WORLD URBAN FORUM
THIRTEENTH SESSION

UN-HABITAT

WUF13
URBAN EXPO
Guidelines

OLYMPIC STADIUM, BAKU, AZERBAIJAN
17–22 MAY 2026

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Overview

The WUF13 Urban Expo is the most popular attraction at the World Urban Forum. The Expo will be held from **May 17 to 22, 2026,** at the **Olympic Stadium in Baku, Azerbaijan.** Over 25,000 participants are expected to attend WUF13. It will showcase practical solutions for urban challenges, focusing on housing, climate resilience, and safe urban environments as outlined in the WUF13 background paper.

Who takes part in the Expo?

The Urban Expo will host small booths and large pavilions representing countries, cities, regions, academia, civil society, United Nations entities, development banks, foundations, and the private sector. The Expo will also feature the WUF13 integrated spaces, including the UN-Habitat Arena, Urban Cinema, Urban Library, and Practices Hub, which will host official events.

Selection criteria

The following criteria will guide the selection of exhibits for the WUF13 Urban Expo.

1. **Thematic relevance:** Exhibits must relate to the WUF13 theme and goals, with a focus on housing, climate resilience, and safe urban environments. Exhibitors should provide a detailed description explaining how their exhibit aligns with these themes.

2. **Reputation and industry relevance:** Exhibitors will be selected based on reputation and established presence in industries or sectors that contribute to sustainable urbanization. Examples include:

    a. **Housing:** affordable, energy-efficient, climate resilient, eco-friendly materials

    b. **Urban Planning and Infrastructure:** green infrastructure, integrated planning, and technologies for efficient urban management and resource allocation

    c. **Renewable energy:** solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal energy, and energy-efficient infrastructure.

    d. **Transportation:** electric vehicles, cycling infrastructure, public transit systems, bike-sharing schemes, etc.

    e. **Waste management and recycling**

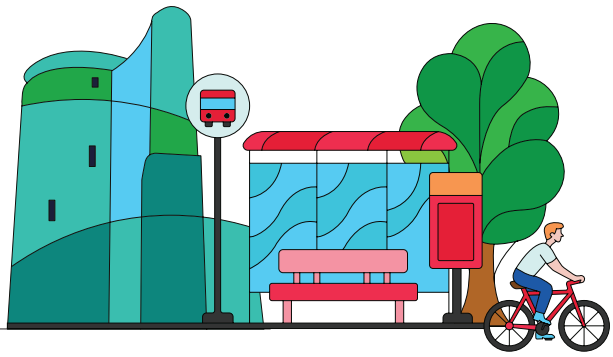
    f. **Water management:** water conservation, rainwater harvesting, wastewater treatment, efficient water distribution, and reduction of urban water waste.

3. **Quality and innovation:** Exhibits showcasing high-quality, innovative products, content, services, solutions, or ideas that demonstrate progress or thought leadership will be prioritized to enrich the impact of the Urban Expo.

4. **Sustainability:** Exhibits must demonstrate how they will manage environmental, social, and economic impacts through clear policies, use of recyclable and local materials, energy and water conservation, and comprehensive waste reduction.

5. **Diversity and geographic balance:** Exhibitors will be selected to ensure representation of stakeholders, including local governments, NGOs, startups, academia, and marginalized communities, from all regions.

6. **Audience engagement:** Exhibits should be designed to engage the specific target audience of the Forum, facilitating interaction and meaningful visitor experiences.



7. **Spatial and logistical considerations:** The scale, dimensions, spatial, and technical requirements of the exhibit must fit within the available exhibition space.

8. **Visual and interpretive impact:** Exhibitors will be expected to effectively utilize branding, visual elements, lighting, and interactive components to enhance the appeal and make exhibits memorable, thereby helping to convey key messages.

9. **Durability and suitability:** Exhibits need to be physically suitable for the display environment, ensuring they can remain in place throughout the Forum period.

10. **Financial and organizational arrangements:** Exhibitors will be responsible for their own costs and must adhere to the application and confirmation procedures and deadlines.

11. **Compliance with guidelines:** Exhibitors must submit detailed proposals in English, through the WUF13 online application platform, GEMS, explaining the exhibition's thematic focus and elements. Space-only exhibitors will be required to submit designs to UN-Habitat for approval to ensure compliance with design and sustainability guidelines.

The deadline for applications to host exhibits at the WUF13 Urban Expo is **31 March 2026.** Applications will be reviewed, approved, or rejected on a first-come, first-served basis, so potential exhibitors are encouraged to apply early.

Sustainability and material guidance

Exhibitors are expected to adopt sustainable practices in booth/pavilion design and operations, as outlined in the materials guidelines.

- Use reusable and eco-friendly materials for booth construction.
- Implement energy-efficient practices, such as LED lighting and waste reduction.
- Promote sustainability awareness by prominently referencing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Exhibitors are encouraged to use sustainable materials to reduce environmental impact.

- Sustainable materials help reduce waste, energy consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Prioritize locally sourced and renewable materials to significantly reduce the environmental impact of transportation and support regional economies.
- Explore circular material by specifying products made from recycled content, agricultural waste streams, and reclaimed materials to minimize virgin resource extraction.

Creative use of fabrics and 3D printing

Innovative materials and techniques can enhance the exhibition experience.

- Canvas is a sustainable alternative to vinyl banners, being durable, reusable, and biodegradable.
- 3D printing enables cost-effective, customized display elements using biodegradable filaments, such as PLA.
- Natural fibers such as jute and hemp can replace synthetic materials in textiles.

