



## **TAG A**

# **Concept Document: National Batho Pele & Innovation Awards**

---

**VERSION 1: December 2021**

**AMMENDED: March 2024**

**VERSION 2: June 2025**

## Table of Contents

|      |                                                      |    |
|------|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| i.   | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....                              | 3  |
| 1.   | INTRODUCTION .....                                   | 5  |
| 2.   | LEGISLATIVE MANDATE .....                            | 6  |
| 3.   | KEY OBJECTIVES .....                                 | 7  |
| 4.   | SCOPE .....                                          | 7  |
| 5.   | PARTNERSHIPS .....                                   | 8  |
| 6.   | PROCESS OF THE AWARDS .....                          | 8  |
| 6.1  | Nominations .....                                    | 9  |
| 6.2  | Shortlisting process .....                           | 16 |
| 6.3  | Adjudication process .....                           | 16 |
| 7.   | RULES AND REGULATIONS .....                          | 17 |
| 8.   | ELIGIBILITY .....                                    | 18 |
| 9.   | DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS .....                     | 18 |
| 10.  | COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENTS .....                      | 18 |
| 11.  | ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GOVERNING STRUCTURE ..... | 19 |
| 11.1 | Governing structure .....                            | 19 |
| 12.  | TEAMS .....                                          | 21 |
| 13.  | CRITICAL TIMELINES .....                             | 21 |
| 14.  | CONCLUSION .....                                     | 22 |

|                                                 |           |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Figure 1: Awards Process .....</b>           | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Table 1: List of categories .....</b>        | <b>15</b> |
| <b>Table 2: Cost Sharing Arrangements .....</b> | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Table 3: Critical Timelines .....</b>        | <b>22</b> |

## i. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Batho Pele and Innovation Awards (NBP&IA) is a flagship initiative of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI), designed to recognise and reward outstanding performance, innovation, and commitment to service excellence across the public sector. Rooted in the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (“Batho Pele” White Paper) (1997) and other legislative instruments such as the Public Service Regulations (2016), Public Administration Management Act (PAMA) of (2014), and the National Development Plan (NDP Vision 2030), the Awards aim to embed a culture of putting citizens first, promote ethical governance, and institutionalise continuous improvement.

The 2025 Awards will be implemented through a merged and collaborative approach between DPSA and CPSI, building on the success of their 2024 integration. The Awards seek to highlight and incentivise excellence in service delivery, foster innovation, strengthen intergovernmental cooperation through models such as the District Development Model (DDM), and align with national and international public service recognition frameworks, including the AU and UN Public Service Awards. Key objectives include celebrating exemplary public servants, encouraging replication of successful models, promoting citizen-centric innovation, and cultivating a results-driven and professional public sector.

The scope of the Awards encompasses all spheres of government, state-owned entities, academic institutions, and civil society projects that contribute meaningfully to public service improvement. Eleven award categories—ranging from frontline service delivery, innovation, leadership, and replication of innovative solutions—will be assessed through a rigorous nomination, verification, and adjudication process. Special Ministerial Awards will be granted at the discretion of the Minister, recognising exceptional contributions across key public service functions.

The Awards will operate under clearly defined rules and eligibility criteria, and their implementation will be guided by a structured Programme Management Unit (PMU), supported by a communications and media strategy to enhance awareness, participation, and visibility. Cost-sharing arrangements between DPSA, CPSI, and participating entities are outlined, with no centralised budget, encouraging a collaborative funding model.

The 2025 timeline spans from the nomination launch in June to the awards ceremony in November, with key phases including adjudicator appointments, site verifications,

and stakeholder consultations. Auditing and adjudication panels will ensure process integrity and credibility.

In conclusion, the National Batho Pele and Innovation Awards serve as a strategic mechanism to reward excellence, inspire innovation, and build a responsive, ethical, and high-performing public service. They are a testament to the government's commitment to recognising individuals and teams who exemplify the Batho Pele ethos and contribute meaningfully to transforming governance and enhancing service delivery for all South Africans.

## 6. INTRODUCTION

The National Batho Pele and Innovation Awards (NBP&IA) are an integral part of the public service's commitment to improving service delivery through the recognition and celebration of outstanding performance and innovative practices. In alignment with the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery ("Batho Pele" White Paper) (1997), the Awards promote a culture of putting people first by acknowledging individuals and teams who go beyond the call of duty to serve citizens. The White Paper states: *It is essential to the success of Batho Pele that the commitment, energy and skills of public servants are harnessed to tackle inefficient, outdated and bureaucratic practices, to simplify complex procedures, and to identify new and better ways of delivering services. It is also important that the efforts of staff - both individuals and groups - who perform well in providing customer service, should be recognised and appropriately rewarded.* It is for this reason that the CPSI was tasked in 2002 to run, on behalf of the Minister, a national Innovation awards programme. In 2013, the Batho Pele Excellence Awards was launched by the DPSA.

