Creating our futures

ECTP-CEU

European Council of Spatial Planners
Conseil européen des urbanistes

13th EUROPEAN URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING AWARDS 2025

CALL FOR ENTRIES

1. Introduction

The European Urban and Regional Planning Awards were inaugurated in 1990-1991 by the European Council of Spatial Planners/Conseil européen des urbanistes (ECTP-CEU) in association with the European Commission. The event provides a common framework for planning practice and rewards examples of good planning all over Europe, allowing ECTP-CEU to promote the implementation of the Charter of European Planning as adopted in April 2013 in Barcelona.

The ECTP-CEU is the umbrella organisation of the European planners' associations, chambers and institutes. It was founded in its current form in 1985 and brings together 40.000 professional spatial planners from 29 countries. The Awards 2025 coincide with the 40th ECTP-CEU anniversary and the aim of the event is to herald projects which make an outstanding contribution to the quality of life in Europe.

The European Urban and Regional Planning Awards is recognizing outstanding projects and influential professional endeavours. It rewards plans in design phase as well as projects in progress or already implemented and is open to a wide range of professionals and institutions operating in the European domain of urban and regional planning.

Since 2012, the European Urban and Regional Planning Awards were organised with the participation of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), an assembly of local politicians from all EU countries elected at local and regional level, and presented, in addition to ECTP-CEU's General Assemblies, to the COTER (CoR's Commission for Territorial Cohesion and EU Budget) in Brussels.

The ECTP-CEU encourages all urban and regional planners to take part in the 13th European Urban and Regional Planning Awards. The importance of the Awards is seen as a means of exchanging experience and to communicate the importance of the spatial planning profession to a wider public.

2. Aims of the awards

Spatial planning is the prudent management of space, a critical natural resource which is limited in supply but with growing demands upon it. It requires a multi-disciplinary approach involving different skills at various scales. The characteristic of the planning profession is the ability to consider a wide range of complex issues, translating these issues into their spatial consequences. This all in bracing approach, on various scales, assist the implementation and delivery of sustainable development.

The ECTP-CEU is aware that due to the rich diversity of cities and regions, different spatial planning approaches are in place, however the universality of the spatial planning profession in Europe re quires a high level of professionalism. The major focus of the European Urban and Regional Planning Awards is to evaluate and disseminate recent examples of good planning and urban design practice, promoting the importance of spatial planning.

The European Urban and Regional Planning Awards is an attempt to investigate the state of spatial planning practice in Europe and to demonstrate the regional diversity in Europe. The Aims of the European Urban and Regional Planning Awards are to:

a. demonstrate to the public, and to the spatial planning profession, successful and innovative planning projects, and developments in which the quality of life of European citizens is enhanced and improved, socially, economically, and environmentally
b. promote the views, ideas, and visions of the ECTP-CEU on the future of European cities and regions, as expressed in the 2013 Charter of European Planning, whereby conditions favourable to the promotion of sustainable development are created and enhanced
c. illustrate the diversity and wide scope of spatial planning activity which prevail today
d. demonstrate clearly the advantages of the participatory planning process, facilitated, and enabled by professional spatial planners. With reference to the 2015 European Charter on Participatory Democracy in Spatial Planning Processes the entry has to show that co-operation between stakeholders, local authorities, development agencies and interested citizens do have a synergistic effect of benefit to all participants and the planning process.
e. promote an integrated approach to urban and regional matter considering the objectives of the European Urban Agenda , the New Leipzig Charter , the New European Bauhaus and the principles of the Davos Baukultur Alliance. include the sustainable use of land and Nature-Based solutions, energy transition, air quality, urban mobility, digital transition, housing, cultural heritage, security in public spaces, urban poverty, circular economy, jobs and skills in the local economy and Inclusion of migrants and refugees.
f. promote objectives of the UN 2030 Agenda, particularly SDG 11, to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

3. Awards categories

The ECTP-CEU wishes to reward best projects that demonstrate an innovative and proactive approach in addressing following spatial planning issues:

3.1. Urban Regeneration,

Urban regeneration is about revitalising urban spaces and understanding what makes great cities truly great. Such projects typically involve large-scale, mixed-used redevelopments (including affordable housing, workplaces, retail, and public spaces) of inner-urban locations. The key is to transform areas by repurposing existing infrastructure, to deliver something that's special and tailor-made for the diverse communities that live within them. Urban regeneration, if included in the urban planning process, can indeed promote socio-spatial city-wide inclusion and sustainability.

