

IWA Inclusive Urban Sanitation Champions Programme Prospectus

The International Water Association (IWA) Inclusive Urban Sanitation (IUS) Champions Programme recognises excellence, leadership, and innovation in the sanitation sector. It responds to the need for encouraging and recognising contributions of sector players towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6.2 – Achieving access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all. The aim is to identify and recognise individuals, teams (including communities) or organisations/institutions who are looking beyond technology and the usual focus on building infrastructure and are focusing on inclusion, service delivery and multiple technology solutions tailored to different geographies and socio-economic contexts **in low- and middle-income countries (LAMIC)**.

The IUS Champions programme is part of the Inclusive Urban Sanitation initiative, launched by IWA at the 2022 World Water Congress and Exhibition. The initiative aims to reshape the global agenda on urban sanitation over the coming years and contribute to achieving inclusive, resilient, and water-wise cities. The initiative is supported by an **Advisory Board** and a **Task Force** to provide guidance, feedback and direction on the initiative's priorities, activities and performance. The IUS Advisory Board and Task Force consist of sanitation experts, regulators, strategic partners, and members from various global regions to secure a balanced geographical representation and address a wide variety of sanitation challenges.

IUS Champions will be announced every two years, at the IWA Water and Development Congress & Exhibition. Applications are now open for the 2023 IWA IUS Champions Programme. **The call for nominations closes on 10th September 2023 at 23:59 BST (London time)**. The 2023 winners will be announced at a ceremony to be held during the IWA Water and Development Congress & Exhibition taking place on 10-14 December 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda.

The categories for the IUS Champions Programme are aligned to the globally recognised Citywide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) framework, which defines **Sanitation Service Outcomes** (Equity, Safety, and Sustainability) and **Functions** (Responsibility, Accountability, and Resource Planning and Management), and to the **SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework and its five accelerators** (Financing, Capacity development, Governance, Data & information, and Innovation).

There are four categories of the Programme:

1. IUS Champion for Policy and Regulation

This category recognises individuals, teams (including communities), and organisations/institutions (utilities, cities, municipal, state, or national agencies/departments) championing inclusive and sustainable sanitation service provision in urban areas. The individuals, teams (including communities) or organisations/institutions must have created, reformed, organised for, or implemented innovative inclusive sanitation policies and regulatory frameworks which are being executed to ensure sanitation services for all.

2. IUS Champion for Service Delivery

Recognises individuals, teams (including communities) and organisations/institutions that have successfully promoted equitable and inclusive sanitation services (wastewater and faecal sludge management) across the entire service chain (containment; emptying and transport; treatment; and disposal/re-use), a mix of centralized and decentralized and sewerage and non-sewerage systems ensure services reach everyone, particularly low-income, informal, and marginalized communities. Those who promote innovative financing, comprehensive and participatory planning, implementation, and monitoring of diverse technologies across the service chain will be highly considered for recognition. **This category has four sub-categories:**

i. Containment systems

Recognises inclusive innovative sanitation containment systems (collection and storage) which by nature of their design and operation, promote public health and environmental safety; are climate-resilient, sustainable, gender-responsive, and culturally acceptable; offer various technological options which are affordable and applicable in all parts of the city or urban area (including low-income, informal settlements or slums), and suitable for different ground/soil conditions. Importantly, there should be relevant policies and regulations and evidence of enforcement to ensure that the containment systems are constructed to standards and functional. Also recognises initiatives that promote climate resilient technologies and excellence in functional data and monitoring systems and other technology options including Geographical Information Systems (GIS), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and other digital technologies in collecting, analysing, and utilising containment systems sanitation data to inform evidence-based decision-making, and improve service delivery outcomes at this part of the service chain.

ii. Emptying and transport systems

Recognises inclusive innovative faecal sludge/septage and wastewater (or used water) emptying and transport or conveyance systems that promote multi-technology options that are responsive and can be applied in different contexts in a city/town/urban area; are affordable to the users and profitable to service providers; promote public safety (both users and sanitation workers) and environmental protection; or encourage public-private partnerships including the formalisation of service chain interventions that reduce overall service chain costs and equitable distribution of costs. Importantly, there should be relevant policies and regulations and evidence of enforcement to ensure that the emptying and transport or conveyance systems are implemental, functional, and sustainable over time. Also recognises excellence in functional data and monitoring systems and other technology options including Geographical Information Systems (GIS), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and other digital technologies in collecting, analysing, and utilising emptying/transportation or conveyance system data to inform evidence-based decision-making, and improve service delivery outcomes at this part of the service chain.

iii. Treatment systems

Recognises inclusive innovative treatment systems employing multi-technology options including a mix of centralized and decentralized treatment systems; and other technology options including Geographical Information Systems (GIS), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and other

digital technologies to improve functionality at this stage of the service chain. Also recognises other (non-mechanical) treatment systems/options that promote climate resilience and are eco-sensitive for example reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; the use of renewable energy and nature-based solutions for wastewater and sludge (faecal and septage).

iv. Disposal and/or reuse

Recognises inclusive innovative disposal and/or reuse of effluent and sludge from wastewater and faecal sludge/septage treatment plants. Initiatives that promote a circular sanitation economy through the elimination of waste and pollution and maximization of resource recovery will be recognised (e.g., reuse of wastewater for irrigation and greening purposes; biosolids as fuels and soil conditioners; aquaculture and horticulture, surface and groundwater recharge, among others).

