

Informal announcement about
The 2009 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa Prize for
the Use of ICTs in Education

Sir/Madam,

We are pleased to inform you that the Director-General of UNESCO will shortly be addressing a letter to the government of your country (an advance copy here- attached) inviting for nominations for the **2009** edition of the **UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of ICTs in Education**, funded by the Kingdom of Bahrain.

As you may know, this Prize is intended to reward individuals, institutions, other entities or non-governmental organizations for projects and activities that are excellent models and demonstrate best practice as well as creative use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to enhance learning, teaching and overall educational performance. The Prize, which is awarded every year, consists of a diploma and \$50,000 to be divided equally between two prizewinners.

The **2009 award theme is Teaching, Learning and e-Pedagogy: Teacher Professional Development for Knowledge Societies**. In the 2010-2011 biennium UNESCO will be focussing on teachers as one of the three essential building blocks for Education for All and education-related MDGs, alongside literacy and skills for the world of work. A high-quality teaching workforce is essential for ensuring the quality and relevance of education at all levels. Addressing teacher shortages and providing better training to future and current teachers for both formal and non-formal is a pressing concern for all countries, particularly for least developed and developing ones. Despite bold measures to recruit more teachers, globally 18 million new primary teachers will be needed by 2015 - 4 million in Africa alone. National governments recognize that highly trained and motivated teachers are needed more than ever in order to help students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a global and increasingly knowledge-driven world and continue learning throughout their lives.

The ICT revolution has gradually transformed the roles of learners and teachers both in and outside of the classroom, and major aspects of the curriculum, and has called for new approaches to, and practices in, the teaching and learning processes. Before teachers can successfully implement technology, they need a change in their pedagogy, requiring the understanding of a paradigm shift in their role from that of providers of knowledge and expertise to that of facilitators of creativity, innovation, and collaborative learning through a wide variety of interactive, authentic and media-rich learning experiences. The successful integration of ICTs into the classroom will depend on the ability of teachers to structure the learning environment in non-traditional ways, to merge new technology with new pedagogy, to develop socially active classrooms, and encourage collaborative learning and group work. Teacher professional development is a crucial component of this education reform and improvement process.

In proposing this theme UNESCO shows its commitment to assisting countries in developing and implementing comprehensive teacher policies and strategies, enabling them to meet their overall development challenges and to build socially and economically sustainable knowledge societies.

The following eligibility criteria must be met: (i) duration of the project, which must be of at least a year in order to permit an assessment of results and proof of success; (ii) evidence of successful policies/plans/curricula of preparing teachers with pedagogical, technological and e-content knowledge, including open educational resources; (iii) innovative models and strategies for delivery of continuous professional development of teachers at national or regional level; (iv) efforts to address and implement ICT competency standards for teacher

development; (v) assessment and quality assurance models for the professional development of teachers; (vi) sustainability and scalability of the given project/initiative in terms of good practices.

Each country is entitled to submit **maximum two official nominations**. The purpose of this message is to give you an opportunity to identify high-quality candidatures for nomination and/or start preparations earlier as the **deadline** for the submission of nominations is **30 September 2009**. We take this opportunity to also send you the 2009 Guide for the submission of nominations.

Should you need further information at this stage, you are kindly invited to contact Ms Mariana Patru, Project Officer for the Prize (m.patru@unesco.org).

Thank you very much for your kind collaboration.