



European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023

Conditions for participation

Version of 27/10/2022

I. Responsibility for the content of the Award and submission office

The initiative Natur im Garten, represented by the Federal Province of Lower Austria as well as the “European Garden Association - Natur im Garten International”, the „Natur im Garten“ GmbH and the “Natur im Garten” Service GmbH will award the “European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023“ as a recognition of outstanding achievements in the field of ecological gardening. The Award, for which participants from all over Europe are eligible, will be handed over by an international expert jury.

Competition Management

“Natur im Garten” GmbH
A-3430 Tulln, Am Wasserpark 1, Austria
award@naturimgarten.at
<http://www.naturimgarten.at/award>
<http://www.naturimgarten.at/award-english>

II. Subject of the Award

It is the objective of the European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023 to award prizes to outstanding, high-quality projects and achievements, which have already been implemented and are based on ecological gardening. We are looking for both innovative and sustainable projects of exemplary character, which are near-naturally designed, ecologically cultivated and can also include social and economic aspects.

III. Objective of the Award and assessment criteria

The objective of the Award is reflected in the assessment criteria and is intended to present excellent ideas, achievements and results in one or several aspects:

- respect for nature and biodiversity, resource conservation
- optimisation of ecological processes and methods in garden management
- the most optimal ecological care and plant selection in accordance with the respective location
- raising public awareness for ecological gardening
- sustainable contribution to climate change
- imitation character, transferability, charisma
- creativity, innovation and sustainability of the implemented ideas and solutions
- social aspects with model character
- added value for the quality of life
- creatively designed landscape spaces
- cooperation and involvement of stakeholders

The size and financial scope of the projects are no assessment criteria. The focus is on the wealth of ideas and charisma.

Submissions can be made in the following three categories:

- **Category 1: Climate-fit municipal green areas**

Given that climate change constantly poses new challenges for us, we need intelligent ways of adapting green spaces in the public sphere. Therefore, we are looking for already implemented projects which represent an added value for humans and the environment alike, whether they serve as a place for experiencing nature, as places of recreation, as producers of cold air or as CO2 reducers. At the same time, the focus is on the innovative use of location-appropriate plants as well as on rainwater management, a positive impact on the microclimate and, not least, climate-fit gardening. The availability of a care concept for the sustainability of a given project also plays a major role.

Awards will be given to ecologically valuable projects in public and semi-public green spaces with a permeable ground and a cooling effect, including building greenings, which can be used for a variety of purposes irrespective of their size and which also take into account the region or the environment, such as the origin of the materials used (natural stone, wood, etc.). All projects submitted should reflect aspects of environmental justice, climate protection, energy generation and utilisation in an innovative way.

- **Category 2: Learning in the Garden - Nature experience gardens in kindergartens, schools and educational institutions**

The near-natural garden strengthens the positive relationship of our children and young people with nature, makes it possible to experience contexts and significantly contributes to the development of their environmental awareness. We are looking for new approaches by schools, kindergartens, universities and other educational institutions, which consider gardens as a kind of “third pedagogue“ and have designed them actively for the purposes of exercise, social and action-oriented learning.

No matter whether teachers, students and parents lend a hand together or whether the garden is designed by experts: We highlight innovative, ecological gardens, which are used as a diversified and practice-oriented learning environment for a variety of topics and subjects, as well as for active breaks, sensual experiences and leisure time.

Awards will be given to pedagogically and ecologically valuable projects for learning and teaching in public, semi-public or private green spaces, which, irrespective of their size, can be used for a variety of purposes of research, discovery and natural experience for young and old and can be used in an inclusive way and also take into account the region or the environment. Beyond that, also aspects of environmental justice and climate protection should be reflected in the submitted projects.

- **Category 3: Gardens for visitors with the focus on raising people’s awareness for more biodiversity and ecological gardening**

The ecologisation of gardens and green spaces promotes biodiversity and improves the ecological balance. That is why we are looking for diversified green spaces for visitors, ranging from renaturated industrial areas, city parks, public green spaces to free spaces around company and residential buildings - with the particular focus of conveying biodiversity to people and emphasising ecological gardening and an attitude towards ecological gardening and circular economy as a life-affirming sign of

environmental protection and a variety of species. Biodiversity means diversity - a diversity of different habitats, species diversity of animals, plants, mushrooms and microorganisms. Diversified structures in near-natural design, a careful handling of the soil and environment through ecological care are equally as important. In the end, natural und species protection starts directly at our doorstep.

