Digital Skills Innovation Awards for Southeast Asia

A competition to accelerate digital transformation in Southeast Asia through innovative training programs

Call for submissions

A classroom in Buriram, Thailand where students are learning to enhance their computer skills. (Credits: Kanchana8810 / Shutterstock)

1. Overview

Digitalization is rapidly reshaping economies in Southeast Asia. Big firms that export or form a part of global value chains and regional digital platforms are adopting digital technologies to stay competitive. At the same time, digital technologies are making significant inroads into smaller domestic enterprises. While technology is quickly advancing, students and workers are struggling to acquire digital skills that are necessary for success in the labor market. There is a shortage of institutions to teach those skills, and access to such learning may be particularly challenging for certain groups. This results in a growing gap between the digital skills that employers need and the digital skills that workers have.
To identify and celebrate existing good practice for teaching digital skills in Southeast Asia, the World Bank is hosting a regional competition, inviting public and private organizations (not individuals) to demonstrate how their programs are helping to address these challenges.

The competition aims to identify innovative programs that teach any of the following four categories of essential skills for the digital workplace and the digital economy:

1. **Specialized digital skills for information and communication technology (ICT)**
   (e.g. programming, network design, data analytics)

2. **Professional digital skills using occupation-specific software that requires data input and manipulation**
   (e.g. information management, graphic design, 3D printing)

3. **Basic digital literacy and productivity skills**
   (e.g. use of word processing, spreadsheets, internet browsing)

4. **Soft skills for the digital economy**
   (e.g. problem solving, communication, critical thinking, creativity).

The finalists will be invited to present their program designs at a virtual international high-level conference hosted by the World Bank and industry partners in **May 2021** (details to follow). The winners of each category will be recognized during a plenary session.

The details of the competition can be found on the [World Bank website](https://worldbank.org). For further questions and clarifications about the competition, please send an email to [digitalskillsinnovation@worldbank.org](mailto:digitalskillsinnovation@worldbank.org)

### 2. Eligibility

Public and private organizations **implementing training programs** are encouraged to submit descriptions of their innovative initiatives to teach necessary skills in a digitalizing workplace in Southeast Asia. Individuals are not eligible.

Organizations acting as a partner for relevant programs – such as sponsors or advisors – should liaise with the organization in charge of the implementation of the program (referred to as “the implementing organization”). In the event that various organizations wish to jointly enter the competition, they should appoint a coordinator who will consolidate all the materials into a single entry.

The competition is open to organizations in all ASEAN countries¹, but focusing mainly on less developed regions, as well as less-skilled populations.

There is no restriction on the number of programs each organization can submit.

### 3. Awards & Recognition

Participants can submit a program in multiple categories of the competition, but each submission can only be awarded once across all categories.

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¹ Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam
• **Youth programs:** Participants can apply to this category if their program is dedicated to young learners up to 25 years old.

• **Women's empowerment:** Participants can apply to this category if their program is dedicated to girls and women, whatever their age and socio-economic status. Female learners should account for 90% or more of all learners for a program to be eligible.

• **Work-based training and employer's support:** This category will recognize initiatives managed by employers (on-the-job training, internships, etc.) or mainly funded by employers, either private or public.

• **Lifelong learning:** This category accepts any program designed to train or retrain adults (18+ years old), who are illiterate, low-skilled workers, or workers wishing to update their skills for success in the digital economy.

• **Long-range access solutions:** This category focuses on training remote and hard-to-access populations. Remote populations are defined as those living in physically remote areas (a significant distance from population centers and educational institutions, with limited functioning transport links and infrastructure, as well as challenging terrain) or those out of reach of digital solutions (lack of internet infrastructure, minority language, prisoners, etc.).

For each category, programs having met the expectations of the Selection committee will be awarded with an Innovation label from the World Bank. Awardees will be invited to present their program during an international conference in May 2021 and they will benefit from media coverage on the World Bank website and communication channels.

4. **Digital Development Partnership**

The Digital Skills Innovation Awards for Southeast Asia is supported by the World Bank’s Digital Development Partnership (DDP). The DDP aims to help implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and operationalize the recommendations of the World Bank’s 2016 World Development Report on Digital Dividends (WDR 2016).

This partnership makes digital solutions available to developing countries with an emphasis on the following areas:
- Data and indicators
- Digital economy enabling environment
- Cybersecurity
- Internet access for all
- Digital government
- Mainstreaming digital services, solutions, and platforms

5. **Submission guidelines**


The deadline for submissions is **March 31, 2021 at 23:59 GMT**.

