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Chairman

**2020 Virtual WITSA Global ICT Excellence Awards**

*Rev. June 2020*

# Summary

The *2020 Virtual WITSA Global ICT Excellence Awards* will be presented to select users and providers whose use and applications of Information & Communications Technology (ICT) exhibit exceptional achievement within nine (9) broad categories:

1. COVID-19 Tech Solutions for Cities & Localities

2. COVID-19 Tech Solutions for Countries or Regions

3. COVID-19 Best Industry Solutions

4. Public/Private Partnership Award

5. Digital Opportunity/Inclusion Award

6. Sustainable Growth

7. Innovative eHealth Solutions

8. Digital Innovation Award

9. E-Education & Learning Award

In addition, a *Chairman's Award* will be presented to a nominee selected from the entire pool of candidates from all award categories.

Candidates for these Awards are nominated by ICT experts from around the world who span nearly 80 countries/economies. The 2020 Virtual *WITSA Global ICT Excellence Awards* will take place on September 15, in conjunction with the September 14-16, 2020 “Road to WCIT Malaysia” - a live telecast event organized by [The National ICT Association of Malaysia (PIKOM)](http://www.pikom.org.my/).

# Award Categories

**1. COVID-19 Tech Solutions for Cities & Localities**

Award Criteria:

COVID-19 literally shut down the largest cities in the world, and while the healthcare industry, first responders, governments, banks, businesses, and entire populations grappled with flattening the curve, technology companies sought to create innovative solutions aimed to combat and ease the effects of the global virus.

Cities and local communities bore the brunt of the virus, causing resource strains to occur, testing the very will of the governments. Some city governments and local authorities were more successful than others in using technology to combat the virus. They effectively used technology, by employing sensors and data to trace the contacts of people infected with the coronavirus. At the same time, some cities are tracking and assisting in efforts to determine whether social distancing rules are being followed.

Some local authorities are analyzing pedestrian and vehicle flow and car park data, CCTV cameras, drones, cell phone usage and apps in order to measure social distancing and to track and enforce quarantines. Using technology along with community-led initiatives has helped contain the growth in numbers of effected people.

This award will recognize cities and localities that utilize technology aided solutions successfully in the fight against COVID-19. The nominee must demonstrate that the adopted technologies or solutions have produced clear positive impact on mitigating the impact of COVID-19 within their geographic locations.

**2. COVID-19 Tech Solutions for Countries or Regions**

Award Criteria:

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced governments, cities, localities and whole societies to seek effective solutions in the COVID-19 battle to include digital technologies to respond to the crisis. Navigating through these challenging times requires governments to adopt an open government approach and to use digital communication channels to provide reliable information on global and national COVID-19 developments. E-participation platforms can represent useful tools to engage with vulnerable groups online and to establish digital initiatives to collectively brainstorm for policy ideas to critical social and economic challenges.

Effective public-private partnerships, through sharing technologies, expertise and tools, can support governments in restarting the economy and rebuilding societies. Developing countries, in particular, will need international cooperation and support in mitigating the crisis. Therefore, regional, national and local project-based collaborations with private sector companies, international organizations and other stakeholders are necessary. In the long-term, governments need to accelerate the implementation of innovative digital technologies such as AI-powered technology, blockchain, and drones. Investments in these technologies can tremendously support the future resilience of the health economy and the public services delivery.

National and regional governments also work and coordinate with cities and help fund the delivery of not only urgently needed medical items, but also technologies and solutions deemed essential to fight and contain the spread of the SARS CoV-2 virus.

This award will recognize countries or regions that demonstrate vision and leadership with regard to using digital tools to successfully respond to the COVID-19 crisis, including engagement with vulnerable groups as well as implementing innovative digital technologies to address not only short-term concerns, but also to grow the resilience of society against future health crises in collaboration with industry and other stakeholders.

**3. COVID-19 Best Industry Solutions**

Award Criteria:

This award recognizes any companies or individuals who successfully utilize information and communications technology, artificial intelligence, big data or similar in the fight against COVID-19. Examples of solutions include telehealth apps, privacy-respecting social distancing enforcement, contact and tracing technologies, as well as vaccine and testing solutions. The nominee must demonstrate that the technology or solution has yielded a real impact on mitigating the impact of COVID-19.

