

EUROPEAN
Riverprize

**2022 EUROPEAN
RIVERPRIZE GUIDELINES**



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1. Introduction

Riverprize, the world's most prestigious environmental award, has been awarded since 1999. The award alternates between the International *Riverprize* which is awarded every second year and a regional *Riverprizes* bringing recognition to organisations (or groups of organisations) who are achieving remarkable outcomes along the journey to resilience for rivers, river basins and their communities.

Riverprizes are awarded by the International RiverFoundation (IRF), a not-for-profit organisation that envisions a future where healthy, resilient rivers support thriving communities, ecosystems and economies. Our mission is to build a global community of River Leaders to champion the health and resilience of rivers around the world through the pillars of leadership, collaboration and celebration.

First awarded in 2013, the European *Riverprize* celebrates excellence in the management, conservation and development of Europe's rivers, wetlands and surrounding communities. Historically, the prize was awarded in conjunction with the European River Symposium, which attracts an audience of Europe's leading advocates for environment and river protection, including the European Commissioner for Environment. Previous winners of the European *Riverprize* include the Rhine River (2013), Mur River (2014) and the Segura River (2016).

The European *Riverprize 2022* is generously supported by Coca Cola and will be awarded during the 25th International *Riversymposium* which will be held on 27th-30th November 2022 in Vienna, Austria.

1.1 *Riverprize* – What does it take to win?

Having awarded 21 International *Riverprizes* and over 20 Regional *Riverprizes*, IRF examined what it takes to be a winner. These five key elements have been identified as the recipe for success:

1. An emphasis on long term commitment
2. Collaboration and partnerships
3. Equality, diversity, and inclusiveness
4. A holistic and integrated approach to planning, evaluation, and monitoring
5. A very clear vision

IRF's [River Journeys](#) book showcases past winners, twinning projects and other initiatives.

2. Re-envisioning the *Riverprizes*

The COVID pandemic has and is continuing to change the world – causing significant interruptions to our traditional activities and the way we go about with our lives. The pandemic has allowed us to reflect and look at opportunities to remain connected, and work together to have a future where healthy, resilient rivers support thriving communities, ecosystems, and economies. In 2022, all of us are looking forward to returning to some sort of normality; however, it is imperative that we continue to adapt.

From 2021, the emphasis of the International RiverFoundation shifted to building community and river resilience rather than just recovery. The International RiverFoundation is encouraging applications that reflect a journey towards the resilience of the rivers, including the following:

- A whole-of-system and integrated approach;

- Planning across multiple scales;
- Evaluation and monitoring
- Actively engaged stakeholders
- Effective institutional arrangements
 - River leadership
 - Sound decision making and governance framework.
- Flexible cross-sector solutions
 - Embracing/piloting innovation
 - Adaptive, ecosystem-based
 - Reflective and flexible.
- Effective financial mechanisms
 - Sufficient financing to implement plans (e.g. investments towards recovery and resilience)
 - Incorporating value of social and ecosystem services.

The criteria for winning the 2022 European Riverprize has accordingly been refreshed (Refer to Section 6).

2.1 River resilience – rivers for future generations

Enabling the resilience of our world’s rivers by addressing the complex social, economic and ecological pressures associated with global change such as the current changes and challenges that have come about with the COVID-19 pandemic, becomes more relevant than ever. We need to ensure our rivers are there for future generations.

River resilience is the capacity of a river system and its associated communities to quickly recover from disturbances, adapt to changes without collapsing, and to transform through innovation and implementation of resilience strategies. The road to resilience can be a complex journey with the interdependence of environmental, social and economic outcomes. There is a need for a paradigm shift and/or movement in the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) goal posts: from achieving healthy rivers to achieving resilient rivers. The journey to achieve the vision of resilience of our rivers is underpinned by four key principles: a) whole-of-system approach; b) effective institutional arrangements; c) effective financial mechanisms; and d) cross-sectoral and flexible solutions. River basins are encouraged to leapfrog recovery to resilience.

3. The IRF Riverprize Alumni Network – a global network of river leaders

The Riverprize Alumni Network comprises Riverprize finalists and winners – a prestigious group of award-winning river leaders who have demonstrated outstanding commitment and expertise to restore, protect and sustainably manage rivers around the world. They showcase high-impact river initiatives. They have the opportunity to connect with other river leaders across the world to tackle major emerging river basin issues and develop personal relationships to share lessons learned and technical resources. The IRFs Alumni Network promotes opportunities to connect virtually in educational forums, receive technical support from fellow global river managers, and meet in-person at the annual International Riversymposium.

4. Eligibility

Organisations, or groups of organisations, responsible for their river and involved in river management, restoration and/or protection can enter. Applications are invited from any river, lake, or wetland in Europe that has demonstrated outstanding achievements in the last two years (although work may have been commenced earlier).

To be considered for the European Riverprize, the river must be located in Europe.

The size of your organisation, budget or project is not a barrier to winning; it's the integration of programs, innovations used and most critically, the judges are looking for the achievements towards maintained or improved river ecosystem health.

Who is **not** eligible to enter?

