

EUROPEAN AWARD FOR COOPERATIVE INNOVATION

RECOGNISING OUTSTANDING INNOVATION OF EUROPEAN AGRI COOPERATIVES

REGULATION

Cogeca established the ***European Award for Cooperative Innovation***, henceforth referred to as the ***Award***, aimed at recognising the most innovative cooperatives emerging from its member organisations in the fields/categories indicated below.

The Award has previously been granted in 2009, 2012 and 2014. The fourth edition of the Award shall be organised in 2017.

ARTICLE 1 – GENERAL TERMS

COGECA has a leading role in promoting more favourable conditions for the development of cooperatives in the agriculture and food sectors.

However, the wider socioeconomic environment is characterised by multifaceted challenges such as increasingly diversified consumer demand, intensified competition in the global market (enforced through market globalisation and trade liberalisation) as well as the imperative need to adjust agricultural, farming and processing practices to environmental sustainability. Thus cooperatives in the European Union, strive to respond to those challenges, by introducing pioneer technical, structural, organisational and system innovations, which effectively address bottlenecks that limit their development potential.

The **Award**, is therefore a tool to promote innovative actions, projects and/or strategies leading to cooperative development, as well as to stimulate the adoption of innovative practices by cooperatives.

The fundamental objective of the Award is to underline and encourage actions conducted to deliver value to cooperative members, develop new markets, promote new products and services offered by EU cooperatives, especially through innovation in the categories/fields indicated in article 2.

The award shall also seek to promote examples of best practices and encourage the qualitative development of these innovations, for the benefit of farmers and the general public in the territory of the European Union.

ARTICLE 2 – THE AWARD

2.1 Scope

The **Award** is open to the participation of all cooperatives in the agricultural, forestry, agri-food, bio-economy and fisheries sectors, members of any of the full members, automatically affiliated members or affiliated by admission members of COGECA.

Applications can be submitted by all levels and types of cooperatives, in the agricultural, forestry, agri-food, bio-economy and fisheries sectors, having achieved or taken part in the development or uptake of cooperative innovation or having achieved or taken part in innovative initiatives in the above mentioned sectors, in (at least) one of the Member States of the European Union.

The Award shall be granted for the following categories/fields:

- **Food processes:** development and/or improvement of sustainable food production processes that add value to primary production and contribute to human nutrition and well-being;
- **Business Model Innovation:** development of organisational processes and/or strategies to improve cooperative efficiency;
- **Innovation in Governance & Members' Service;** any activity (including financial structures, social entrepreneurship and communication) aiming at improving decision making and relations with cooperative members;
- **Innovative uses of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) / digitalisation:** design, development, evaluation and application of innovative ways to use ICTs in agriculture as well as, new analytical capabilities enabling agri cooperatives and their members to maximise performance.

The entry dossiers shall be carefully analysed, under the following main headings: example of best practice, innovativeness, potential impact & measurable tangible results, enhancement and continuity of actions carried out, quality, relevance, applicability and sustainability, and according to the criteria below: the **European Award for Cooperative Innovation** shall be awarded to an entry that demonstrates the best results in Cooperative innovation.

2.2 Nature of the awards

The **Award** winner cooperative shall receive a diploma and a trophy symbolising the objectives pursued by COGECA with this initiative.

The award-winner shall benefit from all the publicity and communication actions at EU level to promote best practice and 'know-how' in Cooperative development.

The award-winning candidates shall also have their projects included in the COPA-COGECA website and further disseminated through its social media platforms.

2.3 Decision and attribution of the Award

The Jury shall meet no later than 13th October 2017, in Brussels, to decide on the Award winners in the different categories.

The Jury shall take a decision for the different categories in accordance with the procedure laid out in articles 3 and 6.

The chair of the Jury shall inform the award-winners about the ceremony, the procedures for remitting the awards and the date of the ceremony, no later than 16th October 2017.

The award-winners shall keep the Jury's decision confidential until the date of the ceremony or until the Jury authorises an early announcement.

The official Award ceremony will take place on 29th November 2017.

The list of the award-winners, in the different categories, will be published on the COPA-COGECA website (www.eaci.copa-cogeca.eu) and on AGRI INFO. Their achievements will be available for consultation in the same (www.eaci.copa-cogeca.eu) website and in AGRI INFO.