We are hoping to receive a lively mix of implemented submissions, with all of them promoting biodiversity and aiming to encourage imitation - through inventiveness, new solution approaches or innovations and at the same time having the potential to initiate new projects.

Awards will be given to appealing, inspiring and ecologically valuable projects in public, semi-public or private green spaces, balconies and terraces, which, irrespective of their size, represent a real added value for humans and the environment alike and contribute to increasing biodiversity.

IV. Eligibility to participate

The competition is open to anyone. The competition particularly targets gardeners, planning offices, municipalities and local communities, educational institutions, research institutes, initiatives and associations from all European nations. The competition does not honour individuals but projects. Participation in the European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023 is free of charge.

Projects can be submitted which have been finalised during the past five years. Submitters are free to make their submissions in as many categories as they wish, provided that all criteria are met. However, the same project can be submitted in one category only. Should a submission be conceivable in all three categories, the submitter(s) select(s) those they consider to be the focus of the given project. The Jury reserves the right to shift submissions to a different category where appropriate. The Jury reserves the right to assign, if deemed appropriate, submissions to another category as long as it deems them worthy of an award in the respective category. The number of submissions per participant is not limited.

The competition is not open to:

- employees and relatives of members of the Awarding Authority and organisers, as well as
- projects which have already been awarded with the European Award for Ecological Gardening during the previous 4 years.

V. Competition language

English

In addition, the description of the project can also be enclosed in German.

VI. Documents to be submitted

Submissions can only be made **online at www.naturimgarten.at/award-english starting from 15 November 2022 until 31 May 2023**. Participants undertake to answer all questions truthfully. For each application, appropriate documentation must be provided that provides evidence of the special ecological, sustainable and social significance of the project by means of plans, photographs, descriptions, etc. By means of the uploaded documents, applicants have the opportunity to describe their submitted work and thereby give the Jury an impression of their project. A submission consists of the following:

1. Application for project submission (form)

A fully completed online submission form for project submissions, containing a description of the characteristics of horticultural achievements, taking into account the objective of the award, indicating the location and integration into the environment (approx. 2.000 characters including spaces, in English).

2. Illustrations and photographs

6 to 12 illustrations and photographs, which (in terms of assessment) are of significance for the project, indicating the project name and referring to the idea, location and social aspects; details should be given only if they are of relevance for the application. Use the following formats: A4 as JPG or TIF, resolution: 300 dpi (printable), max. 5 MB per picture. Include statements of copyright / photographic rights and an indication of the photographers' names. The pictures must represent the current status of the project and should not be older than 2 years at most.

In all categories, additional documentation can be uploaded for further project documentation or to better highlight the impact of the project:

- Short films and videos (only PC readable formats, 3-5 minutes, max. 30 MB),
- Additional illustration material, such as plans, graphics, etc.
- Further documentation (press-clippings, brochures, etc.)

3. Receipt of documents

Each submitter is, both technically and content-wise, responsible for his or her submission.

All the application documents must be submitted at the latest by **31 May 2023 23:59 hrs** digitally via online form (including the author's name, total data volume: max. 60 MB).

Each submission must be complete and meet the specified criteria. Submissions that are delayed, incomplete or do not meet the conditions of participation will be excluded from the competition.

The Awarding Authority reserves the right to request additional documentation subsequently in order to provide evidence of facts or to question third parties about the projects submitted. The latter findings can be taken into consideration during the assessment.

VII. Jury and assessment procedure

The European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023 will be awarded on the basis of an application. The award will be decided upon by an independent and expert panel.

This is a one-stage submission competition with no participation fee. The project submitted will be judged exclusively on the basis of the documents submitted. The latter must present the project in a comprehensible and clear manner.

The composition of the jury is incumbent on the Awarding Authority. All jury members have many years of experience in their field and are renowned and well-known personalities in the international horticultural industry. The jury is independent of the participants and makes a free decision. Submitters are excluded from acting as members of the Jury.