- Any organisation that has previously won the European Riverprize or Thies International Riverprize in the last 10 years
- Anyone who cannot comply with the Riverprize terms and conditions
- Any organisation that has been prosecuted for a violation of any environmental, social or commercial law in the past 5 years.

Finalists to the European Riverprize or International Riverprize can reapply in any category at any time.

5. Recognition

Financial reward, public recognition and increased resources are powerful incentives for river groups to further their efforts to repair damaged rivers and the health of their catchments and river basins in the journey towards resilience. This recognition has provided invaluable to finalists and winners in their ability to attract further resources and financial support.

The process of applying for Riverprize allows the applicant to reflect on, document their innovations and share their lessons learned. By telling their stories of success and challenges overcome, they inspire other global river initiatives and river leaders.

Finalists will be celebrated, and the winner announced at the 25th International Riversymposium on 27th-30th November 2022 in Vienna, Austria. All finalists will be showcased via the short videos provided, to an audience of VIPs, dignitaries, government representatives, sponsors, and conference delegates. Finalists are encouraged to join the special event either in person or online (depending on travel restrictions).

In addition to this recognition and acceptance into the Riverprize Alumni Network, the European Riverprize winner will receive a cash prize to go towards their program/s (within 12 months of the award ceremony) and trophy.

6. Selection Criteria

The entry process allows applicants to reflect on your river basin's (and its communities') progress and achievements in the journey towards protection, recovery and resilience.

2022 European Riverprize Selection Criteria

1. Demonstrated progress in protecting and/or building river/catchment/basin recovery and resilience (25%)
2. Achievements aligned with a long-term strategic water resources/resilience planning (25%)
3. Partnerships, co-investment opportunities and stakeholder engagement (25%)
4. Innovation and degree of difficulty (25%)

For more details on selection criteria, see Appendix 1.

7. How to Apply

Applying is a two-staged process, providing an efficient method of determining whether applications meet the criteria and will be competitive.

Applicants should visit the [Riverprize webpage](#), read the Riverprize FAQs and register. Applicants will be emailed a unique link to complete the online application. This is a secure link and can be sent to multiple people, if needed. Access to applications is only available via this link. If the link is lost or misplaced, it can be re-supplied to the designated contact person.

Applicants must read and accept the Terms and Conditions. Please ensure you understand the responsibilities of finalists and the winner.

Stage 1 closes Friday 15th July 2022.

Stage 2 applications (open to short listed applications only) close Friday, 16th September 2022

See Appendices 1 and 2 for more details.

Riverprize applications must comply with the following:

Electronic	All applications must be submitted via the online portal in the requested format and within the word limit (including supporting materials).
Language	All applications must be in English. Additional documentation may be in another language, however, providing documents in other languages may result in those documents not being understood.
General	Applications must spell out acronyms and abbreviations in the first instance of it appearing in the submission.
Criteria	Judges will assess applications against the Riverprize criteria. All questions must be completed in the corresponding section.
Appendices and supporting documents	Appendices and supporting documents can be attached to the online application and should be referenced in the application. Supporting documentation should include a table of contents and 5 - 10 high resolution images (300+dpi) that are representative of the project,

A maximum of 25 documents can be uploaded with a maximum file size of 1GB in total.

8. Judging Process

The 2022 European Riverprize judging panel consists of eminent scientists and river experts from around the world who participate on a voluntary basis. This independent judging panel is convened by the IRF. Judges must absent themselves from judging any entry for which they have a conflict of interest. The judges' decision will be final.

The Chair of the 2022 European Riverprize Judging Panel is Professor Paul Greenfield, Chair of the IRF.

Riverprize applicants are not to contact members of the judging panel regarding the Riverprize process or their entry. This type of contact may result in disqualification from the prize.

8.1 Application Process and Key Dates

Step 1	Applicants register on the Riverprize Online Portal.
Step 2	Submit Stage 1 application by Friday, 15th July 2022 Applications are assessed, and short-listed applicants notified by mid August 2022
Step 3	Stage 2 application submitted by Friday, 16th September 2022 (Short-listed applicants only). Finalists announced mid October 2022.
Step 4	Finalists register for the 2022 European Riverprize Gala Dinner by 30th October 2022 .
Step 5	Finalists provide a 2 min video for promotional purposes by 7th November 2022
Step 6	Finalists present their work immediately within the 25th International Riversymposium
Step 7	The European Riverprize winner is announced at the Gala Dinner on 29th November 2022.

9. More Information

You can find FAQs, supporting links and materials on the Riverprize webpage <https://riverfoundation.org.au/our-programs/riverprize-2/> . If you have more questions, contact info@riverfoundation.org.au or call +61 7 3002 9062.

10. Terms and Conditions

1. All applications, supporting material and images remain the property of the IRF and may be utilised for educational, promotional and/or fundraising purposes.
2. Entries found to be misleading may be withdrawn from the judging process or have the prize revoked.

