

EU CAP Network Project Competitions: EIP AGRI Awards and ARIA

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#NNMeeting



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EIP-AGRI
INNOVATION
AWARDS
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Designing the concept and the call for Operational Groups

Main aim of the Awards: to celebrate the achievements of OGs from the previous programming period.

➤ Key elements of the concept:

- allowing broad participation by OGs who were (nearly) finalised, so that results could be showcased
- highlighting the innovative character of the project (including the multi-actor approach)
- underlining the upscaling, transferability and market value potential generated by the innovation put in practice
- drawing attention to the dissemination and outreach of the project outcomes

➤ Key elements of the call:

- General information about the OG project
- Personal information of applicant OG members (including option for a third party to fill in applications in the name of the OG)
- Indication of the relevant category (limited to one choice)
- Specific questions mirroring the selection criteria
- Additional media/photos from the OG (up to 2 photos)



Designing the concept and the call for Operational Groups: categories

- › New task → additional time investment to design the process
- › Different possibilities for competition categories explored (incl. keeping it completely open)
- › Working with the OG project database and checking the number of OGs under different themes
- › six thematic categories were selected covering a broad spectrum of the SFC themes (5 nominees per category)
- › Ensured each category could have a sufficient number of potential applications
- › In addition, a public favourite category was added.



Designing the concept and the call for Operational Groups: aims



- Competition and ceremony are celebratory moments → from the start, the concept aimed to:
- Have a facilitator who could truly create a lively atmosphere
 - Combine the awards ceremony with artistic elements
 - Ensure everyone feels like a winner, including all nominees
 - Put emphasis on the creation of video material for each project as part of the competition



Selection of the 30 nominees

- 240 applications in total
- Eligibility check and cross-check of projects in OG databases
- In-depth assessment by dedicated selection committees:
 - independent external experts, DG AGRI and EIP-AGRI SF colleagues
 - coordinated by one SF colleague – BUT additional help required in categories with many applications
 - in any case, this was a heavy workload for all teams involved
- Additional check with MAs following the selection of the 30 nominees
 - this increased the complexity of the process, though a necessary and useful step



Video production and submission

- Video concept:
 - Short videos (up to 2min15sec)
 - Structure and content instructions
 - Local language possibility
- Technical guidelines for video production and editing
- Used wetransfer for video submissions
- English subtitles requested
- Uploaded on youtube and shared on the dedicated nominee's webpage

Learning point:

- **Collaboration with NNs is key:
supporting the nominees in
filming and producing their videos**



Selection of winners

- Jury members: DG AGRI, EUFRAS, Agroecology Europe, EIC, EIT FOOD, COPA-COGECA, EIP-AGRI SF
- Brief for jury members:
 - Guidelines for evaluation
 - Evaluation materials
- Tight timeframe, but smooth process
- Jury members invited to hand over the Awards during the ceremony





Exhibition and Awards Ceremony

> Exhibition:

- Posters at nominees' stands → better visibility
- Spotlighting moment on stage

> Awards Ceremony:

- Entertainment
- Detailed programme, including some artistic performances



Overall learning points

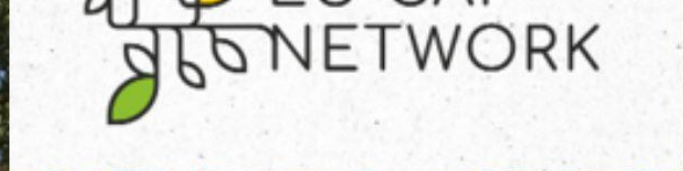
- Extremely tight timeline, no space for error, which did not match to the heavy workload involved.
- Working closely with NNs and MAs – large support in all stages of the awards competition and ceremony.
- This activity created a unique positive atmosphere and experience for all nominees, winners and conference participants.





Thank you for your attention!

Pacôme Elouna Eyenga - Team Leader EIP-AGRI SF



Agricultural and Rural Inspiration Awards 2025



#ARIAwards25



ARIA objectives



To increase the visibility
of rural development and
agriculture in EU



To demonstrate
innovative solutions
affecting rural
communities



To promote a mindset of
reskilling and upskilling in
agriculture



To present best practice
examples



Agricultural and Rural Inspiration Awards Concept

- › **3 thematic categories and 1 rotating following the political agenda**
 - › **1 cross-cutting objective award**
 - › **1 popular vote award**
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- › **Thematic editions of ARIA**
 - › 2023: Rural skills
 - › 2024: Empowering young people and Gender equality
 - › 2025: TBC



ARIA application process

› Eligibility criteria:

- › Projects must be submitted by National Networks (NNs) only
- › All projects must have been funded by the CAP
- › Up to eight (8) projects can be submitted per NN/NSU

Application template:

- › Description of context, aims and objectives, activities of the project
- › **Project achievements** help us understand and evaluate the project's direct benefits, transferability, networking value, innovation, inclusion of young people and women



ARIA evaluation and selection of winners

- › Over 100 applications per year
- › Evaluation process: 24 shortlisted projects (6 per category)
- › Editing of the applications: Applications are edited to be uploaded on our website (clear description of activities, objectives, results)
- › Jury: evaluates the finalists and decides 1 winner per category & highly commended projects
- › Popular vote: the public decides one winner



Successful dissemination tools for competitions

Popular Vote

- 6 weeks social media campaign promoting shortlisted projects
- 14,009 votes

Publications

- Projects brochure
- News Articles
- Newsletter

Good practice database

- ARIA winners, shortlisted projects and more than 1000 CAP-funded projects

Videos

- Short presentation videos about the project
- Video interviews with the winners
- Live-streamed ceremony



Awards Ceremony

- Live-streamed
- Gala style to fight against stereotypes of farmers and rural areas
- Back-to-back with a big event – EU CAP Network Assembly



Learning points

- › **Timeline:** We allocate sufficient time for each stage: a 3-month application period, 2 weeks for evaluation, 1 month for application editing, and 1,5 months for the popular vote.
- › **Capacity building:** We provide training sessions to explain the application template, collection of good practices, answer questions, and offer helpful tips.
- › **Creating Buzz:** We focus on strong communication around the shortlisted projects, including videos, teasers, promotional articles, good practice pages, and a social media campaign.
- › **Networking opportunities:** We bring together project beneficiaries (shortlisted projects) ahead of the ceremony to facilitate the exchange of information and knowledge.



ARIA 2025

> The Categories:

- Environmental protection
- Smart & competitive agriculture
- Socio-economic fabric of rural areas
- **New category:** (TBC)
- **Cross-cutting objective on** empowering women



#ARIAwards25 finals

- 24 shortlisted projects (6 per category)
- 6 winners (4 per category, 1 from cross-cutting objective and 1 from the popular vote)



ARIA timeline

- › Official Launch of ARIA Awards: During April
- › Submission deadline: 22 July
- › Evaluation period: July – September
- › Popular vote: mid-October - December
- › Finalists to be announced: December during the Awards Ceremony

