

# WIPO GLOBAL AWARDS 2025

## RULES OF THE COMPETITION

### Applicable to the two categories: Small and medium sized enterprises and startups

By entering this Awards Program, each Participant accepts the present Rules and agrees to be bound by them.

#### 1. **Introduction**

Intellectual property (IP) in its different forms, ranging from patents and trademarks to industrial designs and copyright, is of immense significance for the economic, social and cultural development of society.

The United Nations (UN) recognizes small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups make up a large share of economies, whether in developed or less developed countries, and are a critical source of innovation and creativity across all sectors, markets and aspects of life.

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) takes into the account the exclusive role of SMEs and startups to use IP systems to deploy innovative and creative activities that have the potential to contribute economically, socially or culturally to society.

Through this Awards Program, WIPO undertakes to celebrate SMEs that have used IP rights to commercialize innovative and creative products/services beyond their home country, and in the case of startups, for integrating IP into their business venture at an early stage, acknowledging the potential to commercialize their IP assets.

For the 2025 edition, we are introducing Special Mentions to recognize and reward the best woman and youth entrepreneur of 2025. The aim is to celebrate their successes and inspire more women and youth to pursue entrepreneurial paths.

The recipients of these Special Mentions will be selected from among the CEOs/founders of the winning companies by the WIPO Global Awards Selection Committee based on the same indicators established for the contest.

#### **2.1 Eligibility for SMEs**

The Awards Program is open to all SMEs located in at least one of [WIPO's 193 Member States](#) and meeting the following conditions:

1. It is a registered business entity. Proof of registration is required.
2. It has no more than 300 employees and up to 15 US\$ millions of total annual sales.
3. It is a holder of at least one registered IP right.

4. It is exporting its products or services to at least one country.

## **2.2. Eligibility for startups**

The Awards Program is open to all startups located in at least one of [WIPO's 193 Member States and meeting the following conditions:](#)

1. The startup is a registered business entity with a legal existence of no more than three years. Proof of registration is required.
2. It has no more than 50 employees.
3. The startup has an innovative product or service associated with IP rights.
4. The startup has submitted at least one application for the registration of one IP right and/or is the holder of at least one registered IP right.
5. The startup is affiliated with a business support organization, such as an incubator, an accelerator, or a similar entity. Proof of affiliation is required.
6. The startup has affirmed its engagement with at least one commercial customer, and/or has completed a business sale, and/or secured one investor.

## **3. Submission Process**

3.1 Only one entry per Participant is permitted. Participants may submit their entry in only one of the two categories eligible for the Awards Program (that is, SMEs or startups).

3.2 All entries to the Awards Program must be submitted in one of the six UN official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian or Spanish) or in Japanese *via* the online application form available at: <https://global-awards.wipo.int/>

3.3 In this form, participants will be requested, in particular, to provide information about how they are using IP rights to commercialize their product/services at the regional or international level, and to describe its potential/existing contribution to economic, social or cultural development. In the case of startups, participants will be requested to elaborate on their IP commercialization plans.

3.4. WIPO reserves the right in its sole discretion to disqualify any submission which does not comply with the present Rules or which, in its opinion, has been entered fraudulently, in an abusive manner, or which may be contrary to the reputation or good name of WIPO.

3.5 WIPO is committed to ensuring the highest level of protection of personal data. All Participants' personal information will be used by WIPO under its Privacy Policy available at: [https://www.wipo.int/tools/en/privacy\\_policy.html](https://www.wipo.int/tools/en/privacy_policy.html)

## **4. Evaluation Process**

4.1 WIPO Secretariat, through its internal Awards Program team, will draw up a short list of finalists among all submissions received in time. Finalists will be notified by email at least a week in advance of the public announcement of the shortlist.

4.2 An international jury composed of up to seven individuals with extensive expertise in the fields of innovation, creativity and IP, and reflecting geographical, gender, age, cultural and

language diversity, will select **winners** from among the shortlisted finalists. The winners will be notified by email at least a week in advance of the Awards Ceremony.

4.3 The selection criteria that the WIPO Secretariat and the international jury will use for the evaluation of the submissions consist primarily of the written responses provided by applicants regarding the following areas of evaluation:

4.3.1 Applicable to SMEs:

- a) Understanding and ability to use IP rights (or a combination of such rights) to protect, manage, and commercialize IP assets, as well as other intangible assets such as data, to achieve business and/or corporate objectives.
- b) Existing positive contribution to up to three Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are at the heart of [The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), which has been adopted by all UN Member States in 2015 and provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. For more information about the 17 SDGs, visit [this page](#).

