

Prize Contest Fiche: Prize for Women Innovators 2014

After the success of the first Prizes for Women Innovators, awarded in 2011, the Commission continues its drive to spotlight women researchers who have brought about outstanding innovations to the market. Europe urgently needs more innovators to stay competitive in the coming decades. The large number of well-educated women researchers who, for various reasons, including lack of awareness, do not consider entrepreneurship as an option, represents a tremendous untapped pool of innovation. Awards have a strong potential to drive innovation through the recognition of achievements and the promotion of role models.

The Prize for Women Innovators 2014 will aim to increase public awareness of this issue, to encourage women to exploit the commercial and business opportunities offered by their research projects and become entrepreneurs, it will therefore help to achieve the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The prizes will not reward research or innovation proposed for the future, but results that have been already obtained.

The Commission intends to award up to three "Prize for Women Innovators 2014" following a contest.

Implementation and management:

The rules of the contest are established and published by the Commission, which will launch and manage the contest and award the prizes. An information campaign will be launched to advertise it via National Contact Points and Programme Committees in order to encourage candidates to apply. Applications have to be submitted by the contestant (natural person) via the web-based submission forms on www.ec.europa.eu/women-innovators.

The applicant will have to provide proof of eligibility and a written presentation of her achievements, which will be presented to a High Level Jury for evaluation.

The High Level Jury will consist of a group of independent experts from business and academia appointed by the Commission.

They will appraise the quality of the entries and submit to the Commission the final list of up to 3 women selected for the award of the following prizes:

First prize: EUR 0.10 million

Second prize: EUR 0.05 million

Third prize: EUR 0.03 million

Funding scheme: prizes ¹

Coordination and Support Action (supporting action), prizes - EUR 0.18 million²

¹ In accordance with Article 30 of Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 of 18 December 2006 laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the Seventh Framework programme and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2013).

² Under the condition that the draft budget for 2013 is adopted without modification by the budgetary authority.

Date of publication of the contest³: 10 July 2012

Date of opening of the contest⁴: 15 April 2013, at 12:00:00 Brussels local time

Deadline to submit applications⁵: 15 October 2013, at 17:00:00 Brussels local time

Eligibility criteria:

Contestants for the "**Prize for Women Innovators 2014**" shall comply with the following eligibility criteria to participate:

1. The contestant must be a woman.
Example of proof: Copy of any official document of identification e.g. passport, identity card.
2. The contestant must be an ordinary resident in an EU Member State or in Associated Countries⁶ of the Research Framework Programmes.
Example of proof: Copy of any official document of identification e.g. passport, driving licence etc.
3. The contestant must be the founder or co-founder of an existing and active company.
Example of proof: Copy of any official document showing clearly that the candidate has (co-) founded a company.
4. The company has been registered before 1 January 2011.
Example of proof: Copy of any official document showing the date of registration of the company (e.g. copy from the business register).
5. The annual turnover of the company was at least EUR 0.10 million in 2011 or 2012.
Example of proof: Copy of a document showing the annual turnover in 2011 (e.g. copy of the annual report to the tax authorities).
6. Either the contestant as a natural person or the company founded/co-founded by the contestant have received or is receiving funding from the European Union or the European Atomic Energy Community Research Framework Programme, or from the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP).
Example of proof: Copy of a document demonstrating the past or current EU funding.

³ The Director- General responsible for the contest may publish it up to one month prior or after the envisaged date of publication.

⁴ The Director-General responsible may delay this deadline up to two months.

⁵ The Director-General responsible may delay this deadline up to two months.

Award criteria:

The winners of the "**Prize for Women Innovators 2014**" will be selected according to the following award criteria, which will be assessed by the High Level Jury:

1. The originality and marketability of the developed product or service provided by the company of the contestant.
2. The economic relevance for Europe.
The economic relevance of a product or service of the company for Europe is measured by the number of countries (inside and outside the EU) where the product or service is sold, and by the size of the turnover achieved with this service or product in 2011 and 2012.
3. The social relevance for Europe
The social relevance of a product or service of the company for Europe is defined by the potential of the service or product to help Europe address the grand societal challenges such as the ageing of the European population, global warming, clean water, renewable energy and resource efficiency.
4. The high scientific content of the innovation
The contestant must have been involved in the research and innovation activities connected to the origin of the product or service provided by the company she has founded or co-founded. Entries will be compared according to the number of patents/co-patents, scientific publications (or co-publications) and trademark.

Contestants can at any time be required to submit official proof to support claims made under any of the above eligibility and award criteria.

Expected impact:

In face of the demographic development of the European continent, Europe can no longer afford to leave unused the greatest untapped pool of innovative entrepreneurs, the European-based women researcher. The prizes will both boost the public awareness of the contribution, potential and importance of women researchers to entrepreneurship and will encourage entrepreneurial women themselves to become innovators.

A group of independent experts (in the form of a High Level Jury) will be in charge of assessing the quality of the applications for the '**Prize for Women Innovators 2014**' against the rules of the contest.