

Paris, 8 June 2026

2026 FRENCH REPUBLIC HUMAN RIGHTS PRIZE “LIBERTY – EQUALITY – FRATERNITY”

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Madam, Sir,

The 2026 French Republic Human Rights Prize “Liberty–Equality–Fraternity”, awarded by the Prime Minister of the French Government, is open for applications.

Established in 1988, this Prize is intended to reward and support the implementation, in France or abroad, of individual or collective grassroots initiatives, regardless of nationality or borders, that contribute to the promotion or protection of human rights.

1 – Theme

Non-governmental organisations, as well as individual candidates, regardless of nationality or borders, are invited to submit an application corresponding to the 2026 theme. Applications must include an action or project to be carried out in France or abroad.

Single Theme: Protecting the Right to Asylum and the Fundamental Rights of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Displaced Persons

The right to asylum is the protection granted by a State to a person who is unable to avail themselves of the protection of their own country. Recognised by the 1951 Geneva Convention—whose 75th anniversary is being marked this year—and by its 1967 Protocol, this instrument constitutes the cornerstone of international refugee law. As an integral part of the international human rights protection framework, its implementation can only be fully effective within a system governed by the rule of law. Contributing to the establishment and strengthening of such systems remains an essential challenge in guaranteeing the right to asylum (Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) and in incorporating international law into domestic legislation.

Often criticised and weakened by certain legal reforms, the right to asylum is now under threat in many States, including among the 145 parties to the Convention. Yet beyond the moral, humanitarian and legal imperatives that oblige States to receive and protect persecuted

persons, numerous studies¹ demonstrate that refugees do not constitute a burden on host societies; rather, they contribute positively to average living standards and economic growth. Public expenditure generated by the arrival of refugees is more than offset by the economic gains resulting from their presence. Many refugees actively contribute to their own social, economic and cultural integration through engagement in fields as diverse as youth work, culture, sport and employment. In doing so, they play a significant role in and contribute to society, fostering social cohesion and enriching communities through remarkable diversity.

According to data from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there were 117.3 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide at the end of June 2025, including 42.5 million recognised refugees, 8.4 million asylum seekers and 67.8 million internally displaced persons². These individuals are fleeing persecution, conflict, human rights violations and, increasingly, the effects of climate disruption.

2 – Applications

Applications may be submitted by individuals or non-governmental organisations carrying out one or more projects based on a human-rights approach and aimed at guaranteeing the right to asylum and the fundamental rights of persons in situations of forced displacement, whether refugees within the meaning of the Geneva Convention, asylum seekers whose claims are under examination, or persons displaced within their own country.

Particular consideration will be given to applications that, while respecting human rights, seek to:

- provide comprehensive support to individuals;
- implement transformative and restorative measures;
- ensure the active participation of the persons concerned in the project.

Projects submitted should address the legal protection of the right to asylum, advocacy initiatives and administrative assistance relating to the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons. They are not intended to cover direct material assistance activities.

Selected projects may include, in particular:

- public awareness-raising activities and advocacy directed at public authorities;
- legal and administrative assistance for refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons, enabling them to gain effective access to their rights, including residence rights, the right to a fair procedure, access to justice, civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights guaranteed under international instruments;

¹ See in particular: Kirsten Schuettler and Paolo Verme, *The Impact of Forced Displacement on Host Communities: A Review of the Empirical Literature in Economics*, Policy Research Working Papers, World Bank Group, 2019; Hippolyte d’Albis, Ekrame Boubtane and Dramane Coulibaly, “Demographic Changes and the Labor Income Share”, *European Economic Review*, Vol. 131, 2021; Michael Clemens, Cindy Huang and Jimmy Graham, *The Economic and Fiscal Effects of Granting Refugees Formal Labor Market Access*, Center for Global Development, 2018.

² UNHCR, *Mid-Year Trends Report*, 4 November 2025

- training for stakeholders involved in asylum matters (border police, government administrations, health and social service sectors, etc.);
- support for the effective exercise of rights related to integration into host societies for recognised refugees and asylum seekers, or to resettlement and the restoration of rights for internally displaced persons.

3 – Award Ceremony

The five Prize winners will be invited to Paris to attend the official award ceremony. They will receive a medal and will share the overall grant of EUR 70,000 allocated by the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNC DH) for the implementation of their projects. They may also refer to themselves as laureates of the 2026 French Republic Human Rights Prize.

The next five-ranked candidates will receive a “Special Mention” medal awarded by the Ambassador of France in their country of origin. Special Mentions do not carry any financial award.

Prize winners and recipients of Special Mentions may benefit from the international protection afforded by French diplomacy.

4 – Rules

Applications must comply with the Prize Rules.

The Rules may be provided upon request. Interested persons and applicants may also consult them on the CNC DH website: <https://www.cncdh.fr/presentation-du-prix-des-droits-de-lhomme>.

5 – Application File

The application file, drafted in French³, must include:

- a) a letter of application submitted and signed by the President or legal representative of the implementing NGO, or by the individual applicant;
- b) the application form attached to this call for applications and available for download on the CNC DH website: <https://www.cncdh.fr/actualite/edition-2026-du-prix-des-droits-de-lhomme>. This form provides detailed information on the activities carried out by the organisation or individual concerned;
- c) the postal and banking details (RIB/IBAN) of the NGO or individual applicant.

Applicants must submit their complete application file **no later than 4 October 2026 at midnight (GMT +1)** to the General Secretariat of the Commission:

³ Applications submitted in English or Spanish may be considered at the discretion of the jury.

CNCDH – For the attention of Mrs. Cécile RIOU-BATISTA
20 avenue de Ségur
75007 Paris
France

or by e-mail: prixdesdroitsdelhomme@cncdh.fr .

Following the announcement of the results by the jury, the 2026 Prize will be formally awarded in Paris by the Prime Minister, or by another Minister of the French Republic, around 10 December 2026, International Day for Human Rights.

I would be grateful if you would circulate this call for applications as widely as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Magali Lafourcade

Secretary-General of the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNCDH)