

CIHEAM YOUTH INNOVATION AWARD FOR GREEN AND BLUE TRANSITION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN FOOD SYSTEMS

Opening and closing of the call: 20 MAY / 15 AUGUST 2024

in collaboration with UFM, UNIMED and BUSINESSMED



The 2024 edition of the "CIHEAM Youth Innovation Award" is launched with the support of partners who share common objectives and a common vision for the Mediterranean, namely, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the Mediterranean Universities Union (UNIMED) and the Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (BusinessMed). The Award ceremony will take place on the occasion of a CIHEAM special session held during the [Ecomondo exhibition](#), one of the most important fairs in the world dedicated to green and circular economy hosted in Rimini, Italy, on 5-8 November 2024.

Why a Youth Innovation Award for Green and Blue Transition in the Mediterranean?

Climate change and its impact on natural resources are increasingly showing their effects particularly at the global and at the Mediterranean levels. In a context of climate change and scarcity of natural resources, sustainable food systems represent a major challenge for countries in the Mediterranean region where the various socio-economic and environmental concerns are of paramount importance. A shift towards sustainable food system patterns can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase energy efficiency and renewable sources, reduce and valorize waste and by-products. It can help avoid the loss of biodiversity, conserve ecosystems and rural and coastal landscapes while promoting equitable growth and more inclusion. Today, the green, blue, circular and solidarity economy allow the emergence of innovative techniques, financing and services to respond to these challenges. **Young people play an essential role in this dynamic. Their visions and solutions need to be better known and supported and must become a source of inspiration for as many people as possible.**

Eligibility and selection criteria

The "CIHEAM Youth Innovation Award for Green and Blue Transition in the Mediterranean" will reward an innovative solution (scientific or entrepreneurship product/service, at least in a pilot phase), contributing to the green and blue transition of SFS Med, and at the same time to improve human well-being and social equity while reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities, contributing to zero climate impact. In order to strengthen the dynamics already at work, the Mediterranean countries eligible for the 2024 CIHEAM Innovation Award include those with which

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the Center has ongoing collaborations in the areas of research, student and staff exchanges, cooperation or network activities.

Eligibility criteria

- Applicants must be young Mediterranean, aged **not more than 39 years**
- Applications should propose an innovative solution (as an individual or on behalf of a team/startup), at least in a pilot phase to be **implemented in an area of the Mediterranean**

Selection criteria

The Award will recompense an innovative entrepreneurial solution, able to generate technological, scientific, economic or social impacts (job placement) and to demonstrate:

- Innovative and disruptive characteristics in comparison with existing ones;
- Quantitative and qualitative innovative contribution to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of Mediterranean Food Systems;
- Feasibility and measurable sustainability;
- Scale-up potential, reproducibility, etc.;
- Readiness of the innovation solution (RTL).

Application

Candidates can submit their application through [this form](#) available on the CIHEAM Website.

The Award

The selected awardee will receive **a financial grant of 10.000 €**, a CIHEAM medal and a Certificate, that will be delivered during a special technical session at the [ECOMONDO - The Green Technology Expo](#) which will take place from 5 to 8 November 2024 in Rimini (Italy). ECOMONDO, the ecological transition ecosystem, provides a space for encounters and discussion for industry, stakeholders, policy makers, opinion leaders and local authorities.

Other recognitions will also be awarded in the form of a **one-year scholarship for a Master's degree in open innovation and youth entrepreneurship** at the [CIHEAM Bari](#); and in the form of an **internship with one of the partner companies**.

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The awardees will also be promoted on the various communication platforms of the CIHEAM, the UfM, BUSINESSMED and UNIMED, especially on the occasion of the [Mediterranean Day](#) (November 28, 2024).

Selection Jury

The selection is based on a two step procedure.

The first stage consists of an evaluation of the eligibility criteria performed by a panel made up of members of the CIHEAM Youth Working Group. The second step consists of an evaluation by an external panel (External Selection Committee) composed of a maximum of 7 members:

- The President of the CIHEAM Advisory Board (CAB)
- One member for each Award partners (UfM, UNIMED, BusinessMed)
- One member from the CIHEAM Youth Working Group
- One member from the partner companies
- One expert in innovation (Incubators, Brokers etc.)

Key dates

20 MAY: Launch of the call

15 AUGUST: Closing of the call and start of the pre-selection (First step procedure)

1 OCTOBER: Evaluation by the External panel (Second step procedure)

5-8 NOVEMBER: Presentation of the winning project at Ecomondo (Date to be confirmed)