

Practical Guide to the EU Organic Awards 2024

1. Is my project/business a good candidate for the EU Organic Awards competition?

1.1. What is the EU looking for in this competition?

The EU institutions, bodies and stakeholders organising these awards are looking for excellent, innovative, sustainable, and replicable projects/businesses, which demonstrate new approaches contributing to the growth of the organic sector in line with the EU's Action Plan for the Development of Organic Production. The awards scheme encompasses seven different topics and eight awards.

1.2. Which are the seven award categories/eight awards?

The seven award categories/eight awards for 2024 are:

- Category 1, Best organic farmer (female) and Best organic farmer (male)¹
- Category 2, Best organic region
- Category 3, Best organic city
- Category 4, Best organic '*Bio district*'
- Category 5, Best organic food processing SME²
- Category 6, Best organic food retailer
- Category 7, Best organic restaurant/food service³

1.3. What is the added value of the awards?

The awards are meant to give publicity and visibility to a variety of projects and businesses in the organic food chain by recognising their excellence.

1.4. Can I submit a project that is under preparation?

No. The jury will assess applications based on accomplished achievements.

1.5. Is my project/business mature enough to be submitted?

The jury will assess applications on the basis of results already achieved.

They will not be able to reward your innovative ideas in case you cannot provide evidence they have been implemented.

1.6. Do I need to be certified organic?

In case of the formal involvement by an operator in organic production, in whatever role (farmer, processor, wholesaler, retailer, etc.), evidence of organic certification should be provided in the application⁴. Operators in conversion cannot apply for the awards. The offer or processing of goods/products in conversion does not meet the criteria for these awards.

¹ Including both land-based farming and aquaculture

² Including those processing organic aquaculture products

³ Restaurant (standalone or part of a hotel) and/or food service (caterer or canteen)

⁴ In line with [Regulation \(EU\) 2018/848](#)

2. How do I submit my project/business?

2.1. How does it work in a nutshell?

You fill in the on-line application by the deadline mentioned below. Participation is free of charge.

2.2. Where do I submit the application?

The starting point for an application for one of the awards will be the following website:

https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/farming/organic-farming/organic-action-plan/eu-organic-awards_en

This website will link to the online application forms for each of the awards. Only complete applications (all sections filled in) submitted via the online platform by the deadline will be considered.

2.3. When is the deadline for submission?

12 May 2024, 23:59:59 CEST.

2.4. What is the timeline of the award process?

Launching of the application period for the awards: 4 March 2024

Deadline for submission of applications: 12 May 2024 23:59:59 CEST.

Awards evaluation: June-July 2024

Awards ceremony: 23 September 2024

2.5. Who should submit the application?

Applications must be submitted by the project/business promoter (= EU-based organisation/ person who is/ was responsible for the implementation of the project/business based in the EU). The eligibility criteria for each award are detailed in a dedicated section on this website.

2.6. In which language can I submit the application?

The application form is available in all official EU languages. Your application can be in any EU language. Submission of the application form in English is encouraged for the smooth and timely running of the assessment of the applications. Please be aware that in case a translation from the original language to English is not provided by the applicant, the jury will work based on a simple machine translation.

2.7. Can I send the application also by email?

No. Please refer to the question "Where do I submit the application?".

2.8. Does the application have to be submitted in one step?

No. You may prepare a draft submission and save it in a first instance and then finalise it and send it at a later stage. The application is finalised once you click on 'submit'.

2.9. Why do you need to provide your social media handles?

If your project/business is present on social media (Facebook and/or LinkedIn), please indicate your social media handles and/ or hashtags. If you are shortlisted, they will be used for social media communication by the organisers.

2.10. What happens once my application has been submitted?

After the jury meeting and decision, we will contact all finalists and winners. If you have not heard from us by the middle of September 2024, your project did not make it into the final.

2.11. Whom can I contact if I have questions?

Please send your enquiries about the application process by e-mail to:

- Category 1 - Best organic farmer (female) EUorganicawards@organicseurope.bio and best organic farmer (male) EUorganicawards@copa-cogeca.eu
- Category 2 - Best organic region, Category 3 - Best organic city and Category 4 - Best organic 'Bio district': EUorganicawards@cor.europa.eu
- Category 5 - Best organic food processing SME, Category 6 - Best organic food retailer and Category 7 - Best organic restaurant/food service: EUorganicawardsEESC@eesc.europa.eu

3. How is my project/business assessed and what happens after?

3.1. How does the pre-selection of 24 finalists work?

Each partner organisation will examine the applications considering the eligibility and awards criteria and make a pre-selection of 24 finalists.

3.2. How does the jury evaluation process look like?

Applications will be examined by a jury considering the award criteria. Only applications that satisfy the first phase of the evaluation (eligibility) will be admitted to the second phase (award by the jury) and evaluated by the jury.

3.3. Who sits in the jury?

The jury is composed of 7 members nominated by, respectively, the European Parliament⁵, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, IFOAM Organics Europe and COPA-COGECA. Members work in teams (based on their expertise in a given award category) but take the final decision on the finalists and winners together as a group.

3.4. How are my personal data protected?

Your personal data are processed in accordance with the dedicated information posted on the Commission and partner websites related to the awards.

4. If I am short-listed (finalist), what would come next?

You should be aware that in case your application is selected among the finalists, the award organisers plan to make publicity about your project/business and need some material (pictures, websites, social media handles etc) to do that.

⁵ To be confirmed as there are EP elections in June 2024

4.1. Which technical requirements do the images have to meet?

You will be requested to submit high-resolution pictures that are going to be used on various communication channels, for instance in printed materials, online and for an exhibition, both during and after the competition itself. The pictures should ideally have a minimum resolution of 300 dpi and documents have a maximum size of 10 MB. Partners will contact you in that regard.

4.2. What happens if I am a finalist but not a winner?

The finalists will be contacted at the very latest by 10 September 2024. Communication material submitted with the finalists' application may be used by the Commission for communication purposes. The finalists will be welcome to attend the awards ceremony. Their travel and related expenses will not be reimbursed, however.

4.3. What happens if my project/business wins?

All winners will be contacted at the very latest at the beginning of August 2024. The European Commission will invite⁶ the winners to a dedicated award ceremony in Brussels on 23 September 2024 when the EU organic Day (23 September of each year) will also be celebrated. The costs for participation in this event will be borne by the Commission. No monetary prize is foreseen.

4.4. What is foreseen in terms of communication regarding my winning project/business?

If available, winners should provide the award organisers with audio visual material.

A short film will be made about your winning project/business. Therefore, winners and their projects/business will be videorecorded during July and August 2024. Winners should foresee some time for the interviews. Awardees will have an opportunity to present their winning project/business during a press event. Click [here](#) to watch the videos of the 2023 awardees.

Materials submitted as part of the application, the videorecorded interviews, and any communication material produced in relation to the event may be used by the Commission and all the partners of the awards for communication purposes.

⁶ If the situation (sanitary or other) allows