**4. Public/Private Partnership Award**

Award Criteria:

This award recognizes successful partnerships between government and private sector entities in ICT. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are a mechanism for government to procure and implement public infrastructure and/or services using the resources and expertise of the private sector. Where governments are facing ageing or lack of infrastructure and require more efficient services, a partnership with the private sector can help foster new solutions and bring finance. PPPs combine the skills and resources of both the public and private sectors through sharing of risks and responsibilities. This enables governments to benefit from the expertise of the private sector, and allows them to focus instead on policy, planning and regulation by delegating day-to-day operations.

PPPs can also help address longstanding barriers to the inclusion of persons with disabilities and the intersection with technological advancements, mitigate the negative effects from trade and technology change, as well as combatting cybercrime by leveraging multi-stakeholder partnerships to drive durable solutions and improve cooperation with industry and other stakeholders through information sharing initiatives, capacity-building programs, by employing responsible and equitable security vulnerability disclosure and remediation practices, and by jointly fostering technology innovations and investments that address global security challenges.

Other areas of private-public partnerships include new partnership opportunities with the ICT sector to deliver the technological transportation breakthroughs of tomorrow. PPPs can also help develop Local Innovation Ecosystems: The success of innovations often depends on the strength and development of the local innovation ecosystem, and public-private partnerships as government tools can effectively build ecosystems in a short period of time.

**5. Digital Opportunity/Inclusion Award**

Award Criteria-Individuals, academic institutions, corporations, NGOs or government authorities that have made a remarkable and successful effort at providing digital opportunities to those in need are eligible for this award. In order for the Digital Age to fulfill its promise, it must consider the unique challenges faced by diverse populations. Examples could include deployment of ICTs and Internet access among inner city populations, or in towns, rural areas or cities in developing and least-developed countries. This award also includes programs and initiatives that aid people with disabilities and others who face longstanding barriers to social inclusion. Digital Inclusion is defined as the “ability of individuals and groups to access and use information and communication technologies (ICTs). Digital inclusion encompasses not only access to the Internet but also the availability of hardware and software; relevant content and services; and training for the digital literacy skills required for effective use of ICTs.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

This award recognizes solutions enabling accessibility for those individuals who have traditionally not benefited from ICT. This award also seeks innovative solutions that create meaningful employment through ICT for those who have traditionally been underrepresented in the labor force. Of particular interest to WITSA are applications that embed inclusion and accessibility in the original design as opposed to retrofitting existing applications.

**6. Sustainable Growth Award**

Award Criteria-Individuals, academic institutions, corporations, NGOs or governments that have made a remarkable and successful effort at using ICTs as a tool to promote sustainable economic growth. Sustainable economic growth shall be defined as the ability to improve the financial and social well-being without compromising the prosperity or well-being of future generations; a sustainable economy is therefore one in which economic growth is decoupled from environmental impacts. Three key challenges are climate change, resource degradation and pollution. At the heart of all three is energy efficiency and the role that ICTs may have.

**7. Innovative eHealth Solutions Award**

Award Criteria- This Award recognizes Individuals, healthcare institutions, academic institutions, corporations, NGOs or governments that have made remarkable and successful efforts at utilizing ICTs as a tool to promote health and health care such as telehealth, mHealth (mobile health), eHealth or through eLearning, electronic health records, big data, legal frameworks, or social media. Solutions utilized may range from provision of information to keep citizens healthy, to support for public health in communities, care and support systems in health facilities, and from all the above the data needed to inform management and policy-makers.

**8. Digital Innovation Award**

Disruption is changing the way we work, demanding businesses to move with speed and confidence, and continually innovate. The Digital Innovation Awards recognize businesses and entrepreneurs that have introduced noteworthy innovations in technology that advance business and IT. The Digital Innovation Awards showcase advances in the productivity and potential of business applications as well as technology that contributes significantly to improved efficiency, productivity and the performance of an organization, or more broadly helps Fulfilling the Promise of the Digital Age for everyone.

