What is the European Sustainability Award?

In 2018, the European Commission launched for the first time ever a European Sustainability Award to reward the efforts and creativity of European people, businesses and organisations. The award will be granted annually to recognise initiatives that are turning the Sustainable Development Goals into concrete solutions and opportunities, contributing thus to the global 2030 Agenda implementation.

What is the theme of the 2019 European Sustainability Award? Are there any reasons behind the selection of this particular theme?


For the 2019 European Sustainability Award, the theme is therefore “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”. This theme refers to a cluster of SDGs: SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities, SDG 13 on climate action, SDG 16 on peace justice and strong institutions and SDG 17 on partnerships for the goals. Initiatives will have to respect the cross-cutting nature of the SDGs and address the three dimensions of sustainable development: environmental, economic and social.

Further information on the choice of the theme can be obtained via: https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND_CCPCJ_joint/2030 Agenda/A.70.L.60.pdf
Where can I find the Rules of Contest? Can I have access to a translated version of the rules of contest?


The rules of contest are only available in English.

What are the eligibility requirements?

There are 4 eligibility requirements:

(1) The application process will be open to 4 stakeholder categories: (A) Public bodies, (B) Private bodies, (C) Civil society and (D) Youth organisations. For the first three categories, sub-categories are foreseen to ensure the principle of diversity among Award winners. All applicants must indicate the category for which they apply.

(2) All applicants must be based/registered in a Member State of the European Union.

(4) All submitted projects/initiatives must be completed.

(3) All submitted projects/initiatives must address all three dimensions of sustainable development – environmental, economic and social – and be in line with the 2019 theme of the European Sustainability Awards.

Am I eligible to participate if my organisation operates outside the EU?

Yes, provided your organisation fulfils two conditions: (1) Your organisation must be based/registered in a Member State of the European Union. (2) Only civil societies can submit projects/initiatives taking place both inside and outside the European Union.

Otherwise, submitted projects/initiatives can only cover activities taking place inside the European Union.
Am I eligible to participate if I receive funding from outside the EU?

Yes. As long as the applicants are based/registered in a Member State of the European Union, are managing the project and are ultimately responsible for its results on the ground, funding may be provided from outside the EU.

Am I eligible to participate with an ongoing project?

No. Submitted projects/initiatives must be completed; in other words, projects/initiatives must have delivered results at the stage of submission.

Is it mandatory to address all the mentioned SGDs and all their respective targets? If so, to what extent?

The competition requires that the initiatives being submitted reflect the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the Sustainable Development Goals and the three dimensions of sustainable development, including cross-cutting issues as well as new and emerging issues. The rules of contest do not foresee specific weights being attributed to individual goals or targets.

What is the selection process?

The selection process of the winner will be two-staged:

(1) After the eligibility screening, an evaluation committee will evaluate each application’s executive summary (part B of the application) and proposal (part C of the application), as elaborated upon in section 3 and Annex 1 of the Rules of Contest. The evaluation committee will prepare a shortlist of outstanding applications per category. The exact number of shortlisted applications will be determined by the evaluation committee.

(2) The Jury will then decide on the winners based on the shortlist prepared by the evaluation committee. The Jury will choose the winners based on unanimity. In case no unanimity can be reached, the Commission representative in the Jury will choses the winners amongst the preferred applications of the other Jury members. There are no quantitative award criteria.
How many award categories and prizes are envisaged for the 2019 European Sustainability Award?

In 2019, a total of 7 Awards will be attributed, one for each award category. The 7 award categories are as follows:

1) Public body: subnational legal public entities reaching a population above 100,000 individuals; project/initiative must take place inside the European Union

2) Public body: subnational legal public entities reaching a population equal to/under 100,000 individuals; project/initiative must take place inside the European Union

3) Private body: SME; project/initiative must take place inside the European Union

4) Private body: Large enterprise; project/initiative must take place inside the European Union

5) Civil Society/Non-profit organization: project/initiative taking place inside the European Union

6) Civil Society/Non-profit organisation: project/initiative taking place outside the European Union

7) Youth organisations; project/initiative must take place inside the European Union
**What does the prize consist of?**

The European Sustainability Award is a prestigious recognition for all who incorporate the principle of sustainability into their daily activities, operations and practices. The Award is non-monetary and brings high visibility in the form of renewed public interest and increased media coverage. The winners of the 2019 European Sustainability Award will be announced during a ceremony held in Brussels beginning of 2019 (indicative). In addition, the list of winners and possibly also shortlisted candidates will be published on the Commission's website.

**How can I apply to the European Sustainability Award?**

The application must obligatory include (Part A) an eligibility section, (Part B) an executive summary and (Part C) a proposal. Please consult the Rules of Contest, page 8, for more information on the application structure. Applications must be readable, accessible and printable. Applications may be filled in and followed up by any representative actor of the participant. However, the submitted application requires the signature of a senior representative of the applying organisation.

Applications must be sent to SG-STAKEHOLDERPLATFORM-SDG@ec.europa.eu. Applicants will receive a confirmation e-mail.

**May I submit more than one application?**

Yes, the Rules of Contest allow for organisations to present more than one application for the award. Please consult the "Rules of participation" section in the Rules of Contest, pages 4-7, for more information on criteria per category.

**Can I have an indicative timeline of the following steps?**

The closing date for submissions is 14 September 2019. The pre-selection will take place in October-November 2018, followed by the final selection in November-December 2018. The winners will be announced during a ceremony held in Brussels beginning of 2019 (indicative).