This updated concept document outlines the merged approach for the 2025 National NBP&IA following the approval of a merged Awards programme within the Public Service and Administration portfolio.

This year's Awards will thus be hosted as a fully merged initiative between the DPSA and the CPSI, following the successful integration of the two programmes in 2024. The Awards showcase not only compliance with public service standards but also encourage creativity, innovation, and ethical conduct across the three spheres of government.

As part of the revised Awards, the proposal includes rewarding public service institutions across government and how they are effective in using intergovernmental instruments including the District Development Model (DDM) to improve efficiency, government performance and most importantly the lives of citizens. This should be done through the sharing of best practices, learning, rewarding good practice and enhancing citizens' trust and satisfaction towards government service delivery.

The Awards will be aligned with other public service awards such as those hosted by, inter alia, the Departments of Basic Education, Tourism and South African Police Service, as well as Local Governments' and Provincial Premier's Service Excellence Awards.

As a national awards programme the *National Batho Pele and Innovation Awards* should also find alignment with continental and international public service awards programmes, e.g. the African Union's and the United Nations Public Service Awards' (UNPSA). Consideration will be given to finding entry into these awards for the local

public servants, so as to improve the prominence and prestigious nature of the Awards. With this arrangement, winners in the national competitions will find automatic entry into the African Union, the UNPSA and similar international awards.

## 7. LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

The hosting of the National Batho Pele and Innovation Awards is grounded in a range of legislative and policy frameworks that promote performance, innovation, and recognition in the public service. *The Public Service Regulations of 2016, particularly Regulations 50 and 73*, emphasise the importance of employee motivation and formal recognition of innovation and excellence as integral components of performance management.

This is further supported by the *Batho Pele White Paper (1997)*, which laid the foundation for a people-first approach to service delivery and underscores the need to acknowledge exemplary public service that aligns with Batho Pele principles. The *Public Administration Management Act (PAMA) of 2014* reinforces these values by advocating for high standards of professional ethics and encouraging innovation within public administration.

Similarly, the *National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030* envisions a capable, ethical, and developmental state, where recognising excellence is a key lever for professionalising the public service. The Strategic Framework for the Implementation of the *Batho Pele Revitalisation Strategy (2022)* provides more recent guidance, institutionalising mechanisms to reward good performance and promote accountability across departments.

Complementing these is the *Government Notice 700* which mandates the Centre for Public Service Innovation to entrench a culture and practice of innovation in the public service to improve service delivery, including *unearthing, demonstrating, testing, piloting, replicating, sharing, encouraging and rewarding innovation*. Collectively, these instruments create a comprehensive policy environment that supports the institutionalisation of an awards and recognition system within the South African public service.

Additionally, South Africa is a signatory to and has ratified the *African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration*. Chapter 25 of the Charter obliges state parties to “*institutionalize a transparent and impartial system for recognizing outstanding performance, creativity and innovation in Public Service and Administration*.”

## 8. KEY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of these Awards are to:

- a) Showcase and reward public servants for excellent service rendition, recognising best practices in implementing Batho Pele principles and programmes; recognising the commitment, integrity and self-sacrifice in providing quality and effective services to the people;
- b) Entrench the culture and practice of innovation in the public service to improve service delivery;
- c) Support effective and efficient governance and teamwork, strengthen collaboration and partnerships, especially those that seek to improve intergovernmental relations using the DDM;
- d) Unearth innovative and best practices within the public sector;
- e) Encourage the replication and mainstreaming of these innovative solutions, approaches, methodologies and tools towards achieving the delivery of quality services that are responsive to people's needs;
- f) Create awareness about public service good stories and celebrate dedicated public servants;
- g) Facilitate a culture of continuous improvement, professional development, learning, innovation, creativity and excellence; and
- h) Support the relentless search for efficiency and reduction of wastage in the public service.

The objectives above reflect the vision encapsulated in the Government's priorities to transform and professionalise the public service, as part of efforts to build a capable, ethical and developmental Public Service and instilling an outcomes oriented public service that is productive, efficient, and effective and delivers value for money.

## 9. SCOPE

The scope of the Awards will encompass national and provincial projects and officials; local government officials and initiatives; state-owned entity officials and projects; public academic institutions undertaking projects that directly impact governance and service delivery; as well as private and civil sector organisation projects that, in partnership with state institutions, contribute to governance, service delivery, and anti-corruption efforts.

The Awards will be open to all public servants and teams to encourage innovation and promote the inclusion of junior colleagues in projects and the work of government. Participants will overwhelmingly be public servants and teams but private and civil sector participation will be allowed where innovations promote public sector service delivery improvements and innovation and where these projects are implemented in partnership with a public sector entity. Previous winners and projects may be allowed

to participate in the categories they won, only with evidence of further improvements or innovation.

