

The Avicenna

Prize

**for Ethics
in Science**

At the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *The Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science* was established by UNESCO in 2002 to reward the research and services of individuals and groups in the field of ethics in science. The prize was awarded for the first time in 2003.



Abu Ali al-Husain ibn Abdallah ibn Sina, known by his Latin name **Avicenna** (980-1037), born near Bukhara in 370 in the year of the Hegira of Persian origin, was one of the most eminent scientists and philosophers of the 10th and 11th centuries. He was the most renowned philosopher of medieval Islam and the most influential name in medicine from 1100 to 1500. Extraordinarily creative throughout his life, he played a crucial role in inspiring humanity to build a better future. His whole scientific life was devoted to promoting ethics, elevating human characteristics and enhancing the welfare of future generations. He wrote approximately 450 works, of which about 240 still exist. Of those that survived, 150 are on philosophy and 40 are devoted to

medicine, the two fields to which he contributed most. His famous work on philosophy, *Kitab al-Shifa* (The Book of Healing), includes many relevant disciplines such as natural sciences, metaphysics, logic, mathematics, astronomy and music. His medical masterpiece is *Al-Qanun fi l-tibb* (The Canon of Medicine). Avicenna established the classification of sciences used in the medieval schools of Europe. UNESCO commemorated his life and achievements in 1980, the thousandth anniversary of his birth, by striking a medal in his honour and granting him the recognition due to one who contributed outstandingly to scientific development.



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Statutes of The Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science*

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Prize is to reward the activities of individuals and groups in the field of ethics in science. Such activities shall be in conformity with UNESCO's policies and be related to the Programme of the Organization in the field of ethics of science and technology.

2. Designation, amount and periodicity of the Prize

- (a) The Prize shall be entitled "The Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science";
- (b) The Prize shall be funded by the Islamic Republic of Iran and shall consist of:
 - (i) a gold medal of Avicenna along with a certificate, (ii) a sum of US \$10,000 and (iii) a one-week academic visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran, which would include the delivery of speeches in the relevant academic gatherings, organized for this purpose by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran;
- (c) The Prize shall be awarded on an initial basis in the 2002-2003 biennium;
- (d) The operating costs of the Prize shall be shared equally by the Islamic Republic of Iran and UNESCO with effect from the 2004-2005 biennium, provided that provision has been made for UNESCO's share of these costs in the programme and budget approved by the General Conference.

3. Conditions

The candidates (individuals and groups) shall have contributed to high quality research in the field of ethics of science and technology.

4. Designation of the prizewinner

The prizewinner shall be designated by the Director-General of UNESCO, on the recommendation of an international jury.

5. Jury

- (a) The jury shall consist of three members, of different nationalities, appointed by the Director-General from among the members of the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST), taking into account the renewal of COMEST members.
- (b) The jury shall adopt its own working procedures and shall be assisted by a member of the Secretariat designated by the Director-General.

6. Nomination of candidates

When the Secretariat has received the items to be awarded and the funds for the operating costs, as indicated in Article 2 above, the Director-General of UNESCO shall invite the submission of nominations from the governments of Member States, in consultation with their National Commissions, and from international non-governmental organizations maintaining official relations with the Organization. Each Member State and NGO may designate one candidate.

7. Submission of nominations

The governments and NGOs shall provide in support of each candidate a recommendation including:

- (a) a description of the candidate's academic background and achievements;
 - (b) a summary of the work submitted for consideration;
 - (c) a review of the way in which the work submitted has contributed to the development of research in the field of ethics of science and technology.
- The nominations should be submitted in English or French and be accompanied by a biographical note.

8. Procedure for the awarding of the Prize

The Director-General of UNESCO shall announce the name of the winner. The Director-General (or his representative) shall award the Prize at an official ceremony held for that purpose to which he will invite the representative of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

9. Amendments to the Statutes of the Prize

Any amendment to the present Statutes shall be submitted to the Executive Board for approval.



* The Avicenna Prize for Ethics in Science was established following the decision by UNESCO's Executive Board at its 166th session.