3.2. Adapting to climate change through spatial planning,

Cities and regions are at the forefront in dealing with the challengers of climate change. Although spatial planners do have a great responsibility in this context, they often lack the tools to implement appropriate solutions. An integrated approach to spatial planning offers a potential tool for ambitious climate action.

Although spatial plans are a multidisciplinary tool that covers most, if not all, aspects of development in an area, they are not widely used to enforce energy and climate ambitions beyond the implementation of underlying national construction standards. By expanding their use and including key elements to fulfil local or regional energy and climate goals, spatial plans can become a great lever of change.

3.3. Community Engagement in the planning process,

Inspiring and harnessing public input and opinions is a pivotal and prominent part of planning and community development. All such activities require building at least a modest relationship with individuals and stakeholder groups and depends upon a level of trust that may or may not be present at the start of the process. As a result, engaging residents, and stakeholders in short- or long-term planning processes is an often-arduous activity that requires concentrated and sustained commitment from both spatial planning practitioners and community members.

3.4. Spatial planning AND energy,

Energy-related spatial planning deals with the spatial dimension of energy consumption and energy supply. It plays a substantial role in fulfilling international climate protection goals. Equivalent to the energy efficiency of buildings there are also energy efficient spatial and settlement structures, which can be characterized by a mix of functions, sensible density, short paths, and compactness of the urban structure. Projects that merely focus on the external envelope of buildings (thermal insulation, cladding, roof covering) do not represent an appropriate strategy.

3.5. Nature-based approaches - restoring nature a spatial planning approach

Ecological restoration attempts to reverse damage or destruction of ecosystems. Nature-based approaches include the reintroduction of native species, erosion control, pollution control, improved management, and restoration actions in forests, grasslands, agricultural areas, and wetlands. Innovative concepts and tools such as the Nature Futures Framework, the 3-30-300 rule and Nature Positive City, offer good examples to address the issues on a city and regional scale. Spatial planning is now at a turning point where planning has a major role to play in reducing land consumption and land take.

The entries should reflect different spatial planning approaches, rather than levels of planning scales which may be different in the European context.

Submissions must state which category they are under, a project can be submitted under more than one category.

4. Selection process

The European Urban and Regional Planning Awards are open to spatial planners, municipalities/cities and local governments based in one of the member countries of the Council
of Europe.

Both full and corresponding members of the ECTP-CEU are encouraged to nominate entries representing the best practices within their country. Spatial planners can apply directly as well.

Any project, that fulfils the content of this call can be proposed, including winners or runners up of national or regional award schemes or schemes which have undergone other forms of selection.

The way entries are proposed have a direct influence on the entry fee (see further chapter 9 ‘Entry fee’).

In selecting the entries, a two-tier process will apply.

- Tier one:
  Member associations (through their delegates) submit suitable projects. Direct entries from European spatial planners or planning bodies are allowed as well.
  A shortlisting of the entries, by the jury will follow.
- Tier two:
  The member association will be asked to invite the actors responsible for shortlisted projects to enter the European Urban and Regional Planning Awards competition.

5. Criteria guiding the selection process

5.1. CONTENT
a) Application of sustainable development principles; development and delivery of sustainable solutions; enhancement of the environment and any recognisable social and economic benefits in terms of human well-being and greater efficiency.
b) The originality and innovation in terms of; new methods and approaches, planning funding, participation in the integration of spatial planning policies and the delivery of sustainable solutions (methods).
c) Application of different tools used in planners' daily practice; this could include normative plans, strategic plans, urban projects, programmes, policies, smart tools facilitating spatial planners, etc. Due to different national spatial planning systems in Europe, the listing is not all-embracing.
d) Demonstrating a strategic planning approach, enhancing the quality of life for the whole community.
e) Promoting social justice and equity within the context of facilitating a diverse society.
5.2. SKILLS
a) The quality of the professional work, involving design, communication, cooperation, development of spatial planning concepts and the application of planning techniques directly related to creating sustainable efficiency. Demonstration of added value brought to the project through the involvement of spatial planners.
b) Engagement with community groups, politicians, and local stakeholders, leading to better awareness and support for sustainable development.
c) The involvement of younger planners in the project and demonstrate the added value brought to the project by doing so. Young planners are defined as professionals aged less than 35 years of age or with less than 10 years´ post-qualification experience.
5.3. REFERENCE TOOL
a) The extent to which the entry may serve as a transferable knowledge to other plans elsewhere (in the same country or across Europe), or as a base for the development of further related schemes.