## 10. ENTRENCHING A CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE

One of the key objectives of the programme is to promote a culture of excellence and innovation in the public sector by recognising those practicing it. The 10-year and 20-year reviews of the Public Sector Innovation Awards programme clearly demonstrated the positive impact the programme had on institutions and departments that submitted entries, leading to further innovation and excellence.

## 11. PARTNERSHIPS

The Awards should seek partnerships that will enhance the sustainability of the recognised projects. Partners such as GEMS that has sponsored additional prizes for innovations in the health sector, have contributed to the sustainability of the programme and further replication of projects. There is an opportunity to further strengthen partnerships with sponsors, other government entities and also with civil society and communities as the ultimate beneficiaries.

## 12. PROCESS OF THE AWARDS

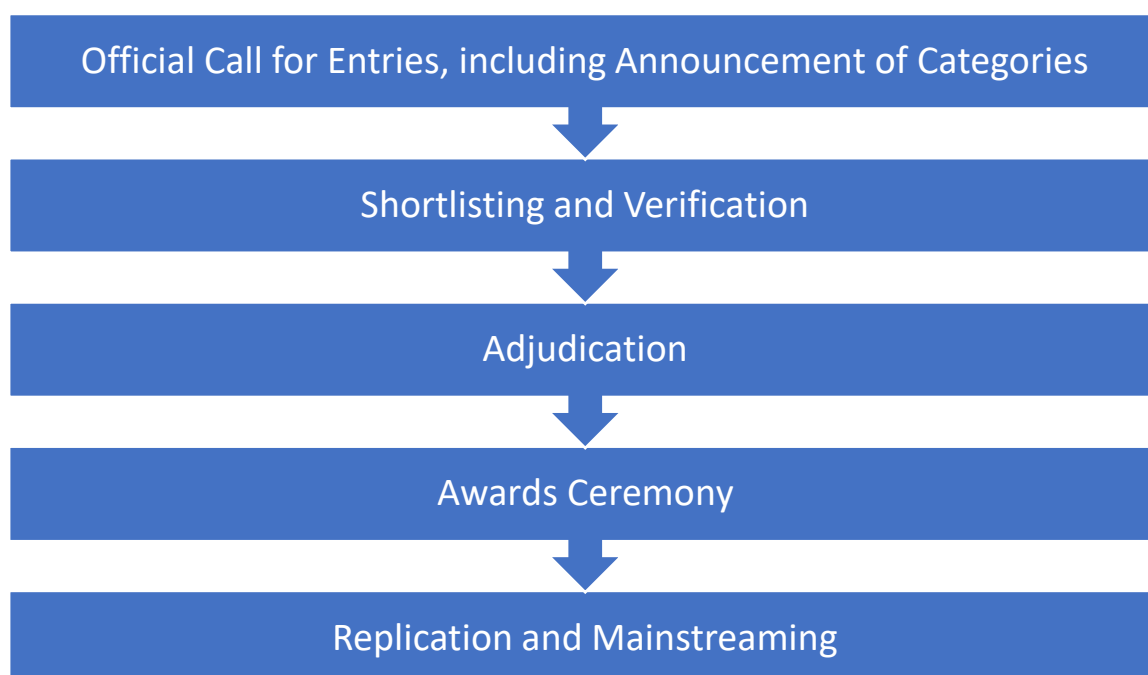


Figure 1: Awards Process

## 6.1 Nominations

The call for nominations shall be opened in quarter one of every year. The closing date shall not be later than 31 August of each year, unless otherwise instructed. All nominations will be submitted using official forms and supporting documents. The pre-selection of entries will be completed within a month of the closing date. The Awards ceremony will be held in November.

### 6.1.1 Categories

The proposed categories are as follows;

| Category                                                            | (Abridged) Criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Weighting                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. The Best Front-Line Service Delivery Employee of the Year</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) This category is for public servants who are professional, diligent and deal directly with citizens (the people) on a daily basis. Qualifying employees include social workers, educators, all fieldworkers, policemen and women, public liaison officers, all categories of health workers, receptionists, security personnel, etc.</li> <li>b) A person who has a record of visible and effective responsiveness, morally upright and excellent etiquette in providing services to citizens or immediate beneficiaries/ recipients;</li> <li>c) Is well-organised, knowledgeable and takes calculated risks; performance exceeds determined standards; successfully demonstrating public administration as a career of choice;</li> <li>d) Consistently upholds the Batho Pele principles in daily routine, and has excellent understanding of these principles and their practical implementation;</li> <li>e) Goes the extra mile (beyond bare minimum) in providing services. Though time conscious, ensures the services provided are of a high and acceptable standard, and lead to effective service experiences for the recipients;</li> <li>f) Values, respects and treats citizens (service recipients) with the required dignity. Complains less, yet remains responsive and accessible.</li> </ul> | Each question is scored on a scale of 1-5 where:<br>1= poor and<br>5= excellent |
| <b>2. Best Service Delivery Institution/ Department</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A Government department or institution that has demonstrated excellence in providing professional service to the public, implements the Batho Pele programmes effectively and has made visible impact in service delivery in society;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Each question is scored on a scale of 1-5 where:<br>1= poor and<br>5= excellent |

