

2022 WITSA Global Innovation and Tech Excellence Awards Nomination Form

The 2022 WITSA Global Innovation and Tech Excellence Awards (formerly known as *the Global ICT Excellence Awards*) will be presented to select individuals, academic institutions, corporations, NGOs or governments whose use and applications of digital technologies exhibit exceptional achievement within the following broad categories:

Private Sector/NGO	Public Sector
Digital Opportunity/Inclusion Award	Digital Opportunity/Inclusion Award
Smart Cities Award	Smart Cities Award
Sustainable Growth/Circular Economy Award	Sustainable Growth/Circular Economy Award
Innovative eHealth Solutions Award	Innovative eHealth Solutions Award
Public/Private Partnership Award	Public/Private Partnership Award
E-Education & Learning Award	E-Education & Learning Award
Emerging Digital Solutions Award	Startup Ecosystem Award

In addition, a *Chairman's Award* will be presented to a nominee selected from the entire pool of candidates from all award categories.

Candidates for these Awards are nominated by ICT experts from around the world who span over 80 countries/economies. The 2022 *WITSA Global ICT Excellence Awards* will take place in conjunction with the September 13-15, 2022 World Congress on IT in Penang, Malaysia (<https://wcit2022.com>/<https://wcit2021.org.bd/>).

Digital Opportunity/Inclusion Award

Award #1: Individuals, academic institutions, corporations, or NGOs
Award #2: Government authorities

Award Criteria - Individuals, corporations, academic institutions, corporations, NGOs or government authorities that have made a remarkable and successful effort at providing digital opportunities to those in need are eligible for this award. In order for the Digital Age to fulfill its promise, it must consider the unique challenges faced by diverse populations. Examples could include deployment of ICTs and Internet access among inner city populations, or in towns, rural areas or cities in developing and least-developed countries. This award also includes programs and initiatives that aid people with disabilities and others who face longstanding barriers to social inclusion. Digital Inclusion is defined as the “ability of individuals and groups to access and use information and communication technologies (ICTs). Digital inclusion encompasses not only access to the Internet but also the availability of hardware and software; relevant content and services; and training for the digital literacy skills required for effective use of ICTs.”

This award recognizes solutions enabling accessibility for those individuals who have traditionally not benefited from ICT. This award also seeks innovative solutions that create meaningful employment through ICT for those who have traditionally been underrepresented in the labor force. Of particular interest to WITSA are applications that embed inclusion and accessibility in the original design as opposed to retrofitting existing applications.

YOUR NOMINEES (limit three nominations per award category). *Please specify whether the nominee(s) are for the private or public sector category.*

- **Sector:** Private
- **Organizations implied:** Costa Rica United States Foundation for Cooperation (CRUSA) and the National Council for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICIT) in alliance with the local incubator Impact Hub San José
- **Project Name:** CONSTELAR

REASONS FOR NOMINATION (NOTE: It is important that you make a detailed description of the nominee and why you think the nomination is justified. The absence of a detailed summary of qualifications as they *relate* to the above-mentioned award description will make it difficult for the awards committee to make an appropriate assessment of the candidate):

There is a gender gap in the participation of women in science and technology. Although in recent times these gaps have been closed, in areas such as exact and natural sciences, engineering and technology there is still a significant gap.

In the case of engineering and technology, according to CONARE data for 2019, only 37% of graduates in 2019 were women. This gender gap translates to women's less participation in the high value entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystem. According to the "State of the Nation" (Estado de la Nación, in Spanish), by 2021 only 18% of technology-based entrepreneurs were women. In this context, the Costa Rica United States Foundation for Cooperation (CRUSA) and the National Council for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICIT) in alliance with the local incubator Impact Hub San José launched the CONSTELAR Program.

CONSTELAR seeks to promote, facilitate, and strengthen the participation of women in entrepreneurship in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in Costa Rica. For this, two main components have been developed: the creation of the Fénix Community, a community of women in STEM through clubs in universities in the country that allow the creation of networks among women in STEM areas in the country, position success stories for future generations and position entrepreneurship as an option in their professional development. On the other hand, the program included the launch of the first incubation program for companies led by women, focused on STEM areas in Costa Rica. The program offers access to financing for the prototyping stage through a competitive fund.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION: Please send any supporting information to the address above, including information from candidate (i.e. excerpt from program description, web site print-out, press release, etc.)

- <https://constelarcr.com>

NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION (for award follow up and coordination)

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