2.4 Eligibility of entries

A Jury composed of internal and external representatives shall decide, on one winner per category, based on a selection of short-listed candidates presented by the Organising Committee.

The Organising Committee shall establish a list of all eligible received entries.

All entries received that do not comply with the provisions of article 2 are not valid and therefore shall not be eligible for the Award.

ARTICLE 3 – THE JURY

3.1 Role

The Jury shall be entrusted to decide on the attribution of the Award in the selected categories indicated in article 2.

3.2 Composition

The Jury shall be composed of five (5) members, representing European institutions and relevant individuals who, in the capacity of their functions, profession and experience in the fields of food and agri-business, cooperatives, enterprises, agricultural and enterprise policy and development, are competent to identify achievements and/or outstanding initiatives in cooperative innovation in the territory of the EU.

The Jury shall be composed by:

- One representative of the Presidency of COGECA;
- The Secretary General of COPA-COGECA;
- One representative of DG Agriculture & Rural Development, of the European Commission;
- One representative of the European Parliament;
- One representative of the European Social Economic Committee.

The representative of the Presidency of COGECA shall chair the Jury.

The Senior Policy Advisor in charge of Cooperative issues shall assure the secretariat of the Jury and assist it in its evaluation, using the Award criteria and conditions adopted. He/she shall participate, as observer, in the meetings of the Jury.

3.3 Decision making

On the basis of a prior examination and selection done by the Organising Committee, the Jury shall analyse the short lists and decide on the attribution of the Award acknowledging an achievement in the categories indicated in Article 2.

The Jury's decisions are not subject to appeal, and are taken preferably by unanimity or, if not possible, by simple majority of votes. In the case of a draw, the Jury's Chair shall have a quality vote.

The Jury might decide not to attribute the Award in one or all the categories indicated in article 2.

The Jury may be supported by members of the Organising Committee acting as observers and without voting rights (see article 4).

ARTICLE 4 – THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

4.1 Role

An Organising Committee shall be established to make a preliminary examination of all received entries based on the eligibility criteria defined in Article 5 and assist the Jury in the decision-making.

In its role of assistance to the Jury the Organising Committee reserves the right to request further information and/or verify locally the achievements submitted in the applications.

4.2 Composition

The Organising Committee is made up of:

- A Chairperson: the Chairman of the COGECA Cooperative Coordination Committee (CCC);
- A member of the COGECA secretariat: The Cooperative affairs Senior Policy Advisor;
- 3 representatives from COGECA member organisations nominated by the Cooperative Coordination Committee (CCC).

ARTICLE 5 – APPLICATIONS

5.1 Eligibility of applications

Only dossiers using the valid application form, and complying with the procedure set down in this article shall be considered.

The Organising Committee shall establish a list of all eligible entries received and shall be responsible for verifying that the dossiers transmitted to the Jury fully comply with the eligibility criteria.

All entries received that do not comply with the provisions of article 2 are not valid and therefore shall not be eligible for the Award.

As indicated in Article 4, the Organising Committee reserves the right to request further information and/or verify, *in situ*, the achievements proposed by the candidates.

5.2 Organisation of the application dossier

The interested candidates shall prepare an entry dossier composed of the following documentation:

Mandatory, minimum requirements:

- Application form;

- Short description of the Cooperative indicating its area of activity, structure (sectoral, multi-purpose, federated), number of members and latest financial information (turnover);
- Declaration of a COGECA member (full member, automatically affiliated member or affiliated by admission member) certifying that the candidate cooperative is their member;
- Detailed description of the innovation that the cooperative puts forward as a candidacy to the Award;
- Verifiable indicators (or other factual information) of the achievements indicated in the previous item.

Optional, additional information material:

- Other supplementary supporting documents (leaflets, photos, maps, publications...), or supporting material (links to web-sites, CDs, DVDs), that can be sent in any official EU language.

The application form must be completed in one of the Cogeca working languages (English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Polish) and a summary in English (in case of submission in one of the other languages).

The entry dossier should be put in an envelope/box, or as attachment of an email with the following statement/reference/subject clearly visible “**Submission from «Name of Cooperative» to the COGECA European Award for Cooperative Innovation**”.

5.3 The application form

The application form shall be available in electronic format, for download, at the COPA-COGECA website (www.eaci.copa-cogeca.eu/).

