



Commonwealth Education Awards 2021



The Commonwealth



Call for entries

Nominations are open for the Commonwealth Education Awards 2021.

- Two winners will receive the awards at the Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers taking place in Kenya in March 2021.
- Awarded and commended examples will be promoted on the Commonwealth website and/or other media.

The Commonwealth Education Awards showcase the innovative and successful education and learning initiatives that are being conducted in 54 member countries. By recognising excellence and innovation, we hope to support member countries in their endeavours of providing quality education for all, highlight the great work of education professionals and signal the key role of education and learning in achieving sustainable development.

We are particularly interested in highlighting initiatives that remove barriers, address challenges, facilitate access to quality education and learning; as well as build resilience, especially for disadvantaged groups.

There are six categories for 2021: please ensure your initiative falls under one of these. Two winners will be selected across the six categories.

Category 1: Rethinking Education for Innovation

Innovations such as:

- Creative and effective ways deployed to meet existing and future challenges of the education systems.
- Flexible learning approaches, redefinition of the learning space whether for formal or non-formal education delivery i.e. innovative learning spaces.
- Non-traditional alliances and collaboration among different stakeholders.
- Engagement and synergy between different sectors to ensure that every child or young person develops the set of skills they need for their wellbeing and reach their full potential.
- Technology driven projects that provide education systems with tools to foster inclusion, quality and gender and socioeconomic equity.
- New digital technologies with alternative learning modes that enhance pedagogical practices and improve outcomes.

The award will recognise the best project under this category, including projects with daring ideas about education and technology.

Category 2: Rethinking Education for Work

Education for Work that:

- Address skills relevant to the labour market.
- Identify and prepare for 21st Century skills and prepare learners for a variety of roles – as productive and responsible citizens, as parents and consumers – in which they will need to apply their knowledge and skills effectively to rapidly changing situations.
- Transition from school to work.



The award will go to the most promising project that imparts to students or learners, the competencies they will need to navigate a changing world – skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, and collaboration, often referred to as ‘21st century skills’, ‘soft skills’, or ‘deeper learning’.

Category 3: Rethinking Education for Sustainability

- Inclusion of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into the curriculum.
- Provides space for learners to explore, analyse and engage with their environment, and in the process strengthen their knowledge and skills about complex issues that affect the environment and society, now and for the future.
- Innovative and impactful sustainability programme or policy designed to enhance institutional sustainability through education from an environmental, social, economic or human sustainability perspective.

The education project that best demonstrates an innovative and impactful sustainability programme or policy designed to enhance institutional sustainability through education, from an environmental, social, economic or human sustainability perspective, will receive an award.

Projects may consider more than one of these forms of sustainability. Entries should include examples of policies that have been set up, explain how the project addresses challenges, indicate the outcomes and show how it engaged pupils or students and communities.

Category 4: Education as Pathways to Peace

- Inculcates universal and humanistic values through education.
- Creates better understanding of social rights and responsibilities.
- Respects cultural and religious diversity through formal and/or non-formal education and training.
- Provides and supports conflict sensitive quality education and learning.

Many Commonwealth member countries are vulnerable to drugs, gang violence and street crime and in certain societies, to extremism. Concerted efforts are required to impart global citizenship.

The project that best promotes these values and makes a comprehensive shift towards preventing violence and sustaining peace through education, will receive an award.

Category 5: Education for Inclusion

- Remove barriers to learning through early identification, inclusive teaching for positive learners' outcomes, or strong and effective leadership and management.
- Inclusive practice in a school or learning environment.
- Innovative and effective special needs intervention.

- Alternative forms of learning for learners with special educational needs and disabilities.

The award will recognise the project that provides the best inclusive environment to learners with special education needs to participate fully in school life or society.

Category 6: Commonwealth outstanding teacher or school leader

- Embraces the changing demands of education in the 21st Century.
- Takes up the challenge of educating for a new era, for jobs that do not yet exist, and for the changing and unpredictable needs of economy and society.
- Demonstrates leadership of an innovation in an educational setting with significant contribution to educational development.

The award will recognise outstanding Commonwealth teaching or school leadership that prepares pupils or students for success and that allows them to reach their full potential as productive, responsible, principled citizens.

Who can enter the Commonwealth Education Awards 2021?



Any organisation, whether public or private, including Commonwealth ministries of education, educational institutions and civil society organisations delivering **an education or learning project** in a Commonwealth country can nominate the project. Before nominating the project, secure permission from an appropriate senior manager. A submission must be a project that has made a positive difference to learners, whether children, young people or adults, or to the education system of a Commonwealth member country in respect of one or more of the six project categories for 2021. The project must have been running for more than 12 months.

A teacher or school leader who has demonstrated outstanding achievement and leadership to improve education and learning. You can also nominate others for awards. However, please check with the nominee beforehand that they are happy to have their name put forward. The nominee must be a Commonwealth citizen and exercising their profession in a Commonwealth member country.

What is the entry process?

Organisations should complete all sections of the application form, available on:

commonwealtheducation.awardsplatform.com

Although not part of the selection criteria, if you choose to submit a video, it may be included on the Commonwealth Secretariat website and/or other media. You may also wish to upload additional material to support your application (for example links to websites, news articles, video/audio content).

The Commonwealth Secretariat reserves the right to reproduce, without limitation, submitted materials including the project and or/ good practice description and any attachments, for distribution to member countries, partner organisations, Commonwealth newsletters and in communication with the general public (printed and electronic).

