



# Blue Sky



Young Researcher &  
Innovation Award 2026



Blue Sky Young  
Professional Award 2026

Cepi



EUCEPA

European Liaison Committee  
for Pulp and Paper

## APPLY FOR THE BLUE SKY YOUNG RESEARCHERS & INNOVATION AWARD EUROPE 2026 AND THE BLUE SKY PRO YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AWARD EUROPE 2026

[APPLY HERE by 30 June](#)

Cepi, in partnership with EUCEPA (the European Liaison Committee for Pulp and Paper), invites researchers and young professionals working on innovative projects across the forest-based value chain to apply for the Blue Sky Young Researchers & Innovation Award Europe 2026 or the Blue Sky Pro Young Professionals Award Europe 2026 by **30 June 2026**.

The two award categories recognise different types of innovation contributing to the resilience and sustainability of the forest-based sector:

- **Blue Sky Young Researchers & Innovation Award Europe 2026** focuses on research-driven innovation, including scientific research, emerging technologies, novel materials, breakthrough concepts, and experimental developments relevant to the forest-based sector.
- **Blue Sky Pro Young Professionals Award Europe 2026** focuses on innovation put into practice, recognising young professionals implementing sustainable improvements, operational innovations, process optimisation, or technological developments in industrial and manufacturing environments.

Eligible projects may cover forest-based science, products using forest-based raw materials, pulp and paper production process improvements, sustainable manufacturing developments, or other innovations throughout the value chain.

The shortlisted candidates will:

- attend a personalised public speaking training with an experienced native English-speaking coach;
- present their research or innovation project during the [Bioeconomy LAB exhibition](#) in Brussels;
- network with an exclusive group of industry experts and representatives.

The laureates will automatically qualify for the global ICFPA Blue Sky contest in Brazil in 2027.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

### Blue Sky Young Researchers & Innovation Award Europe 2026

Applicants must:

- be under 30 years of age;
- be currently working under the supervision of a European research institute or university;
- conduct research or innovation work with the potential to advance the pulp, paper and forest fibre industry in a sustainable manner.

### Blue Sky Pro Young Professionals Award Europe 2026

Applicants must:

- be under 35 years of age;
- work in an R&D, technological, operational or manufacturing role within companies across the pulp, paper and board value chain;
- contribute to practical industrial innovation, sustainable manufacturing developments, or process improvements.

### General eligibility requirements

Applicants for both categories must:

- be fluent in English and possess good presentation skills;
- work within the European forest-based value chain.

### Next steps

The selection process is conducted by juries composed of representatives from industry, European institutions, and the scientific and academic communities. Three candidates per category will be shortlisted by 3 August and invited to Brussels to present their projects to industry experts and representatives.

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