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) A department or institution that has a proven record of upholding good and demonstrable workplace culture, practises and there is an understanding of workplace diversity; Employees are satisfied and are willing to help one another (i.e. promotes teamwork and a culture of selfless servitude). The workplace promotes a sense of belonging and encourages delivery of targets, creativity and learning;</li> <li>c) A department or institution that has effective service delivery improvement mechanisms in place, and a conducive working environment for all staff and service recipients (e.g. tools of trade are available; turnaround time for repairs or replacement to equipment/ furniture is very quick);</li> <li>d) A department or institution that shows demonstrable good governance practice (e.g.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Sound human resource planning and management practices</li> <li>(ii) Sound labour management practices</li> <li>(iii) Proper management systems, processes and procedures are in place</li> <li>(iv) Comprehensive strategic plans, which are aligned to government priorities</li> <li>(v) Sound financial management policy, systems, procedures and processes</li> <li>(vi) Sound anti-corruption policy and systems/ mechanisms are in place and have proved to be effective.</li> </ul> </li> <li>e) The department or institution has consistent clean audits (or unqualified audit with minimum adverse recommendations).</li> </ul> |                                                                                          |
| <b>3. Best Worker of the Year</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) This category caters for employees between levels 1-5;</li> <li>b) A person who has a record of visible and effective responsiveness, morally upright and excellent etiquette in providing services to immediate beneficiaries/ recipients;</li> <li>c) Is well-organised, knowledgeable and takes calculated risks; performance exceeds determined targets and standards; <i>successfully demonstrating public administration as a career of choice</i>;</li> <li>d) Consistently upholds the BP principles in daily routine, and has excellent understanding of BP principles and their practical implementation;</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>Each question is scored on a scale of 1-5 where:<br/>1= poor and<br/>5= excellent</p> |

|                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e) Goes the extra mile (beyond bare minimum) in providing services. Though time conscious, ensures the services provided are of a high and acceptable standard;</li> <li>f) Values, respects and treats colleagues and citizens (service recipients) with the required dignity. Complains less, yet remains responsive and accessible.</li> <li>g) Obtains above average results in their work performance, and is exemplary to peers.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                          |
| <b>4. Best Implemented Project of the Year</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A project that has been in existence for at least 12 months.</li> <li>b) A project legally established in accordance with SA legislation and/ or legal programmes, executing public services;</li> <li>c) A well-organised, effective project implementing services successfully and making immediate, direct or potential beneficial impact on communities;</li> <li>d) Performance exceeds determined standards;</li> <li>e) The project fosters respect for good practices, including consistently upholding the Batho Pele principles in daily functions and in practical implementation efforts;</li> <li>f) The project fosters consistency in ethical conduct and enhancing institutional performance;</li> <li>g) The project ensures that citizens receive better services, directly or indirectly;</li> <li>h) The project is implemented with Government priorities integrated in the project strategies;</li> <li>i) The project demonstrates creativity in achieving targets and in executing priorities. Meets targets effectively with minimum resources;</li> <li>j) The Project demonstrates effective and positive impact on service delivery;</li> <li>k) The Project demonstrates excellence in implementing BP principles;</li> <li>l) Government priorities are integrated in the project;</li> <li>m) The Project shows strong collaboration with various structures such as business and the community. Intergovernmental relations are also strong (where necessary);</li> <li>n) The project demonstrates creativity in achieving targets;</li> <li>o) Programme and Project Management approaches are used in planning and executing the project;</li> </ul> | <p>Each question is scored on a scale of 1-5 where:<br/>1= poor and<br/>5= excellent</p> |

|                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                               | <p>p) Imparting of skills to participants (or people who are targeted to receive services offered through the project) is consciously undertaken;</p> <p>q) Demonstrates ability to build capacity of local community (ies) to run similar projects on their own.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                          |
| <p><b>5. Best Public Service Leader (Senior Manager) of the Year</b></p>                                      | <p>a) (Excludes Directors General, both national and provincial, Provincial Heads of Departments, Municipal Staff and Managers)</p> <p>b) An individual with demonstrable leadership qualities (i.e. practices with visible leadership characteristics). An individual who embodies the Batho Pele values and principles practically (visible evidence);</p> <p>c) Champions professional behaviour and appearance; is organised, knowledgeable and takes initiative in executing tasks;</p> <p>d) Performance exceeds determined standards, successfully demonstrating public administration as a career of choice;</p> <p>e) Proven record of upholding good and demonstrable workplace culture and there is an understanding of workplace diversity;</p> <p>f) Proven record of good and professional leadership (e.g. explains targets clearly; leads with strategies to achieve the targets; unlocks logjams; shows interest in wellbeing of subordinates). Leads by example.</p> | <p>Each question is scored on a scale of 1-5 where:<br/>1= poor and<br/>5= excellent</p> |
| <p><b>6. Citizen-focussed Innovations harnessing non-ICT solutions</b></p>                                    | <p>(a) This category celebrates the Innovative use of citizen focussed non-ICT solutions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery at the coalface. The emphasis is on the citizens and what has been done to make their experience of government pleasant, hassle free, effective and efficient.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                          |
| <p><b>7. Internal Innovations harnessing ICT or non-ICT solutions</b></p>                                     | <p>a) This category focuses on innovations in the back office – enhancements or transformation of internal systems leveraging ICT and/or non-ICT solutions that significantly improve internal efficiency and effectiveness.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                          |
| <p><b>8. Innovations harnessing Technology (ICT and other frontier technologies) - Frontline services</b></p> | <p>a) This category includes the use of technology (ICTs) in a new way, including emerging technologies such as Blockchain, Robotics, and Artificial Intelligence and Innovative use of Big Data to significantly improve service delivery.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                          |

