



Call for Applications AFHC Awards for Healthy Cities 2026

Award for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities

The Alliance for Healthy Cities calls for applications for the Award for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities.

The Healthy Cities program, promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO), is a long-term, city-based development program that has been extended globally since the 1980's. This program has led a strong movement for public health at the local level that seeks to value health high on the agenda of cities. Other city-based programs, such as safe cities, resilient cities, age-friendly cities, smart cities, and compact cities, emerged following Healthy Cities' initial expansion.

These city-based programs feature the well-being of people and cities. Most of these programs share common approaches, such as multi-sectoral collaboration, community engagement, vision sharing and planning, a whole-of-government approach, innovations, and evaluation.

The strength of Healthy Cities is that they prioritize policies that create co-benefits between health, well-being, quality of life, and other city policies. The policies include collaboration with multiple sectors; coordination between urban landscapes and the natural environment; taking advantage of innovative technologies; featuring a sustainable, equitable, and inclusive society; and care for the planet.

Please report how creatively your city has acted and how your city is preparing for the future in the scope of the following topics:

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(1) Public Spaces for Health and Well-being

Planning for public spaces for better health and well-being in cities involves integrating physical, mental, and social health considerations into urban design. Considerations range from safety, protection from environmental hazards, universal access, good infrastructure, and urban ecosystems to social cohesion. Equity in access to good public spaces is also a concern. Creative developments in public spaces for health and well-being in cities are expected to be reported.

(2) Universal Health Coverage in Cities

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in cities ensures all residents access quality health services—from prevention to palliative care—without financial hardship. There are requirements in six components (1) well-trained health workers; (2) quality services; (3) medicine and other health products; (4) sustainable finance; (5) policies to make quality services available to everyone, every time; and (6) information from the government sector is available to make the right decisions about the whole system. To evaluate the achievement in UHC, not only the insurance coverage rates and access to healthcare, but also performance indicators reducing health disparities, promoting health, and ensuring the well-being of residents are expected to be addressed. Creative developments in cities to improve UHC are expected to be reported.

(3) Remedy for Loneliness in Cities

Loneliness in cities is a growing concern. Despite the increased population density, urban dwellers often feel unseen and disconnected. High-rise buildings, lack of green spaces, and run-down areas decrease social interaction. However, there are opportunities in cities to alleviate loneliness. Creation of personal connections and supportive environments is an example. Creative developments to address loneliness in urban areas and initiatives to alleviate loneliness are expected to be reported.

(4) Evaluation of Long-term Commitment of a Healthy City

Working towards a Healthy City is a long process. It starts with a vision development; assessment of city's health, environment, and governance structure; development of a long-term plan with involvement of multiple stakeholders; community engagement; implementation of the plans; assessment and monitoring; and evaluation. Creative developments in the evaluation of more than 10 years' commitment of a Healthy City are expected to be reported. Evaluations according to numerical data, narrative data, and others to share the value of Healthy Cities are encouraged.

(5) Nature-based Solutions for Planetary/One Health in Cities

Nature-based solutions (NbS) for Planetary/One Health in cities integrate green infrastructure to simultaneously enhance urban biodiversity, mitigate climate change, and improve the health of humans and all life in cities. Solution-oriented initiatives in collaboration with partners and an emphasis on ecosystem health are important. Creative developments in cities to promote NbS addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are expected to be reported.

(6) Increasing Resilience to Health Emergencies in Cities

Increasing resilience to health emergencies in cities requires multi-sectoral coordination, robust health infrastructure, and proactive community engagement. Health emergencies include infectious disease outbreaks and pandemics, natural and man-made disasters, and others. Key strategies include strengthening local governance, adopting all-hazard preparedness, and utilizing urban planning to mitigate risks. Resilient cities improve equity and emergency response. Creative developments in cities for increasing resilience to health emergencies are expected to be reported.

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Template for submission:

*** Title of the report**

*** Names of the contributors of this case study. Please list all relevant individuals (and name of cities/organizations)**

1-Background

2-Objectives

3-Program Content or Methodology

4-Findings/Observation

5-Application

Award given

A few case studies selected for award and publication

Eligible Applicants

Any members of the Alliance for Healthy Cities

Materials to be submitted [Please submit materials electronically.]

- A summary of submission (Submission Form 1, see the next page).
- A report (1,000 - 4,000 words) and tables or charts.
- Photographs or multimedia materials, if applicable.

*A maximum of two reports throughout “AFHC Awards for Creative Developments in Healthy Cities” from one member (city/organization) is permitted.

Awards evaluation criteria

The following points are used for selection of awardees.

- If the work is relevant to the goals and objectives of the Alliance for Healthy Cities **[Relevance to the Charter of the Alliance for Healthy Cities]**
- If the report describes details of the activities, outcomes of those activities, and lessons learnt **[Concrete explanation of activities]**
- If the work meets specific needs of the cities/communities concerned **[Relevance to the cities’ needs]**
- If the work is a new and original effort (not a replication of another’s work) **[Originality and innovation]**
- If the work could be a useful model for other cities and organizations to replicate or to learn from **[Influence on other cities]**

Deadline for submission

July 10, 2026

Contact Information

Applications and any queries should be sent to:

Awards Committee of the Alliance for Healthy Cities

c/o Prof Keiko Nakamura

Secretariat of the Alliance for Healthy Cities

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URL: <http://www.alliance-healthycities.com/>