

## **Innovation Awards at the virtual Asia-Pacific Housing Forum to promote winning sustainable solutions for affordable housing**

*The call for submissions has been extended to September 12. Innovators across Asia-Pacific, including Thailand, are encouraged to submit their solutions and get a chance to interact with multisector stakeholders. Winners will each receive a trophy and cash prize.*

**BANGKOK, September 1, 2021** – The Asia-Pacific Housing Forum’s Innovation Awards recognize and celebrate innovators and disruptors in the affordable housing sector. Startup and scaleup companies, policymakers and advocates, architects and engineers are invited to submit sustainable and practical solutions for affordable housing.

“The Asia-Pacific region faces complex housing challenges, compounded by rapid urbanization, natural and human-made disasters, the negative effects of climate change, and persistent poverty and inequality,” said Luis Noda, Asia-Pacific vice president of Habitat for Humanity. “We need everyone working together and every possible creative solution that is locally adapted to address the housing deficit.”

“The recognition allowed us to expand our circle of influence, created more awareness about our advocacy in the community and open more opportunities to help others,” said Paulette Liu, president of SKILLS and a 2019 Innovation Awards winner.

The Innovation Awards (visit [aphousingforum.org/innovation-awards](http://aphousingforum.org/innovation-awards)) underscores the importance of strategic collaboration, specifically by multiple sector partnerships that foster innovations. The Awards are organized by Habitat for Humanity in collaboration with the Hilti Foundation, Whirlpool and the European Union-funded SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility.

There are three award categories: ShelterTech, Public Policies, and Inspirational Practices. The ShelterTech category seeks technology innovations (product & services) led by the private sector; while the Policies category promotes innovative public policies across all government levels to help reduce the housing deficit while taking into consideration specific needs of minorities, vulnerable and marginalized populations. The third category recognizes practices from public or public-private partnerships that contribute to improved communities and settlements and increased access to affordable housing for the most disadvantaged segments of society.

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A special Sustainability Award, sponsored by the SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility, will be given to the innovator who will score highest in showcasing scalable solutions for sustainable housing, regardless of the category. The EU and its SWITCH-Asia Programme recognize the critical importance of the housing sector to sustainable consumption and production, and promote sustainable housing and buildings as part of their support for green, circular economies in its 24 target countries in Asia.

“For Asian countries to achieve more sustainable consumption and production in the housing and building sector, it is vital that we heed diverse experiences and adapt these to local realities. The SCP Award will showcase one solution that is particularly inspiring, and we are looking forward to supporting its winner in connecting with EU SWITCH-Asia stakeholders,” said Zaida Fadeeva, Team Leader of the SCP Facility.

The top 12 finalists will get to present their ideas in front of a jury panel and the public during the virtual Innovation Awards Grand Premiere on December 1. Winners will be announced on December 8, 2021 during the Asia-Pacific Housing Forum. Each winner will receive a trophy and a US\$ 5,000 cash prize. Deadline for submission is September 12, 2021.

The Forum, with the theme “Building forward better for inclusive housing,” includes program tracks on resilient cities and communities, innovative housing solutions and technologies, sustainability in the housing sector, and financing affordable housing. It includes a training course on land tenure and markets and a youth congress that will highlight the need for decent, affordable housing and the ways in which the youth can contribute to addressing the housing challenge.

Register for complimentary access to the fully virtual Asia-Pacific Housing Forum at [aphousingforum.org](http://aphousingforum.org).

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### **About Habitat for Humanity**

Driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat for Humanity began in 1976 as a grassroots effort and has since grown to become a leading global nonprofit working in more than 70 countries. In the Asia Pacific region since 1983, Habitat for Humanity has supported millions of people to build or improve a place they can call home. Through financial support, volunteering or adding a voice to support affordable housing, everyone can help families achieve the strength, stability and self-reliance they need to build better lives for themselves. To learn more, donate or volunteer, visit [habitat.org/asiapacific](http://habitat.org/asiapacific)

### **About EU SWITCH-Asia Programme**

Launched in 2007, the SWITCH-Asia programme is the largest European Union-funded programme promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) supporting 24 countries in Asia and Central Asia. The programme

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has funded around 130 projects, supporting over 500 Asian and European non-for-profit partners, about 100 private sector associations and 80.000 Asian MSMEs. The SCP Facility, one of SWITCH-Asia Components, aims at strengthening the implementation of SCP policies at the national level, facilitating the coordination of all components of the programme through information sharing. In addition, it carries out analyses on the results of the pilot projects and supports dialogue with stakeholders.

The EU and its SWITCH-Asia programme have recognised the critical importance of the housing sector to sustainable consumption and production or SCP, and the construction, housing and buildings cluster is a major pillar of EU policy and SWITCH-Asia activities. It is highlighted as part of the green transition in the flagship EU Green Deal (2019) and the Circular Economy Action Plan (2020). To stimulate further green innovations, the EU has also put forward legislation including its Construction Products Regulation. As the housing and building stock in Europe is not expected to grow as dynamically as in Asia, one of the focus areas for the EU is the renovation of existing buildings for increased energy efficiency, through its “Renovation Wave” strategy (2020), which prioritises social housing. In the SWITCH-Asia programme, several national assignments focus on implementing SCP principles in the buildings sector, including in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Kyrgyzstan.

**Media contact:**

Maetavarin Maneekulpan | +66-2260-5820 | mae@tqpr.com

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