

Rules of Contest

Blue Economy Business Awards 2016 – Rules of Contest

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of the annual summit of the Blue Economy Business & Science Forum, the European Commission (DG MARE) is organising an awards ceremony accompanying the Forum to showcase excellent practices from industry in the blue economy field.

The Forum will bring together around 200 stakeholders to exchange knowledge and experience, discuss opportunities and barriers for innovation in the blue economy. But the Forum is meant also to celebrate scientific and industrial achievements connected with the sea. For this reason, the European Commission is pleased to organise this awards ceremony and to champion the best achievements of the year in the blue economy.

2. GENERAL RULES

2.1 The awards

The winner of the **Blue Economy Business Award 2016** will be selected by an independent jury.

Furthermore, the jury will have the possibility to select among the applicants the "**Woman of the Year in the Blue Economy**" and the "**Rising Blue Star of the Year (up to 35 years old)**".

A total of 3 winners may be selected and awarded.

2.2 How to submit an application

Applications must be submitted only through the following link <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/BlueEconomyBusinessAwards>

The application has to be completed in English. Applications can be submitted from 13th May 2016 and no later than **July 8th of 2016 (18pm UTC +1)**.

2.3 Evaluation process

Applications must be submitted only through the link mentioned in point 2.2. The candidates will have to provide proof of eligibility and provide a complete and valid application, which will be presented to an independent Jury for evaluation.

The Jury will consist of a group of independent experts from business, academia and Commission and appointed by DG MARE. They will appraise the quality of the entries on the basis of a review of the written applications and submit to DG MARE the final list of the 9 finalists (3 per each award).

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The evaluation of applications will be carried out in July 2016. There will be first a remote evaluation where the experts evaluate the applications individually at home, followed by a meeting (physical or through videoconference) in Brussels (this will depend on the availability of the experts). At the evaluation phase, the expert panel will assess each submitted solution against the award criteria and will then mark each solution up to a maximum number of 25 points.

The jury will evaluate each application against 4 award criteria and score them as follows:

Selection criteria	Max points
1) Level of originality/ innovative character of the project	25
2) Economic impact obtained	25
3) How they have improved the visibility of the blue economy	25
4) How they have promoted cross-sectorial and/or transnational cooperation?	25
Total	100

The 9 finalists (3 per each award) will be informed about the outcome of the evaluation by August 2016.

The 9 finalists will be invited by the European Commission to attend the Blue Economy Business Awards 2016 ceremony that will take place on 12 September 2016 in Hamburg. The European Commission will take charge of travel and accommodation expenses of the 9 finalists.

The 3 winners will be announced directly at the awards ceremony on 12 September 2016.

2.4 Cancellation of the contest

The Commission has the right to decide not to award a prize if no applications are received or if the jury decides no application meets the high quality standards required to issue an award.

2.5 Publicity

The Commission may use, for its own communication and publicising activities, information relating to the action, documents or summaries for publication and public deliverables as well as any other material, such as pictures or audio-visual material that it receives from the applicants (including in electronic form).

The Commission will publish the name of the finalists and winners. Photos and videos taken by the Commission either in preparation of the award ceremony or during the award ceremony are the sole property of the Commission.

2.6 Processing of personal data

Submission of application shall be made in writing through the link provided (as specified in the rules of the contest), provided that they ensure integrity, confidentiality and protection of personal data. All personal data contained in the application shall be processed in accordance

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with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L8 of 12.01.2001, p1) on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

The Commission shall be authorised to publish, in whatever form and by whatever medium, the following information:

- The name of winners;
- The locality of winners;
- The general purpose of the activities of the winners in relation to the award of the prize.

2.7 Contact information

All enquiries can be sent to:

MARE-C1@ec.europa.eu

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Contestants for the "**Blue Economy Business Awards 2016**" shall comply with the following eligibility criteria to participate:

1. The applicant (as individual or as a company) must be established in an EU Member State or in an Associated Country¹
2. The submission consists of a complete application written in English
3. The applicant (individual or representative of the company) can be selected as winner of the "Woman of the Year in the Blue Economy" award only if she is of female gender
4. The applicant (individual or representative of the company) can be selected as winner of the "Rising Blue Star of the Year" award only if (s)he is not older than 35 years

4. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Contestant will be excluded from participating in the competition if they fall under any of the following situations:

The contestant:

a) is bankrupt or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into an arrangement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of

¹ The Associated Countries are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Faroe Islands, FYR Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey.

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proceedings concerning those matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;

b) has been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of res judicata;

c) has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the European Union bodies can justify including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organizations;

d) is not in compliance with all its obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established, with those of the country of the authorising officer responsible and those of the country where the activity is to be implemented;

e) has been the subject of a judgement which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;

f) is subject to an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresenting the information required as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or another grant award procedure or failing to supply this information, or having been declared to be in serious breach of its obligations under contracts or agreements covered by the Union's budget. Natural persons with power of representation, decision-making or control over one of the contestants that are legal entities, must not be in the situations referred to in b) and e) above:

Contestants must:

g) have no conflict of interests in connection with the prize; a conflict of interests could arise in particular as a result of economic interests, political or national affinity, family, emotional life or any other shared interest;

h) inform the European Commission, without delay, of any situation considered a conflict of interests or which could give rise to a conflict of interests;

i) have not been granted, and will not grant, have not sought and will not seek, have not attempted and will not attempt to obtain, and have not accepted and will not accept any advantage, financial or in kind, to or from any party whatsoever, where such advantage constitutes an illegal practice or involves corruption, either directly or indirectly, inasmuch as it is an incentive or reward relating to the award of the prize;

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5. SELECTION CRITERIA

- a) Level of originality / innovative character of the product or service
- b) Economic impact obtained
- c) How the product or service has improved the visibility of the blue economy
- d) How the applicant has promoted cross-sectorial and/or transnational cooperation