Deadline: Applications must be submitted by **30 June 2020**.

- Submissions and nominations received after the deadline will not be considered.
- Commonwealth small states are particularly encouraged to submit applications. Female teachers or school leaders are greatly encouraged to submit an entry for the outstanding teacher or school leader award.

What are the criteria for the Award?

For Projects:

- **Relevance:** Contextual, socio-cultural and economically appropriate responses to the challenge of education delivery in a specific country.

Tell us about the education strategy and the learning process. Learning is at the core of the awards, and is an essential part of the story we would like to tell the world about. We want to understand the learning provision and learn about the learners. What are the aims of the project? What needs is it addressing? Who are the learners? What are the learning activities that take place?

- **Innovative:** Displaying innovation in its approach, methods or outcomes. Demonstrate how the project has made a difference.

Tell us why the project stands out as exceptional. We are looking for projects that stand out from the crowd. How and why would this project inspire others? Tell us what makes this project special. How is the project innovative?

- **Measurable Impact:** Evidence that it has been independently evaluated and its impact assessed e.g. through qualitative and quantitative indicators.

Briefly explain how the impact of the project/provision is monitored and evaluated.

- **Sustainability:** Demonstrates its capacity or potential in delivering sustainable benefits for society, and in making substantial contribution to the education sector.

Tell us about how the project has made a difference to the learners and, where relevant to families and/or communities. Please provide examples that illustrate your points, and concise evidence that backs up your claims.



- **Efficiency and Effectiveness:** Demonstrates efficient and cost-effective use of resources in the project implementation. Explain how, if applicable, the project has influenced policies or responded to a policy.
- **Knowledge Exchange and Participation:** How it contributes to knowledge exchange, successfully communicates its objectives, approaches and findings to stakeholders, and encourages girls and women, community and civil society participation, ownership or contribution.
- **Replication:** The extent to which the initiative is replicable in other Commonwealth countries and can advance good practice within the sector and/or influence policy agendas promoting good practice. How could others replicate it?

Reminder: Entries should be clear and comprehensive, and should evidently describe how good educational and learning practices have been implemented and what has been achieved.

Selection Criteria for Outstanding teacher or school leader

Learning environment:

School leaders address various challenges in schools every day. Staff recognise their excellent leadership and enjoy working and learning with them. Parents trust them and feel engaged and positive about the school.

What are the ways in which the nominee creates a conducive learning environment that not only provides a safe space to the learner but also inspires a desire to learn. How does the nominee foster learners' enthusiasm to achieve their full potential – both academically and holistically?

Stands out:

Teachers working with children with special educational needs have a huge impact that goes beyond the classroom; These unique and committed individuals are raising the aspirations for children or young people with special educational needs. They personalise, effectively promote and embed inclusive practices that best prepare those they work with for adulthood and making a success of their future lives. Tell us how your nominee stands out from the crowd.

Positive Impact beyond the classroom:

The nominee could be a primary or secondary school teacher who plays a vital role in inspiring and engaging learners. They are focused on best possible learner outcomes, preparing them to make successes of their lives, whether that is transitioning to Higher Education or directly into employment.

Tell us about a positive impact on their learners. The ways in which the nominee ensures learners become good citizens and can show how their actions make a difference. On a wider level how they enrich the life of the school community, engaging other professionals to address the students' needs. How the nominee's work has had a significant positive impact on the nominee's educational community, whether locally, nationally, regionally, or worldwide.

Vision:

Educational professionals know and care for their students and/or teachers, as inspiring leaders and managers, create an environment where success is expected and supported. Students enjoy going to school and develop as confident and positive learners with the skills, qualities and learning outcomes necessary to broaden their opportunities and increase their life chances.

Tell us what makes you or your colleague an inspiring and successful teacher or leader. How has the nominee demonstrated their ability to develop a systemic plan aligned with shared vision for school effectiveness and student learning?

Leadership:

The skills, characteristics and methods that make the nominee an exceptional practitioner who leads in their profession or a school leader. How the nominee uses excellent pedagogy and inspires and motivates every learner they teach so they make impressive progress and achieve well. How the nominee delivers on the curriculum and engages in learner centred approach, or demonstrates innovative pedagogy. How they engage other colleagues and parents on their pupils or students learning journey

How the nominee builds a strong and open learning community where both pupils and staff have an enthusiasm for and commitment to learning and understand the difference it can make to them as individuals, to their work and to society.

Awards Process

There will be four finalists who will benefit from recognition and publicity around their work. Two winners will receive sponsorship to attend the 21CCEM in Kenya: the top project entry will receive the Pan Commonwealth Award and the best teacher or school leader will receive the Outstanding Award.

The awards ceremony will take place as part of the opening ceremony of the 21CCEM where the winners will receive an engraved plaque and a certificate.

Guidance notes for completing the application form

- Make sure you answer all the questions and provide all the information requested.
- Be succinct. Whilst there is a word limit, make your points clear and concise within that.
- Convey to the jurors how the project has made a difference. Provide powerful examples with supporting relevant evidence.
- Include a strong learner statement. It will act as a powerful evidence to demonstrate the impact the project has directly had on learners, highlighting the difference the learning has made in their life.
- We strongly invite you to provide a 3-4-minute video using a smartphone or similar device presenting your initiative. No professional production is required.

If you have any further questions, please contact
educationawards@commonwealth.int

For more information, contact:

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