Importance of natural greenery in Exhibits

Incorporating plants can enhance the aesthetic and atmosphere of exhibition spaces.

- Bright hanging plants and potted greenery can make booths more inviting and visually appealing.
- Wall displays with greenery can soften the space and create a refreshing ambiance.
- Plastic plants are prohibited.

Efficient content handling practices

Digital content exchange is encouraged to minimize paper waste.

- Utilizing QR codes and NFC tags can streamline the exhibition experience and enhance accessibility.
- Reducing paper usage aligns with sustainability goals and promotes eco-friendly practices.

End-of-life management

- Design booths with modular components that can be disassembled and reused, reducing costs, resource use, and waste.
- Include a clear end-of-life plan in the application that explains how booth materials will be reused, repurposed, donated, or recycled after the event.
- To promote recycling, choose recyclable materials like wood, metal, and natural fabrics, while avoiding composite materials and permanent adhesives. Opt for non-toxic finishes and simple fasteners to facilitate the breakdown of exhibits for reuse or donation.

Sustainable transport and logistics

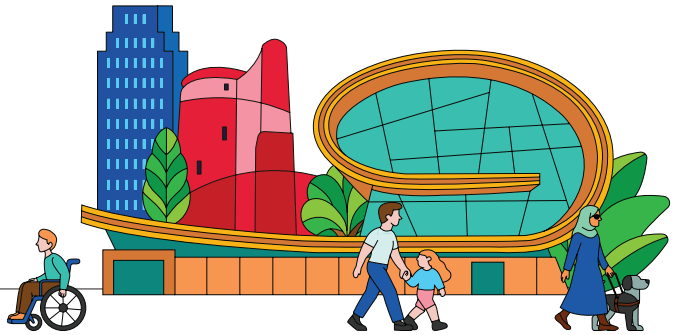
- Consolidate and reuse shipments by coordinating to maximize loads in trucks or containers. Whenever possible, implement "show-to-show" shipping to transport booth elements directly from one venue to another, reducing the number of empty return trips.
- Select low-emission transport to reduce carbon emissions. Whenever possible, opt for rail or sea freight over air freight to reduce carbon emissions.
- Use reusable and bulk packaging systems to minimize waste. Choose reusable crates, pallets, and rollable frames over disposable boxes and single-use plastics. Pack items in bulk (e.g., with recyclable stretch wrap) instead of individually boxing each piece.

Giveaways and catering

- Avoid single-use items: Eliminate disposable plastics in booths and catering. Don't hand out bottled water or plastic cups. Use reusable or compostable plates, utensils, and cups for any food service.
- Source low-impact catering: If you offer snacks or refreshments, choose local, seasonal ingredients to reduce food miles and support the host community. Favor plant-based menu items, which generally have a lower environmental impact than meat.
- Offer sustainable giveaways: If giving promotional items, choose useful, durable items rather than throw-away knick-knacks. For instance, branded reusable bags, stainless-steel tumblers, seed packets, or metal straws make lasting impressions and avoid single-use plastic.

Exhibition schedule and important dates

A roadmap outlining the key dates for build-up, event days, and dismantling will be provided shortly.



Exhibition packages and pricing

Various exhibition packages are available, including space-only options and pre-built booths. The costs for pre-built booths, space-only, and additional services for custom-built exhibits will be available shortly.

Pre-built booths

Pre-built booths start at 9 square meters and include basic furniture, carpet, plants, lighting, power outlets, and a 65-inch LED screen for digital content. Larger pre-built booths are available in 18, 27, and 36 square meters. Technical details on the larger booths will be available soon, including the cost of additional services, equipment, and furniture. The cost of a prebuilt booth is **$612 per square meter.**

Space-only (empty floor space)

Exhibitors may reserve empty floor space to build large, custom-designed pavilions. The cost for empty floor space is **$195 per square meter.** Space-only bookings start at **18 square meters** and are capped at **500 square meters per exhibitor.** The cost of utilities for space-only, such as electricity, water, and dedicated internet, will be available shortly.

All prices are subject to 18% VAT

World Urban Forum 9m² booth

Rules and regulations

- The sale of merchandise, or any goods, at the WUF13 venue during the Urban Expo or at anyA other time is strictly prohibited. Any material or goods distributed as part of an exhibition shouldA be offered free of charge.
- Roll-up banners are prohibited from the Urban Expo area.
- WUF13 will be a paper-smart meeting; hence, exhibitors are encouraged to distribute contentA digitally to reduce paper use.
- At least one staff member must be present at each booth/pavilion throughout the Forum.
- All participants and exhibitors must abide by the **UN Code of Conduct.**
- Consumption and/or distribution of alcohol is strictly prohibited.
- The maximum height allowed for booths and pavilions is 5 meters.
- All booths and pavilions with raised floors must be wheelchair accessible. Technical details ofA ramp[s are available on the WUF13 Accessibility Guidelines.
- Approved space-only exhibitors must submit 3D pavilion designs for approval by UN-Habitat byA **10 April 2026** through ***unhabitat-exhibition@un.org.***

**Additional rules and regulations, including health and safety, will be available shortly.*

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Housing the world: Safe and resilient cities and communities

Shipping and customs information: Guidelines for shipping and customs clearance will be provided shortly to ensure smooth logistics for exhibitors.

For exhibition coordination and space allocation, please contact

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For more information on the Urban Expo, please write to unhabitat-exhibition@un.org.

Details of the WUF13 Urban Expo master contractor and recommended stand builders will be available shortly.