|                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>9. Replication and Adaptation of Innovative Solutions</b></p> | <p>a) This category focuses on the enhancement of existing solutions. The category seeks to showcase the importance of replication and scaling- up of innovations in other contexts and environments. Previous entries that can demonstrate enhancements are welcome to enter.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                       |
|                                                                     | <p>Criteria for Category 6-9 include:</p> <p><b>a) Innovation</b></p> <p>i. Demonstrate the newness of the solution in the specific environment or, if an adaptation/replication (in the case of Category 9), how an innovation was improved.</p> <p><b>b) Relevance</b></p> <p>ii. The project must demonstrate relevance in terms of national and provincial prioritized and indicate which of the MDTP 3 strategic priorities have been addressed:</p> <p>a. Strategic Priority 1: Drive inclusive growth and job creation.</p> <p>b. Strategic Priority 2: Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living.</p> <p>c. Strategic Priority 3: Build a capable, ethical and developmental state.</p> <p>iii. Demonstrate how the project contributes to the achievement of the National Development Plan and the priority outcomes, or to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063.</p> <p><b>c) Impact</b></p> <p>What service delivery improvements have been achieved (nominees should provide evidence of these improvements and quantify benefits where possible such as increased number of beneficiaries, savings achieved, reduction in waiting times, etc.)</p> <p><b>d) Sustainability</b></p> <p>Nominees should indicate how the project is being sustained and what has been put in place to ensure long-term sustainability, e.g., in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) budget, skills capacity, and collaborations?</p> <p><b>e) Potential for replication/scaling</b></p> | <p>Each question is weighted and scored on a scale of 1-5 where:<br/>1= poor and<br/>5= excellent</p> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Nominees should reflect on the potential for broader impact and if the project can be further replicated/scaled/mainstreamed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                           |
| <b>10. Overall Batho Pele Winner of the Year</b>                                                                                                                                                                        | This category will be awarded to the highest scorer in the 5 individual categories 1 and 3 above. (Best Frontline Service Delivery Employee and the Best General Worker of the Year categories).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | The Best of all the Individual Categories |
| <b>11. Public Sector Innovator of the Year</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | This category will be based on the winners of the 4 Innovation Award categories (6-9 above).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                           |
| <b>12. Ministerial Awards</b><br>(incorporating Projects and Individuals):<br><br>a) <b>Special Ministerial Awards</b><br><br>b) <b>Public Sector Innovation Trailblazer</b><br><br>c) <b>Lifetime Achievers Awards</b> | <p><b>a) Special Ministerial Awards</b></p> <p>Awards recognise extraordinary individuals or projects that reflect the highest ideals of public service excellence. Nominations may be submitted by anyone, including the Minister, Deputy Minister, Director-General, Secretariat, Adjudicators, or any authorised stakeholder. These awards may honour individuals or service delivery projects that have made a significant impact on society.</p> <p><b>Criteria for the individual:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Be an official currently employed, or previously employed at the time of retirement or death, under: Public Service Act (1994), Employment of Educators Act (1998), Corrections Act (1998), Police Act (68 of 1995), Defence Act (42 of 2002) and Health Act (2004).</li> <li>b) Demonstrate extensive knowledge, ability, and consistent efficiency in executing public service duties.</li> <li>c) Display professionalism, ethical conduct, and a strong connection to the community.</li> <li>d) Show long-term performance that consistently exceeds institutional standards.</li> <li>e) Serve as an ambassador for public administration as a respected and valued career path.</li> <li>f) Consistently embody the Batho Pele Principles in daily work</li> </ul> <p><b>Criteria for the project:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Show measurable positive impact on service delivery, transformation, or citizen experience</li> <li>b) Clearly embed Batho Pele principles in design, implementation, and outcomes.</li> </ul> |                                           |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                          |
|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>c) Provide evidence of sustainability, long-term value, or scalability within government.</p> <p>d) Demonstrate strong governance, accountability, and effective monitoring mechanisms.</p> <p>e) Uphold ethical standards and set a benchmark for excellence within the public sector.</p> <p>f) Introduce innovative practices, technologies, or approaches with proven effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Criteria for Life Time Achiever</b></p> <p>a. Officials currently (or at the time of retirement or death were) employed under the Public Service Act (1994), the Employment of Educators Act (1998), the Corrections Act (1998), the Police Act (68 of 1995), the Defence Act (42 of 2002), and the Health Act (2004);</p> <p>b. Officials who have displayed knowledge, ability and proven effectiveness in executing tasks (e.g. contributed to transformation of the public service), who have records of visible, effective and successful programme implementation, and can easily demonstrate vast experience;</p> <p>c. Officials who are affirmed good public service leaders, of stable demeanour and well-grounded community people;</p> <p>d. Officials whose performance consistently exceeded determined standards, and successfully demonstrated public administration as a career of choice;</p> <p>e. Officials who have consistently upheld and live according to the Batho Pele principles in executing their daily duties, and have excellent understanding of Batho Pele principles and their practical implementation. If retired, are able and ready to come out of retirement to continue service delivery when the need arises;</p> <p>f. Officially who are role models (have made impact in society), with integrity and command the respect of peers, colleagues and communities they are part of.</p> |                                                                                          |
|  | <p><b>Criteria for Trailblazer:</b></p> <p>The affected awards will consider:</p> <p>g. Software developers and ICT solution developers who developed “in-house” innovative solutions that made it to the finalist level (Trailblazer Awards);</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>Each question is scored on a scale of 1-5 where:<br/>1= poor and<br/>5= excellent</p> |