**9. E-Education & Learning Award**

The Digital Age is requiring new sets of skills, and adoption of new models of public education that emphasize coding, programming and computer science must be adopted. Contrary to popular belief, the digital gap is widening, putting pressure on countries to catch up. Public education must adopt new approaches to lifelong learning. This award will be given to the best electronic learning project. We seek any innovative new technological tool, or any project that uses existing electronic learning tools in an innovative way. Such projects should facilitate and support learning through the use of information and communications technology.

# Nomination Process

The WITSA Secretariat will supply an *ICT Excellence Nomination Form* and instructions to all WITSA members. Each WITSA member association will be entitled to nominate a maximum of ***two candidates*** ***in each award category***.

# Award Winner Selection Process

**Advisory Committee**: There will be one (1) WITSA Advisory Committee governing the selection of winners in all award categories. The Committee shall be Chaired by the WITSA Secretary General. Members of the Committee will be selected by the WITSA Secretariat and will consist of independent, non-affiliated experts from industry, governments and academia.

**Advisory Committee Guiding Principles**: The Committee Chairman shall chair all meetings. The Committee will be responsible for selecting one winner for each of the award categories. The Chairman’s Award will be selected by the WITSA Chairman, exclusively.

**WITSA Office**: The WITSA Secretariat’s office shall be responsible for overseeing and coordinating the activities of the Committee, and will ensure that the Guiding Principles governing the awards are properly adhered to by the Committee.

The Office will announce all the Award Winners to WITSA members.

**Selection Committee Judging/Scoring Methodology**:

The general judging criteria and weighting:

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| --- | --- |
| **Judging Criteria** | **Weighting** |
| Global Impact/Potential | 30% |
| Scalability | 30% |
| Innovative Features and Functionalities | 10% |
| Proven Solution | 30% |

Judges will then score each nominee on each of the criteria above from 1 (being the worst) to 5 (being the best)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Very Poor |  | 2 | Poor |  | 3 | Average |  | 4 | Good |  | 5 | Excellent |

The WITSA Office will calculate and rank the nominees based on the total scores received.

The highest score will then be the winner for that category.

***Judging***: Using the judging criteria listed above, the Committee members will rate all the nominees such that a complete ranking of candidates in each award category can be determined.

**Conference call**: A conference call of the Committee will be held after the ratings have been received. During the call, committee members will share impressions and concerns with regard to the finalists.

The top scoring candidate following the voting may be declared the winner; however, committee members will have a great deal of latitude in reviewing and making final decisions. Whenever possible, geographic diversity should be promoted among the award categories.

The judges may also decide to award several merit recipients in a given award category. Merit winners will be awarded Merit Certificates and will be recognized during the World Congress as a group.

The Committee Chairman will determine if a second round of voting and conference call is warranted.

**Chairman’s Award:** The Committee will make a recommendation to the Chairman for the Chairman’s Award; however, the final selection will be made by the chairman.

**Merit Winner and Back-up candidates**: The second highest scoring nominee in each category may be considered a back-up candidate. A back-up candidate may replace the winner in the event that the winner is unwilling to accept the award. If the Chairman selects one the award category winners for the Chairman’s Award, the respective back-up candidate will fill the vacated award slot.

**Confidentiality**: Please note that the winners will ***not be publicly announced*** until the virtual Award Ceremony on September 15, 2020.

# Schedule (subject to modification)

1. June 3, 2020: Members requested to initiate the process for nominating candidates for each of the award categories.
2. Friday, August 14, 2020: Deadline for WITSA members’ submission of nominees.
3. Monday, August 17, 2020: Nominees to be posted online. Selection Committee to begin reviewing nominees
4. Friday, August 28, 2020: Selection Committee to complete voting.
5. September 1, 2020: Awards Committee conference call to discuss finalists and select winners. WITSA Secretariat to announce Award Winners to Members and PIKOM. The winning candidates will be contacted to ensure acceptance and participation.
6. September 15, 2020: WITSA’s first ever Virtual Awards Ceremony will take place on September 15, in conjunction with the September 14-16, 2020 “Road to WCIT Malaysia” - a live telecast event organized by [The National ICT Association of Malaysia (PIKOM)](http://www.pikom.org.my/)

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1. <https://www.imls.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/BuildingDigitalCommunities_Framework.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)