Main entries must be submitted in **English only**. Pictures and additional documentation can be provided in any language.

Information on submitted programs will be used by the World Bank to build a global good practice inventory. This inventory will be publicly available on a dedicated website (without any personal
information). By submitting their entries, participants agree that the submitted information can be collected and used for this purpose.

Online briefing sessions may be organized to provide applicants with additional guidance to fill out the submission form. Interest in such sessions should be expressed using the dedicated form: http://bit.ly/WB-DigitalSkills-Briefing

6. Selection procedure

A selection committee will review submissions and propose final awards.

The submissions will be assessed across a range of variables:

- Matching the criteria of the submission category;
- Innovative aspects of the training method;
- Program inclusiveness;
- Rigorous evidence of program results.

The following criteria will be considered in detail and adjusted for each category:

- **Alignment**: The program effectively provides training in one or several of the five digital skill categories and reaches its target audience.
- **Outcomes**: There are measurable indicators confirming that the program increases learners' digital-ability or employability.
- **Innovative approach**: The program offers at least one of the following: a unique curriculum, provides new learning outcomes, uses a mix of pedagogical approaches, is implemented by non-training organizations, relies on a new technology or the new application of a technology, or other innovative aspects.
- **Context appropriateness**: The program takes into account the context of developing countries, including low to no connectivity in some areas, limited access to formal technical training, and low literacy and numeracy levels.
- **Replicability**: The program can be effectively replicated for other beneficiaries and in other locations within the development context.
- **Scalability and ease of use**: The program can easily be scaled up to train a large learning population.

Shortlisted participants may be contacted to provide additional material on their program, such as testimonials, pictures, and videos. This material will only be used for evaluation purposes to help the selection committee make a final decision.

7. Results & final conference

The Digital Skills Innovation Awards for Southeast Asia competition will be held online, and the results will be announced during a virtual international conference in late May 2021.

**Awards and winners’ presentations.** The winners of each category will be awarded during a dedicated plenary session of the main conference. After receiving the award, the winning teams will each be asked to briefly present their solutions, followed by a discussion session.

By entering the competition, participants agree to attend the virtual presentation ceremony or to send a video.
**Global inventory.** The information on innovative programs collected through this competition will be used by the World Bank to build a global inventory on good practices. The global inventory will be published online following the competition (without any personal information about the participants).

### 8. Timeline

Submissions will be accepted from **February 1, 2021**

**Deadline for submission:** **March 31, 2021** at **23:59 GMT**

**Tentative date for the next online briefing session:** **March 4-5, 2021**

**International (virtual) conference:** **May 20, 2021 & May 21, 2021**

### 9. Terms & Conditions

- Submissions must be submitted in English only. Pictures and additional documentation can be provided in any language.
- Submission should be made before the final deadline, as indicated on the competition webpage. Late submissions will be disqualified automatically.
- There is no restriction on the number of programs an organization can submit.
- Participants who are ineligible to receive Bank funds under the Bank’s Anti-Corruption Guidelines, procurement rules, and other rules such as on anti-money laundering and anti-terrorism are ineligible to receive cash or any prize under this competition.
- The World Bank reserves the right to research and verify the eligibility and information provided in the submission of any entrants. If the World Bank determines that a participant is ineligible, misrepresents a claim with respect to its submission, or violates any rights, it will automatically disqualify the organization and its submission. All World Bank decisions are final.
- By entering the competition through their submission, participants agree to attend the virtual presentation ceremony or to send a video and to share information on their program in the public database.
- The winners of each competition's category will be awarded during a dedicated plenary session of the main conference. After receiving the award, the winning teams must hold a plenary short presentation about their solution, followed by a discussion session.
- The competition winners selected by the World Bank Group are final.
- The information on innovative programs will be used by the World Bank to build a global inventory on good practices that will be publicly available online following the competition (without any personal information on the applicants, confidential or information which violates the rights of third parties). All rights to the innovative program design remain with the participant. By entering the competition, participants represent that it has all rights to all aspects of the program. Participants agree to release the World Bank Group from any claims based on the contest. The World Bank disclaims any liability for violations of privacy, or infringements or other violations of intellectual property rights based on claims of ownership by Participant. Participant, by entering the Challenge, agrees to release the Bank from any claims and hold harmless and indemnify the Bank against any third-party claims.
- Failure to comply with these rules may result in disqualification from the contest. If you do not agree with these rules, do not submit your program for consideration.
- All World Bank decisions are final.
- Nothing herein shall constitute or be considered to be a limitation upon or a waiver of the privileges and immunities of the World Bank, or any other member of the World Bank Group, which are specifically reserved.