3. IUS Champion for Communication

Recognises individuals, teams (including communities) and organisations/institutions for their innovative communication tools such as short films (maximum duration of 5-7 minutes) or campaigns for wider outreach and dissemination and engaging local/national decision makers and stakeholders, particularly in marginalised communities in promoting inclusive sanitation agenda in urban areas.

4. IUS Champion for Youth Engagement

Recognises the contribution of youth to solving current sanitation challenges and progress towards achievement of the SDG 6.2. This category aims to recognise either an individual (below 35 years), teams (including communities) or organisations/institutions working with the youth for improved and inclusive sanitation service delivery.

Overall, a pro-poor approach will be a key criterion for evaluating all the above categories aimed at increasing improved sanitation services for the urban poor in low-income areas/informal settlements/slums to bridge the gap in service delivery. The interventions should align with to “Leave no one behind” (LNOB) Principle, a central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs.

Nomination and Selection Process

The call for nominations is now open through the following link: [Nomination link](#)

1. Eligibility

The IUS Champions Programme is open to individuals, teams (including communities) and organisations/institutions (IWA members or non-members) active in the sector. Eligible individuals, teams (including communities) or organisations/institutions can be drawn from practice, academia/science, consultancy, formal and informal private sector service providers, NGOs and civil society, international organisations, or the government. Individuals, teams, and organisations can be nominated only based on the work they have conducted in low- and middle-income countries.

Nominations will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Criteria	Rationale
Innovation	The utilisation of novel and creative approaches to address sanitation challenges (i.e., bringing unique or new solutions, representing a change or improvement in existing practices).
Sustainability	Demonstration of commitment to sustainable sanitation service provision, such as economically and socially acceptable, technically, and institutionally appropriate and environmental protection. Including financial sustainability, scalability and replicability in other contexts or communities. Evidence that scaling-up or replication is already taking place is key.
Impact	The measurable impact on public health, environmental sustainability, or the economic development of the community.
Equity and Inclusion	Prioritisation of the specific needs of marginalised or vulnerable populations, such as women, children, or people with disabilities, including the urban poor in informal settlements/low-income areas/slums. In addition, community involvement in the design, implementation, and evaluation of sanitation initiatives.
Geographical scope	Must be in a specific geographic area (such as a city, country, or region) and implemented in a low- and middle-income country (LAMIC).
Integration, Partnership & Collaboration	Cross-sectoral collaboration and coordination in sanitation service provision. Considering sanitation in its entirety including wastewater and faecal sludge management, solid waste management, and grey water management; and its interlinkage with water supply, urban drainage, housing, urban planning, and climate-resilience.

2. Nomination submission

Nominations can be made by **IWA members** outlining the contributions of individuals, teams (including communities) or organisations/institutions – **IWA members or not** – and how it/they meets the eligibility criteria. **Self-nominations will not be accepted.** Nominations should include relevant information such as goals, objectives, and impact, as well as details about the partners involved, the resources utilised, and the community engagement process.

The evaluation and selection process

IWA is responsible for the selection of the winners of the Inclusive Urban Sanitation Champions. The IWA Secretariat will advertise the opening of the submissions period and receive nominations. Nominations will first be preselected internally, and the pre-selected nominees will be contacted to submit individual applications. IWA will also appoint a jury consisting of 5 to 7 voting members who will evaluate the received applications against the criteria outlined. Judges may request additional information or clarification from applicants and may conduct site visits or interviews as part of the evaluation process. After the selection

process, the results will be presented to the IUS Task Force members for validation and endorsement, if the process is proven satisfactory.

Incentives

Apart from trophies and certificates, other incentives for participation can be identified. These may include networking opportunities and publicity. Below are some examples of incentives that the IUS Champions Programme can offer:

1. **Recognition and visibility:** For the winners, IWA can provide recognition and visibility to the individual, team (including community), organisation/institution behind the win. This can help to build credibility and raise awareness about the importance of sanitation. This includes publishing a case study, featuring case study in IWA webinar, press release and promotion through other IWA communication collaterals.
2. **IWA membership:** For the winners, IWA will cover membership fee up to two years.
3. **Capacity building and training:** IWA can also offer capacity building and training opportunities to the winners. This may include mentorship, coaching, and training programmes designed to help the winners develop their knowledge in areas such as project management, communication, and technical skills.

Key Dates

9 August 2023 – Online submission opens

10 September 2023 – Close of online submission

September 2023 – Shortlisted candidates are notified

October 2023 – Supporting documents submission & judging process

10-14 December 2023 – Recognition ceremony in Kigali, Rwanda