

Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons Announces Call for Nominations for the 2026 Mikhail Gorbachev / George Shultz Youth Award

Presented annually on August 6 – Hiroshima Day



Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons, a Cooperation Circle of the United Religions Initiative (URI), proudly announces the opening of nominations for the Mikhail Gorbachev / George Shultz Youth Award, given each year on August 6, the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. The award honors the courage of young people (ages 18-35) who are working to eliminate nuclear weapons and shape a safer, more compassionate world.

Founded in memory of President Mikhail Gorbachev and Secretary George Shultz, two global statesmen whose leadership reduced nuclear tensions and opened pathways toward disarmament, the award recognizes emerging leaders whose commitment to peace reflects their legacy. The date of the award—August 6—serves as a solemn reminder of the unacceptable human cost of nuclear weapons, and a call to future generations to prevent such devastation from ever occurring again.

[Link to Nominations](#)

Award Criteria

Nominees should demonstrate one or more of the following:

1. Leadership in Nuclear Disarmament or Nonproliferation
 - Creating or supporting initiatives that reduce nuclear threats
 - Engaging communities, governments, or civil society in nuclear abolition efforts
2. Commitment to Peacebuilding and Global Cooperation
 - Strengthening intercultural, interfaith, or international relationships
 - Promoting dialogue, conflict transformation, or reconciliation
3. Innovation and Creativity
 - Using technology, media, education, or the arts to expand public understanding of nuclear risks
 - Developing new models of youth engagement or public outreach
4. Advocacy Rooted in Compassion, Integrity, and Global Responsibility
 - Demonstrating ethical and humanitarian motivations in their work
 - Amplifying marginalized voices and communities affected by nuclear policies
5. Tangible Impact
 - Clear evidence of influence, outcomes, or community engagement
 - Potential for future leadership in the global disarmament movement

Nominees may come from any sector, including science, activism, diplomacy, education, interfaith leadership, the arts, community organizing, or policy research.

Eligibility

- Youth and young adults ages 18–35
- Individuals may apply directly or be nominated by another person
- Work may be local, national, or international in scope
- Nominees from all countries and backgrounds are welcome

How to Nominate or Apply

Individuals may [submit a nomination](#) or self-application that includes:

- A brief biography
- A description of the nominee's work toward nuclear abolition or peace

- Evidence of impact (projects, publications, media, partnerships, etc.)
- One letter of support (optional but encouraged)

Nominations are now open and will close on June 30, 2026. The selection committee will announce its decision prior to **August 6, 2026**.

About Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons, part of the United Religions Initiative, is a global interfaith, intergenerational movement dedicated to the elimination of nuclear weapons. Founded by a constellation of peace leaders—including Former Secretary of State George Shultz, Former Secretary of Defense Bill Perry, Ambassador James Goodby, and former URI Executive Director Bishop William Swing—Voices advocates for a safer, more just, and compassionate world through education, diplomacy, and public engagement.

A Call to the Next Generation

At a time when nuclear tensions are rising and the risk of conflict is increasing, the world urgently needs the creativity, moral clarity, and leadership of young people. The Gorbachev / Shultz Youth Award is both a recognition and an invitation—to stand at the forefront of a global movement for peace.

We encourage all eligible youth to apply or be nominated. Your voice, your work, and your courage matter.