To that effect, at the COPA-COGECA website, all the information concerning this award shall be available through a link.

The application forms shall be available in the working languages of COPA-COGECA.

5.4 Reception of applications

All application dossiers can be submitted either by email, post, courier, or hand no later than 23rd June 2017 (12:00 p.m. Brussels time).

In the case of email submission, the email should contain all necessary documents in electronic format or with a link to a cloud-based computer file transfer service provider. When sending the email the subject line must be: **Submission from «Name of Cooperative» to the COGECA European Award for Cooperative Innovation**. The email address to use is: eaci@copa-cogeca.eu

In case of hard copy the entry dossier should be sent to the COPA-COGECA address:

COPA-COGECA

4th EUROPEAN AWARD FOR COOPERATIVE INNOVATION

Rue de Trèves, 61

1040, Brussels;

Belgium.

In the case of hand delivery, documents must be delivered before 12:00 p.m. (Brussels time). The postmark or the date of collection by the courier, accompanied by the acknowledgement of receipt dated and signed by COPA-COGECA, shall serve as proof of the date of submission of the proposal. Applicants must therefore ensure that these deadlines are respected. No documents/emails received after this deadline shall be accepted. Faxes, incomplete dossiers, or dossiers sent in several parts shall not be accepted.

ARTICLE 6 – ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS AND DECISION-MAKING

All received entries shall be opened by the Organising Committee, at a special meeting, to be held no later than 30th June 2017.

The Organising Committee shall analyse all application dossiers and establish a list of all received eligible applications.

All applications received that do not comply with the stipulations in articles 2 and 5 are not valid and therefore shall not be eligible for the Award.

All documentation (including photos, maps or other) pertaining to non-eligible applications or to those not chosen for the prizes shall be kept by COGECA and not returned to their senders.

On the basis of the examination and selection the Organising Committee shall decide on a short list of three (maximum) cooperative innovation cases per category indicated in article 2.

In order to establish this short-list the Organising Committee, failing to take a unanimous decision, shall decide by simple majority voting.

The Jury composed of internal and external representatives (see article 3) shall decide on one winner per category based on a selection of short-listed candidates presented by the Organising Committee.

The Jury's decisions are not subject to appeal, and are taken by simple majority of votes. In the case of a draw the Jury's Chair shall have a quality vote.

The Jury may be supported in this process by members of the Organising Committee acting as observers and without voting rights (see article 4).

ARTICLE 7 – RESULTS AND REMITTAL OF THE AWARDS – DESIGNATION OF AWARD-WINNERS

After the analysis and deliberations (no later than 13th October 2017), the President of the Jury shall transmit the information concerning the award-winners to the Organising Committee to prepare the official award ceremony.

The President of the Jury shall take charge of informing the award-winners by 16th October 2017. They shall be informed by a letter from COGECA of the date and place of the remittal of the awards.

The award-winners shall be asked not to communicate or use any public reference to the award before the official ceremony on 29th November 2017, unless the Jury's Chair specifically authorises it.

The Jury reserves the right not to award the Award in any or all the categories indicated in article 2.

The official Award ceremony shall take place in Brussels or another location as decided by the Jury, at which moment the names of the winners shall be read in the presence of the members of the Jury, the Organising Committee, as well as the authorities and the persons concerned by the Award.

ARTICLE 8 – COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICITY OF AWARD WINNER

The results of the **Award** shall be widely publicised. The award-winners shall also have their projects included in the COPA-COGECA website and further disseminated through its social media platforms.

ARTICLE 9 – REMINDER OF THE CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE AWARD

Participation in the **Award** entails compliance with and acceptance of the conditions of this regulation by the participants, in keeping with the procedures set down above, in the various phases and during the official award ceremony.

For further information or any particular questions related to the Award, please use the email address: eaci@copa-cogeca.eu.

RELEVANT DATES 2017:

Announcement of the Award: 8th February 2017;

Deadline for submitting the application: 23rd June 2017, at 12:00 p.m.;

Opening and listing of eligible applications: no later than 30th June 2017;

Analysis, screening application dossiers and establishment of short-lists: no later than 15th September 2017;

Jury meeting and decision: no later than 13th October 2017;

Announcement of Jury decision to Award-winners: 16th October 2017;

Award ceremony: 29th November 2017.
