



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

04/05/2017

Ref.: CL/4201

Subject: **Nominations for the 15th edition of the UNESCO-Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture**

Sir/Madam,

It is my pleasure to invite your Government to submit candidatures for the UNESCO-Sharjah Prize for Arab Culture. Awarded since 2001, the Prize was established in 1998 in collaboration with the Government of Sharjah (United Arab Emirates) and is now at its 15th edition.

As you are aware, the Prize fulfils its fundamental mission in highlighting the core message of the Organization by promoting a dialogue among culture, and by rewarding significant contributions made by two eminent personalities, groups of persons or institutions (one from the Arab States and the other from elsewhere) to the development, knowledge and spread of Arab culture by means of artistic, intellectual or promotional outreach aimed at enhancing intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. Proposed candidates should have earned an international reputation for their meritorious action in their field of competence.

At its 14th edition, the Prize was awarded to two avant-garde artists renowned for their combination of the ancient art of Arabic calligraphy with modern methods of representation. Bahia Shehab (Egypt) is one of the voice of the emerging youth from the Arab world and she has used her art to change the existing narrative in and on the region. eL Seed (France) has mastered the use of public space to transmit strong messages in favour of dialogue and exchange through his impressive artworks.

By conferring this Prize on such young artists, the Prize strove to reinforce the Organization's fundamental mission to promote dialogue among cultures, as well as to bolster understanding of the multifaceted aspects of Arab culture.

UNESCO and the Government of Sharjah would like to encourage you to propose qualified candidates who deserve to be rewarded for their literary, scientific or artistic achievements, as well as for their global outreach devoted to promoting Arab culture and its worldwide dissemination – independent of any religious considerations.

Furthermore, taking into account the important contribution of women, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to propose renowned female candidates, to bring a better gender balance to the list of Laureates.

As mentioned above, the Prize is endowed \$60,000 by the Government of Sharjah, which is divided equally between the two laureates selected by me on the basis of the recommendation of an international jury established for that purpose.

In view of the importance of this Prize, the Organization has established a rigorous process for selecting candidates. We encourage you, therefore, to propose the most-qualified candidates from your country. You may wish to note that candidatures can be submitted online only.

If, as I hope, you are in a position to nominate suitable candidates for the Prize, I invite you to send an e-mail to the Secretariat of the Prize (e-mail: prix.sharjah@unesco.org; tel.: +33 1 45 68 42 71), with the name and e-mail address of the person authorized to submit your nominees on your behalf. The Prize Secretariat will then send all necessary information to the person concerned, notably on how to submit the candidature online. Kindly note that the deadline for the submission of candidatures is **31 August 2017**. The Secretariat of the Prize stands ready to respond to any queries you might have.

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Irina Bokova
Director-General

cc: National Commissions for UNESCO
Permanent Delegations to UNESCO