Table 1: List of categories

## 6.2 Shortlisting process

Entries may be submitted directly to the PMU or through the Offices of the Premier. Nominees may be nominated by anyone, including themselves. Entries will be received at the least cost to the Government, e.g. by using electronic modes of submission. Where possible, entries may be consolidated departmentally, signed off by the Head of Department and sent to the DPSA or CPSI.

The gold (first prize) winners in the first and third categories above (1 and 3) will be automatically entered into the category “**Outstanding Batho Pele Winner of the Year**”. Only one winner shall be awarded in this category, i.e. the highest scoring entry. This Category is not open for public nomination.

The Category winners (gold or first prize winners) in the Innovation categories (6-9) will compete for the coveted “**Public Sector Innovator of the Year Award**”. This Category is not open to public nomination.

It is the Minister’s prerogative to pick recipients for the **Special Ministerial Awards** (11). This Category is therefore not open for public nomination. The PMU may be requested by the Minister to assist in soliciting nominations from the public. The Minister makes the final selections and awards at his discretion. Names will be forwarded to the Minister at least two weeks after the closing of nominations (where a request to assist has been received). The names will be accompanied by motivations and the relevant evidence. The number of people/ institutions to be awarded is not prescribed.

## 6.3 Adjudication process

The process of adjudication will be conducted in three main stages. The first stage is **internal shortlisting**. The secretariat reporting to the PMU will be responsible for this function and will comprise officials selected from the MPSA Portfolio. Where feasible, officials from other departments/ portfolios and from Offices of the Premier may be included. They will receive, sort and validate entries. A database will be developed and a short list of eligible entries prepared.

The second stage is **verification**. Officials (and adjudicators, where applicable) will assess shortlisted entries. Verification will include actual visits to the entrants/ project sites. Additional evidence may be provided by the affected projects. Evidence may be provided in written, video or pictorial forms. The videos and photographs of finalists will be used and prepared for display at the Awards ceremony and for the Awards booklet.

The final and third stage is **adjudication**. Appointed independent adjudicators will look at the shortlisted and verified entries/ projects and select the winning entries. The adjudication panel will comprise of two sub-adjudication panels: 1) Adjudicators for the Excellence categories; and 2) Adjudicators for the Innovation categories. The adjudicators' decisions are final.

The adjudication panel will present its final decision to the Heads of the Institutions in the MPSA (viz. the DG of the DPSA and the Executive Director of the CPSI).

Officials and individuals selected to be on the Adjudication panel should be people of integrity and industry experts, where applicable. They may be sourced from civil society structures, government departments, public sector institutions, the private sector, and academic institutions.

Letters of appointment will be signed by the respective Accounting Officers in the MPSA.

## 7. RULES AND REGULATIONS

Adherence to the rules and regulations is crucial, and any breach will result in the disqualification of the entries. The Awards are governed by the following rules:

- a) No correspondence will be entered into once the adjudication process is finalised.
- b) The Awards, in terms of excellence, recognise entries for the immediate past financial year (i.e. in 2025 the Awards will consider performance for the year 2024/25). While the innovation projects entered should have been implemented for at least a period of 12 months by the time the adjudication process is done, it is noted that not all projects would have been implemented in that same year;
- c) The Awards will be celebrated annually;
- d) Participation is open to all public servants (at provincial and national levels), as well as the broader public sector (including universities) and civic organisations in the case of the innovation categories;
- e) Civic organisations can only enter projects in the innovation categories where there is clear evidence that implementation was done in partnership with the relevant department or public sector institution (thus not through procurement).
- f) Nominations may come from public service institutions (national and provincial departments, chapter 9 and 10 institutions; public entities), individual public officials and the public in general;
- g) The same individuals may enter the same category in which they won, on condition there are tangible new improvements and new elements, for two consecutive years only;
- h) The Awards will have three winners in each category, namely **gold**, **silver** and **bronze**;

- i) Each nomination must be on the official entry form accompanied by supporting documents (either written, on audio or video).

