

9th Youth Forum on SDG Implementation
“Youth as Innovators: Driving AI Solutions for Sustainable Development”

Ideas for Change Contest Guidelines
Turn your ideas into action

“As Artificial Intelligence reshapes our world, young people must also be front and centre in shaping digital policies and institutions.” - United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres

Context and Background

To ensure that young people’s voices are heard and that they are included in the work of the United Nations, the United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), under the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), continues to host the Ideas for Change Contest. This contest invites young people to share their innovative ideas and helps them turn those ideas into tangible actions that support global sustainability.

This year’s contest, titled **Youth as Innovators: Driving AI Solutions for Sustainable Development**, specifically invites young people between the ages of 15 and 24 to develop innovative AI-based solutions. Participants are encouraged to propose ideas that improve transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public governance systems while contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The contest aims to inspire youth-led innovation by providing a platform where young minds can share their projects with peers, representatives from various UN agencies, and other institutions. It is an opportunity for participants to have their voices heard and to help shape a more sustainable future.

Competition Tracks

Participants may choose from the following tracks, each aligned with specific SDG targets and addressing key public governance challenges:

- **AI for Transparent Governance**
Focus: Develop AI tools to enhance transparency in government operations.
SDG Alignment: SDG 16.6 – Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels.
- **AI for Inclusive Decision-Making**
Focus: Create AI solutions that promote inclusiveness in policymaking.
SDG Alignment: SDG 16.7 – Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels.
- **AI for Anti-Corruption and Accountability**
Focus: Design AI systems to detect, prevent, or report corruption.
SDG Alignment: SDG 16.5 – Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.

- **AI for Efficient Public Service Delivery**

Focus: Innovate AI-driven solutions to streamline public services.

SDG Alignment: SDG 16.6 – Ensure effective public service delivery.

- **AI for Public Access to Information**

Focus: Develop AI tools that facilitate public access to information.

SDG Alignment: SDG 16.10 – Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms.

Eligibility

Students and young professionals between the ages of 15 and 24 are invited to submit their ideas. Prospective teams must consist of three (3) members and may be formed from different schools, institutions, companies, countries, and nationalities.

Application Requirements

Registration

- Register [here](#) by **8 August 2025** if you wish to attend the Forum only.
- If you are participating in the Ideas for Change Contest, please complete the Contest Entry Form and upload it [here](#) by **11 July 2025**.

Submission of Concept Note

- Submit a 1000-word concept note outlining your proposed AI solution. Your submission should include:
 - A clear problem statement
 - The proposed solution
 - Alignment with the SDGs and the chosen track
 - Expected impact and sustainability
- Concept notes must be submitted by **27 June 2025**.
- All entries must be original work. Plagiarism or the use of pre-existing solutions without proper attribution will result in disqualification.
- ***Note: Prospective teams must sign in using their Gmail account to upload entry materials. If you encounter any issues logging in, please reach out to the email provided below.***

Shortlisting Process

A panel of judges will review all submissions based on relevance, feasibility, innovation, and alignment with the SDGs. Five (5) shortlisted teams will be notified via email and invited to participate in the next phase, which involves preparing a PowerPoint presentation of their concept note and presenting it at the Youth Forum.

Winners

Three (3) winners will receive a certification award from the Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS), the Ministry of Environment, and Incheon Metropolitan City of the Republic of Korea. Winners will be selected fairly and openly by evaluators, with audience participation playing a role in the decision.

Additional Opportunities

All participating teams will be invited to join the Youth Session of the UN DESA's Regional Symposium on 24–26 September 2025, held virtually. Additionally, the MOIS awardee winners will have the opportunity to deliver an in-person presentation of their project proposal during the Youth Session.

Timeline

- Application Announcement: 28 April 2025
- Application Deadline Extension: 11 July 2025
- Shortlist Announcement: 18 July 2025
- Youth Forum Day: 13 August 2025
- Award Ceremony: 26 September 2025

Contact Information

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