELIGIBILITY**

#### **Q5. What are the eligible countries for the ORD and for the MIDP category?**

Afghanistan; Albania; Algeria; American Samoa; Angola; Argentina; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Belarus; Belize; Benin; Bhutan; Bolivia; Bosnia and

Herzegovina; Botswana; Brazil; Bulgaria; Burkina Faso; Burundi; Cabo Verde; Cambodia; Cameroon; Central African Republic; Chad; China; Comoros; Colombia; Costa Rica; Congo, Dem. Rep; Congo, Rep.; Côte d'Ivoire; Cuba; Djibouti; Dominica; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; Egypt; El Salvador; Eritrea; Eswatini; Equatorial Guinea; Ethiopia; Fiji; Gabon; Gambia; Georgia; Ghana; Grenada; Guatemala; Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Guyana; Haiti; Honduras; India; Indonesia; Iran; Iraq; Kenya; Kiribati; Korea, Dem. People's Rep; Jamaica; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kosovo; Kyrgyz Republic; Lao; Lebanon; Lesotho; Liberia; Libya; Madagascar; Malaysia; Malawi; Maldives; Mali; Marshall Islands; Mauritania; Mauritius; Mexico; Micronesia; Moldova; Mongolia; Montenegro; Morocco; Mozambique; Myanmar; Nepal; Namibia; Nicaragua; Niger; Nigeria; North Macedonia; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Panama; Paraguay; Peru; Philippines; Romania; Russian Federation; Rwanda; Samoa; São Tomé and Príncipe; Senegal; Serbia; Sierra Leone; Solomon Islands; Somalia; South Africa; South Sudan; Sri Lanka; St. Lucia; St. Vincent and the Grenadines; Sudan; Suriname; Syrian Arab Republic; Tajikistan; Tanzani; Timor-Leste; Thailand; Togo; Tonga; Tunisia; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Tuvalu; Uganda; Ukraine; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; Vietnam; West Bank and Gaza; Yemen; Zambia; Zimbabwe

#### Japanese Award for Outstanding Research on Development

The ORD is open only to researchers from the list above, with the requirement that they also need to be their citizens and residents and the project to be implemented in one of the listed countries. Citizens of eligible countries currently residing in a non-eligible country are also eligible to apply only if they have been living in the non-eligible country for no more than five years as of 1 January 2027.

#### Japanese Award for Most Innovative Development Project

The MIDP is open to non-profit Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from the list of above to submit applications on projects currently at the stage of implementation. Projects must have started their implementation on 1 June 2025 or before to be considered eligible.

Additionally, NGOs/CSOs applying for the MIDP category must be eligible to receive funds from abroad according to the national legal framework (e. g. in India, the NGO/CSO must be FCRA compliant).

## Q6. Must an ORD application be associated with a university to be eligible for the research grant?

What is relevant under the ORD category is the profile of the individual(s) applying and composing the team, their experience as a researcher and the project proposed among all other items from the eligibility criteria. The organisation is more focused on the respective due diligence necessary, as explained on the call.

However, please note that the budget must reflect a research proposal even if submitted by applicant(s) associated with an organisation focused/involved in a research project that structures their proposals as a consultancy proposal.

## Q7. Is there any age limit to apply for ORD?

The upper age limit for all applicants is 45 years by the end of 2026. Individuals above 45 years of age as of 1 January 2027 are not eligible to apply. This applies to the Principal Investigator and all other team members.

## Q8. Are previous winners and finalists eligible to apply?

### Japanese Award for Outstanding Research on Development

Past ORD winners and finalists are not eligible to apply with the same or a similar research proposal. Additionally, winners are not eligible to apply for a period of three years subsequent to the end of their agreement with GDN.

### Japanese Award for Most Innovative Development Project

Applicants from previous years (except winners) may reapply, but they must update the application to include new aspects of the project. Previous MIDP winners are not eligible to apply.

## Q9. Are past and current employees of the Global Development Network eligible to apply?

Previous and current employees of GDN (Including interns and members of evaluation teams) or its Regional Network Partners<sup>1</sup> are not eligible to apply for up to 5 years from the completion of their tenure.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.gdn.int/regional-network-partners](http://www.gdn.int/regional-network-partners)

## Q10. Can I apply with more than one proposal?

### Japanese Award for Outstanding Research on Development

Each applicant may be involved only with one proposal.

### Japanese Award for Most Innovative Development Project

An organisation can only submit one application.

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## PROCESS

## Q11. Where can I submit my application?

You must access the online submission platform from GDN's website using the following internet link: [app.gdn.int/grantee\\_portal](http://app.gdn.int/grantee_portal)

## Q12: What is the application process?

The application, along with the documents specified for each opportunity, is available at [www.gdn.int/gdac/2026](http://www.gdn.int/gdac/2026). Please note that we do not accept hard copies of applications or those sent through post.

## Q13: What is the last date for applying?

The deadline for submission of applications is **June 17, 2026 (Indian Standard Time 6 PM)**

For more information on the competition, the complete eligibility criteria and selection process, please read the guidelines.

Please note that applications that do not follow the guidelines will NOT be considered. If you have further questions which are not addressed through the guidelines and this FAQ, please feel free to write to us at [awards@gdn.int](mailto:awards@gdn.int).

## Q14: When will the grant be awarded?

The timeline for the implementation of the grant will be defined with the editing of the budget, as well as depending on the final classification and the amount awarded.