## 8. ELIGIBILITY

- a) Public servants employed in Municipalities (in terms of the Municipal Systems Act of 2000, and as amended in 2011 and 2021) and the South African public service in terms of the Public Service Act (1994), the Employment of Educators Act (55 of 1998), the Correctional Services Act (111 of 1998), the Police Act (68 of 1995), the Defence Act (42 of 2002), the National Health Act (2004), and other similar acts accommodating the establishment of professional services within the public sector, are eligible to enter;
- b) Sectoral organisations and Public Training Academic Institutions should be lawfully registered and be in good standing and only their projects can be eligible to enter (i.e. no employees);
- c) There is no minimum period of employment in the public service before public officials can be eligible to enter, save that the official should be in the public service employment for at least 12 months;
- d) Officials that have left the public service but have activities that are nominated for the period in which they were still in the employ of the public service are eligible to enter;
- e) In the case of a project being nominated, it should at least have been in operation and functional for a year;
- f) In the category on **Special Ministerial Awards** active, retired or deceased public servants are eligible.
- g) Eligibility for all other categories is guided by specific criteria developed for each.

## 9. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Any dispute related to the Awards will be directed to the Accounting Officer, who may appoint a special committee to handle disputes. Its composition will be in accordance with the public service dispute resolution approach. All appeals shall be directed to the Minister for consideration and action. The Minister's decision shall be final.

## 10. COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENTS

| Cost Item                                                                                                  | Responsible Department                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Shortlisting Workshop Venue and catering ( <i>the workshop is for the Secretariat and Administrators</i> ) | Responsibility: 50-50 CPSI and DPSA<br><br>Responsibility for individual travel and accommodation is for each entity's budget. Where external officials/ adjudicators are required, the entity sponsoring the category will take |

|                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                              | responsibility for the related travelling and accommodation costs, as well as subsistence where applicable.                                                                 |
| Site Visit Verification travel logistics                                                                                                                     | Responsibility: Each entity is responsible for their categories                                                                                                             |
| Costs relating to the Adjudication (including the Workshop with appointed adjudicators to orientate them on their task)<br>(Venue, Travel and Accommodation) | Responsibility for the venue: 50-50 CPSI and DPSA<br>Responsibility for individual travel and accommodation as per Categories: Each entity responsible for their categories |
| Awards Ceremony Venue                                                                                                                                        | Responsibility will be distributed to all entities on an equal cost share basis                                                                                             |
| Audio-visual Services at the Ceremony                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Entertainment at the ceremony                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Awards Publication/ Booklet                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Trophies, Certificates and Dummy Cheques                                                                                                                     | Each entity takes responsibility for their Categories                                                                                                                       |
| Prize Monies (Role of Sponsors)                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Marketing and Communication (re-branding)                                                                                                                    | Communication Unit (DPSA)                                                                                                                                                   |
| Any other costs relating to the Awards Programme                                                                                                             | To be shared equally                                                                                                                                                        |

Table 2: Cost Sharing Arrangements

**N.B. No centralised budget allocation.**

## 11. ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE GOVERNING STRUCTURE

- a) To enforce and monitor compliance with the set rules and regulations;
- b) To provide strategic advice;
- c) To facilitate the implementation of the Awards processes; and
- d) To ensure adherence to the maintenance and promotion of high standards of professional ethics in the execution of Awards activities.

### 11.1 Governing structure

#### a) The Minister for the Public Service and Administration

The Minister for the Public Service and Administration is the sponsor of the Batho Pele National Service Excellence and Innovation Awards programme. The Minister will constantly inform Cabinet on the intention, processes, and progress in ensuring the successful hosting of the Awards.

#### b) Programme Management Unit (PMU)

Chaired by a Chief Director, this PMU will be responsible for the day to day management of the Awards processes until the day of the ceremony. Its sub-

committees will include the secretariat, administration, drafting, adjudication, and the communications and media. The PMU shall meet monthly, and weekly in the last two months before the ceremony. The PMU will handle, among others, the nominations process, all correspondence, logistical and administrative arrangements, secretarial responsibilities, and attend to immediate questions.

Members of the PMU will be appointed by the Accounting officers for the sub-sections of the Awards programme and may include external representatives. The DPSA shall provide the core representatives, and Secretarial duties.

