



# United Nations Investment Promotion Awards 2025: Promoting Sustainable Investment in the Digital Economy



## ENTRY GUIDELINES

### Overview

In 2025, UNCTAD will recognize **exceptional achievements in promoting and facilitating sustainable investment in the digital economy**. Investment promotion agencies (IPAs), outward investment agencies and institutions (OIAs), special economic zones (SEZs), and associations of IPAs, OIAs, or SEZs are invited to submit entries. The deadline for nominations is **21 March 2025**. Winning organizations will be announced in October 2025 during the *World Investment Forum 2025* in conjunction with the 16<sup>th</sup> UNCTAD ministerial conference in Viet Nam.

### Eligibility

- National and sub-national IPAs, including authorities responsible for promoting investment in SEZs.
- OIAs, such as outward investment promotion agencies, development finance institutions, investment guarantee schemes, and other agencies that promote and service investment abroad.
- Associations of IPAs, OIAs, or SEZs.

### Requirements

Entries should be **written submissions of a maximum of 500 words**. These submissions can be complemented with photos, videos, and links to websites.

Submissions should meet the following requirements:

1. The foreign direct investment (FDI) should be related to digital economy sectors such as, but not limited to: digital infrastructure, data centres, e-commerce, online platforms (e.g. search engines, news and entertainment, video sharing, online gaming, etc.), robotics, artificial intelligence (including applications), advanced computing, fintech and digital financial services, semiconductors, software development and cloud computing.
2. The project was initiated or realized in the **period 2023–2025**.

Submissions should include:

1. A **description of the FDI project** in terms of:
  - sub-sector or activity,

- type of project (e.g. greenfield, PPP, private equity, impact investment, venture capital, manufacturing, services, export or import substitution oriented)
  - volume (in US dollars), and
  - number of jobs created (kind and quality of the jobs/gender related information).
2. An explanation of **the role that the organization (IPA, OIA, SEZ, or association) played** in the realization of the project and, if applicable, in maximizing the project's impact.
  3. **Innovative approaches** to the promotion or facilitation of the project

Entries must be received by the UNCTAD secretariat no later than the deadline: **Friday, 21 March 2025, 11:59 p.m. Central European Summer Time.**

### **Re-entrants**

Each organization may only submit one entry per year for consideration for the **United Nations Investment Promotion Awards**. While organizations are encouraged to submit new entries, they are welcome to enter a previously submitted project that never received a United Nations Investment Promotion Award with updates and notable developments.

### **Language**

Organizations should complete the Award survey in English or French, the two working languages of the United Nations secretariat.

### **Method of selection**

Award winners will be selected based on completed submissions. Upon receipt, the UNCTAD secretariat will make a preliminary screening of all entries and prepare a shortlist based on the stated requirements and assessment criteria. Information provided in the submission will be verified by UNCTAD experts, which may entail follow-up enquiries with the submitting organization and verification of information through third parties.

Shortlisted entries will be provided to the Award Selection Committee comprised of UNCTAD and external experts which will be responsible for the selection of the winners. The Award Selection Committee will evaluate each shortlisted entry against the assessment criteria.

### **Assessment criteria**

Entries will be evaluated based on the following elements:

#### Project quality and SDG impact

1. Quality and added value of the investment project
2. Effective contribution of the project to the realization of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

## Role of the organization

1. Role of the organization in promoting or facilitating the project
2. Innovative approaches to the promotion or facilitation of the project

Entries will also be reviewed against the size and development level of the local or beneficiary economy.

## **Announcement of winners**

The winners of the Awards will be announced by the UNCTAD Secretary-General during the *World Investment Forum 2025* in Viet Nam. A press release on the Award winners will be distributed to global mainstream media and the winners will be announced via online and social media channels as well as printed materials.



## **Confidentiality**

Information provided in the submission will be treated confidentially. UNCTAD may conduct further research and consultations with third parties to verify information contained in the entries, however UNCTAD will not publish content from received Awards submissions without prior consent.

## **More information**

For additional information please contact UNCTAD's Investment Promotion Team at [ips@unctad.org](mailto:ips@unctad.org).

In fairness to all participants, UNCTAD is not able to assist organizations with the preparation of entries. However, UNCTAD staff is pleased to answer any questions of a general or technical nature regarding the Awards.