4.3.2 Applicable to startups:

- a) Business pitch, on areas such as business feasibility, unique value proposition, and scalability and vision for job growth.
- b) Demonstrate the potential to use IP rights and/or existing use of IP rights (or a combination of such rights) to protect, manage, and commercialize IP assets, as well as other intangible assets such as data, to achieve business and/or corporate objectives.
- c) Existing and/or potential positive contribution to up to three Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs are at the heart of [The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), which has been adopted by all UN Member States in 2015 and provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. For more information about the 17 SDGs, visit [this page](#).

4.4 The jury will follow an approach that upholds inclusiveness and diversity.

4.5 All decisions of the WIPO Secretariat and the international jury are final and not subject to any appeal.

## 5. **Awards Program Calendar**

- a. January to March 2025: Application period
- b. April-May 2025: Selection of finalists
- c. June 2025: Selection of winners and Special Mentions

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d. July 2025: Awards Ceremony for the public announcement of winners and special events in Geneva.

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## 6. **Awards**

6.1 Winners will receive:

- a. Travel to Geneva to attend the Awards Ceremony and special events (funded in accordance with WIPO's rules),
- b. A WIPO Trophy specifically designed for this Program,
- c. Customized IP mentorship opportunities (considering, on a case-by-case basis, the business background and specific needs of the winners).

6.2 In addition, winners will be offered promotion, visibility and recognition through an Awards ceremony, special WIPO Awards webpage, WIPO media, and other external IP related media.

## 7. **Intellectual Property**

7.1 Participants shall retain all IP rights on the contents of their submissions and/or derived from their business activities. Participants do not transfer any ownership rights by entering the Awards Program.

7.2 By entering the Awards Program, each Participant grants WIPO a non-exclusive, worldwide and royalty-free license to use, reproduce, communicate, make available for public display and distribute the content of its submission for promotional, informational and educational purposes, via printed or digital form, including WIPO's website, provided that such use is accompanied by an acknowledgement that the Participant is the source. This license does not apply to information marked as "confidential" by the Participant in their submission.

7.3 By entering the Awards Program, the Participant warrants and represents that the content of their submission and the grant of license referred to in paragraph 7.2 do not infringe any IP rights, or other proprietary rights, of any third party. Each Participant agrees to release and hold WIPO harmless from and against all claims, expenses and liability, relating to infringement of trademark, copyright, patents or any other proprietary rights arising out of their participation in the Awards Program and the content of their submission.

## 8. **Final Provisions**

8.1 No Participant is allowed to use the WIPO name or logo on material produced by them, without the prior written permission of WIPO.

8.2 Each Participant agrees and consents to WIPO taking photographs and making recordings of their likeness during the Awards Ceremony and using their name and likeness in any

communication or publication or advertising of the Awards Program and/or their submission posted on WIPO's website and social media platforms, without any compensation or notice.

8.3 Disclosure of confidential information or other sensitive information is at the sole discretion of each Participant and WIPO shall not be held liable for any loss or damage of whatsoever nature arising from disclosure of confidential or other information by the Participant.

8.4 While WIPO makes every effort to ensure that its website and online services are free of any software virus, it cannot guarantee that they are free from any or all software viruses. WIPO shall not be held liable for any loss or damage caused by the use of its online services.

8.5 WIPO shall have the right, in its sole discretion, to modify these terms and conditions and to suspend or cancel the Awards Program without any future obligation. Any such change, suspension or cancellation will be communicated on the [WIPO Awards webpage](#) or via email to the Participant's email address indicated in the online application form.

8.6 Any dispute relating to the Awards Program shall be referred to and finally determined by arbitration in accordance with the UNCITRAL Rules, then in force. The appointing authority shall be the Secretary General of the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The place of arbitration shall be Geneva.

8.7. By creating an account to participate in the competition, Participants agree to be contacted by WIPO via email, newsletters, and other communication channels for the purpose of sharing news and announcements that could be of interest to the Participant.

8.8 Nothing in or relating to these Rules shall be deemed or interpreted as a waiver of any of the privileges and immunities accorded to WIPO as an international organization and a UN specialized agency.