After the submission deadline, all submitted projects will be viewed and subjected to a comprehensive assessment. In each category, the ten most highly rated submissions will be selected from the submitted projects during a judging procedure using a points system. The number of nominees per category can be changed by the Jury. A winning project in the respective category will be selected from the nominated projects at the expert jury meeting.

In addition, the jury may give non-endowed awards/special mentions to other noteworthy objects, which will be honoured with a certificate.

The jury sessions are non-public and will take place in June and July 2023. The awarding consortium will supervise the expert judging procedure and ensure that the winners are correctly selected. Each jury member has one vote. Decisions will be taken by a simple majority of the votes. The decisions of the Jury are final and are not countervailable. Any recourse to courts of law is excluded. No written correspondence can be conducted about the Jury's work.

If, upon evaluation of the dossiers by the Jury, it appears that the submitter was not eligible for participation, or if there is any reason for exclusion, the next submission in the sequence will advance.

VIII. Nominations and prize

The Jury will nominate the best submissions in each category and select the winning project from among the latter. Participants to the competition nominated for the prize will be informed in writing and announced on 15 August 2023 on the website of "Natur im Garten", as well as in social networks and other online and print media.

The award winner will be presented to the public only during the prize award ceremony on 13 October 2023. The awarding of the nomination for the prize-winning projects takes place by means of a certificate and a nomination board.

For each category, a prize will be awarded to the winning project. The prize is made up of the public prize award ceremony, a special plaque, as well as a prize money of EUR 1.000,00. The prize money goes to the submitting institution.

All projects nominated or awarded for the European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023 can be advertised with the slogan "Nominated for the European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023" or "Recognition at the European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023" or "Prize winner of the European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023" and use the logo of the European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023 for this purpose.

Participation in the competition and the prize award ceremony is free of charge. Beyond that, no costs incurred can be reimbursed.

IX. Presentation of the nominated projects

Following the announcement of the nominations, all nominated projects will be presented at www.naturimgarten.at/award or www.naturimgarten.at/award-english.

A detailed brochure with all nominated projects will be published during the award ceremony. In addition, all nominated projects will be introduced and presented to the public in the form of an exhibition where the project submitters will have the opportunity to present their projects personally. The presence of the submitters at the award ceremony is requested. Please register in good time at www.naturimgarten.at/award.

This will be accompanied by a press release and the nominees and winning projects will be published on the website www.naturimgarten.at. The winners and their competition entries will be published in particular on the "Natur im Garten" website as well as in social networks and in other online and print media.

X. Prize award ceremony

Prizes and certificates will be handed over solely to the submitter(s) of the competition contributions which receive an award. The prize award ceremony, during which the winning projects will be announced, will be held on 13 October 2023 in Innsbruck, Austria.

X. Schedule and important dates

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|--------------------------|---|
| 15 November 2022: | Start of the submission period |
| 31 May 2023 | Entries deadline |
| June/July 2023: | Jury sessions |
| 15 August 2023: | Announcement of the nominations on the website of "Natur im Garten" as well as in social networks |
| 13 October 2023: | Prize award ceremony and announcement of the winning projects |

XII. Awarding Authority

Federal Province of Lower Austria

RU3 - Gruppe Raumordnung, Umwelt und Verkehr

Abteilung Umwelt- und Energiewirtschaft

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www.naturimgarten.at/european-garden-association

XIII. Changes to the terms and conditions of participation

The conditions of participation are conditional and may be subject to change at any time.

XIV. Contact

Questions regarding the submission can be sent to the Awarding Authority at:

award@naturimgarten.at.

XV. Declaration of consent

The submitters confirm that they are eligible to submit the project for the "European Award for Ecological Gardening 2023".

Furthermore, the submitters assure that they are entitled to dispose of the exploitation rights or copyrights to the materials handed over in connection with the submission (in particular uploaded photos, videos and other image material) and the consent of the persons shown in the images.

The submitters give their consent to the publication of the submitted competition entries at the exhibition and in the media (presentations, web, print and radio), as well as for other publications without any restrictions in terms of space or time, by naming the submitters, photographers and the location.

Submitted documents will remain with the awarding authority and will not be returned.

By submitting the competition entry, all participants accept all the conditions contained in the call for entries. The participants expressly acknowledge that the decisions of the Jury are final and unappealable in all technical and discretionary matters. There is no recourse to legal action.