6. Jury composition

To evaluate the tier one and two entries, a jury representing the spatial planning profession will be nominated by the Executive Committee of ECTP-CEU and the jury will comprise of six members. The composition of the jury will reflect the diverse nature of European society.

7. Entry requirements

Tier one

Written description of the entry, explaining the major features, the planning context, listing the assessment criteria that have been met and stating which category or categories the entry is submitted under. The entry must follow the attached template and the description in English should not exceed four pages (two A4 pages of text and two pages containing illustrations)

Tier two

1) Detailed written description of the entry. The description must be no longer than four A4 pages including tables, illustrations and if appropriate references.
2) Colour poster in A0 format (High-resolution version - jpg, tiff or pdf resolution minimum 300 ppi), providing a clear explanation, detailed location, and detailed illustrations in English. The high-resolution file will be printed and serve the evaluation process by the jury and the exhibition at the Awards ceremony.
   A template will be provided and all colour posters in A0 format must adhere to this requirement.
3) All material (electronic versions of the panel, the written descriptions) must be placed in a downloadable zip file and the web address (url) provided at submission. Sending via 'WeTransfer' or similar transfer services is also accepted.
4) Submission Form, containing:
   - Contact details for the spatial planners - the team or the team leader - responsible for the selected project; a named contact for the local authority or agency commissioning the project
   - Summary description of the project
5) Information about any young planners who were involved. (professionals aged less than 35 years of age or less than 10 years' post-qualification experience.).
6) The bank evidence of the payment of the entry fees.

Entries should be sent to ECTP-CEU in electronic format: secretariat@ectp-ceu.eu

8. Deadline/timeline

Deadline, entries endorsed by ECTP-CEU membership organisations or individual entries:
Tier one entries: **7th April 2025**
Screening/shortlisting by the Jury - **May 2025**

Notification to the members on the final entries -Tier two: **1st June 2025**

Tier two entries, deadline Final submissions: **15th September 2025**
Jury assessment - **end of September 2025**

Awards/Presentation: **7th or 8th November 2025 in Brussels**

The shortlisted candidates will receive an invite to present the entry at the Awards ceremony in due time.

9. Entry fee

The entry fee to the 13th European Urban and Regional Planning Awards varies, depending whether the application is sent directly or endorsed by an ECTP-CEU member (national planner association).

Following fees apply:

- sent directly: 300,00 €
- endorsed by an ECTP-CEU member: 200,00 €

The above-mentioned entry fee, is due for tier two applications and the payment should be made by bank transfer to ECTP-CEU.

10. Awards/prizes

Awards will be given to those entries considered outstanding according to the assessment criteria as listed under chapter 5. An overall winner (first, second and third prize) will be awarded, regardless of the categories as listed under chapter 3, a winner will not be announced for each separate category. In the case of good examples, in a particular category, the jury may also decide to make a special mention.

ECTP-CEU will present Certificates of Achievement and following monetary prizes will be awarded:

- First prize - 1.000 €
- Second prize - 750 €
- Third prize - 500 €

A specific publication covering the entries will be disseminated at the 13th European Urban and Regional Planning Awards Ceremony.

The ownership of the results remains exclusively ECTP-CEU's and the dissemination of the results will be exclusively managed by the Executive Committee of ECTP-CEU.

No results will be communicated before the Awards Ceremony.

11. Ceremony

The 13th European Urban and Regional Planning Awards Ceremony will be held at the Autum General Assembly in Brussels on the 7th or 8th of November 2025, at a venue to be announced. This event achieved high media profile on the previous occasions and it is anticipated that the event will achieve similar coverage.

The shortlisted candidates, will be invited to attend the Ceremony and to participate in a session for presentations and debate.

12. Further information

For further information on the 13th European Urban and Regional Planning Awards, please contact ECTP-CEU secretariat. (secretariat@ectp-ceu.eu)

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Annexure 1 – Template for tier one entries

13th European Urban and Regional Planning Awards 2025
Tier one entries

Title of the entry/project:
Name of the ECTP-CEU member:
Name of the Planner/City/Local authority, responsible for the project:
Is the entry endorsed by an ECTP-CEU member? And if yes, by which one?
Awards Category:
The entry considers following criteria (short description):
Major features of the entry/project:
Location of the project, planning context, planning scale:
Stage of the project (in progress or already implemented):

Important note: the description should not exceed two pages and two pages containing illustrations.