### **c) Marketing and Communications and media**

The Communication and Media team (comprised of all MPSA Institutions representatives) will be responsible for all marketing, communication and media tasks pertaining to the Awards, and work with all the relevant stakeholders. A Marketing, communication and media strategy will be produced and will take care of pre-, during- and post-award communication and media activities. The tasks include all possible radio and television interviews, all pre-award and post-award marketing of the Awards ceremony and the marketing and popularisation of the winners.

### **Build-up activities towards the Awards ceremony**

- i. Pre-award ceremony activities will include announcements of the opening of nominations and inserts of clips in mainstream and community print and electronic media, information sharing with all provincial and national departments through the Batho Pele Forum and the Communicators Forum (headed by GCIS) and on social media. Access to nomination forms will be provided manually and on the websites. Where feasible, nomination forms may be inserted into the newspapers. All Departments will be given access through the government websites, e.g. the DPSA and CPSI websites.
- ii. **Pre-award launch** of the nominations process will be run in phases. The PMU will advise on the set of activities that are necessary annually. Firstly, there will be a gathering where the nominations process is thoroughly explained to stakeholders in a workshop format. The categories and criteria for nomination will be unpacked, as well as the packaging of entries and the adjudication process. Secondly, a formal launch of the Awards will take place. Live TV interviews may be organised where the launch is formally announced, and lines are opened for public engagement. Thirdly, supporting public events may be organised to popularise the Awards, e.g.
  - A Fun Run, where public servants are mobilised to take part, and an announcement is made through active engagement with all participants. The media will be invited to cover the event.

- Visits to best performing projects, such as a Thusong Service Centre, a high school, or parading previous winners at national and provincial events;
  - Conducting capacity building workshops for stakeholders to perfect the Awards process will be undertaken as part of the activities to enhance the knowledge of and participation into the Awards.
- iii. The PMU will handle the selected activity or set of activities (as indicated in (ii) above), in close communication with the Minister, Deputy Minister, Accounting Officers, Programme Managers (Heads of relevant Branches/ Divisions) and all the relevant stakeholders.

## 12. TEAMS

### a) Auditing Team

An auditing team, approved by Accounting Officers comprising competent individuals from the MPSA Audit components and external auditor, will be engaged to audit the process. Their engagement will commence as soon as the adjudication of entries begin. The auditing team will provide an independent report which will be tabled before the Heads of Institutions (Accounting Officers).

### b) Adjudication Panel

The Adjudication panel will be constituted as described in 10.4. The number of adjudicators is not prescribed but must not be less than 12. The panel may be divided into sub-panels responsible for service excellence and innovation respectively. The team will provide a report for the Heads of Institutions on the winning entries and finalise a report for submission to the Minister. The Adjudication panel will be appointed by the affected Heads of Institutions (Accounting Officers).

## 13. CRITICAL TIMELINES

| PHASE          | KEY ISSUE                                                  | TIMEFRAME      |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Phase 1</b> | (i) Launch the Awards process                              | August 2026    |
|                | (ii) Open nominations                                      |                |
|                | (iii) Briefing meeting with national and provincial depts. |                |
|                | (iv) Awareness Campaign                                    |                |
|                | (v) Closing of nominations                                 |                |
|                | (vi) Consultation with stakeholders                        |                |
| <b>Phase 2</b> | <u>Adjudicating Process</u>                                | September 2026 |
|                | (i) Appointing adjudication team:                          |                |
|                | (ii) Briefing session for adjudicators:                    |                |
|                | (iii) Sorting and capturing of entries                     |                |

|                |                                                                                                                                                                             |                             |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                | (iv) List of possible Special Ministerial Awards candidates<br>(v) Assessment of entries<br>(vi) Site visits/ interviews of finalists                                       |                             |
| <b>Phase 3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjudicators make a final selection of winners</li> <li>• Heads of Institutions present to actively observe the process</li> </ul> | October 2026                |
|                | Submission to the Minister                                                                                                                                                  | First week of November 2025 |
| <b>Phase 4</b> | Announcement of the winners (Awards Ceremony)                                                                                                                               | 27 November 2025            |

**Table 3: Critical Timelines. *The dates are for reference only and may be changed due to project developments. Kindly verify with DPSA or CPSI.***

## 14. CONCLUSION

Employees who work hard and go the extra mile in meeting the needs of citizens are a reflection of a professional, productive and efficient Public Service. The recognition and rewarding of best performing and innovative officials and organisations, therefore, fulfils the requirements of the Constitution and the legal framework of the public service.

The Awards encourage participants to continue demonstrating the level and standard of service performance that led to their recognition. Participants are further expected to serve as ambassadors for service excellence by encouraging, motivating and promoting good practices across the public sector.

To elevate the prestige of the Awards and promote innovation, facilitate the learning and sharing of information, and enhance the marketing and communication of the Awards, public servants should be recognised and acknowledged for their hard and excellent work.



We Belong



We Care



We Serve