3. IRF accepts no responsibility for entries that are not received, late, incomplete or are lost due to a technical problem.
4. IRF reserves the right to cancel the prize if an insufficient number of entries has been received, the quality of entries does not meet the criteria, or the entries are deemed inappropriate for any reason.
5. All **European Riverprize finalists must** submit a short video showcasing their story, to be screened at the *Riverprize* Gala dinner in Vienna, Austria on 29th November 2021. This must be a single, high-definition video that gives an overview of the organisation, project/s and achievements. This material is required for publicity purposes (e.g. awards ceremony, IRF's website and YouTube page). The video does not influence the judging process and will not be returned.
6. IRF reserves the right to use entry photos and videos for **Riverprize marketing and promotion** and any other relevant materials
7. All **European Riverprize finalists must** register to attend and present their work during the 2022 International *Riversymposium* either in person or online (depending on travel restrictions). Finalists may also be asked to participate in panel discussions, provide video testimonials and other marketing/media opportunities. ***IRF is unable to provide financial assistance to attend the symposium. However, finalists will be eligible for early-bird registration fees.***
8. **European Riverprize finalists must** attend the 2022 European *Riverprize* Gala dinner in Brisbane, Australia either in person (if travel is possible) or virtually (if travel restrictions are still in place). IRF is unable to provide financial assistance to attend this event.
9. **European Riverprize finalists are encouraged** to become members of the *Riverprize* Alumni Network and are encouraged to develop a close working partnership with other *Riverprize* finalists and winners to exchange knowledge and skills.
10. **European Riverprize finalists** are encouraged to become members of the Resilient Rivers Hub Network, where their works can be presented as case studies of the journey towards river resilience.
11. **The European Riverprize Winner must** attend the 2023 International *Riversymposium* (Brisbane, Australia) with a delegation of three or more representatives. Winners are expected to participate in various sessions, functions and networking events to share their knowledge, experiences and lessons learned. Winners are encouraged to bring emerging leaders to the 2023 International *Riversymposium* to participate in the emerging water professionals program and submit an abstract to present in their area of expertise.
12. **The European Riverprize Winners agree** to document their award-winning processes as a case study and make it available for IRF to share with other groups (e.g. IRF website, Resilient Rivers Hub and printed publications). Winners also agree to provide testimonials about the impacts of winning the *Riverprize* and how prize money has been invested.
13. **The European Riverprize Winners are expected to** share their learnings and journey, including participation in *RiverAcademy* as course developers or mentors, or *RiverTwinning* opportunities with other river basins.

14. In 2023, **Riverprize winners may be invited to** give a *RiverTalk*, IRF's bimonthly webinar to showcase their journey to resilience.
15. The **Riverprize monies** will be paid to the winner of within 12 months of winning. An official invoice, accompanied with a short design and plan for a project to take their river system further on the road to resilience will need to be approved by the IRF.
16. **The European Riverprize winners** are not eligible to re-apply for ten years. Finalists are welcome to re-apply at any time.
17. Applicants must not contact any member of the *Riverprize* judging panel during the judging process, either verbally or in writing, about the *Riverprize* process or any specific entry for their chosen category. This type of contact will render the associated entry of the person contacting the judging panel invalid.
18. Members of the *Riverprize* judging panel, or their nominated delegate, may contact referees and make enquiries of acknowledged river and waterway systems scientists and independent experts regarding any of the entries. The judges' decision will be final.

11. Appendix

11.1 Appendix 1 - Stage 1 Application A-C

STAGE 1	
Section	Information to be provided
SECTION A	<p>Administrative details pertaining to your entry, including Terms and Conditions.</p> <p>Insert your river name and country.</p> <p>Contact details</p>
SECTION B RIVER AND ENTRANT DETAILS SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS	<p>Provide an overview of your River:</p> <p>B.1 Describe the catchment characteristics – population, threats and risks (250 words limit)</p> <p>B.2 Describe environmental, social, economic values of your river (250 words limit)</p> <p>B.3 Organisational overview – Background/history (250-word)</p> <p>It is important to set the context for your entry through a clear organisational overview. You may include information such as your organisation's history or timeline, the catalyst for your (project/program) activities or involvement with the river, any major organisational milestones you have achieved or challenges you have overcome so far, and any overarching goals.</p> <p>B.4 Roles of other parties as they relate to the project (250-word limit)</p> <p>Managing rivers involves many stakeholders. The <i>Riverprize</i> entry may be submitted on behalf of a group of organisations, for example by the lead agency. Please outline the roles and responsibilities of the various participating parties involved in the (project/program) activities.</p> <p>Emphasise the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders and how they work together (e.g. is there a governance structure or signed commitments, memorandum of understanding).</p> <p>B.5 Summary of achievements (300-word limit)</p> <p>This summary should briefly describe your initiative, detail its impact and clearly demonstrate why it is unique or ground-breaking.</p> <p>Include what the program or project achievements are, where they are implemented, why they were needed and how activities improved or preserved the aquatic ecosystem health of your river, estuary, lake or wetland and its catchment or basin.</p> <p>Specific achievements and activities can then be detailed further in section C.</p> <p>This summary be used for promotion purposes and included in promotional materials should you become a finalist or a winner.</p>

<p>SECTION C</p> <p>EVIDENCE OF OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS</p>	<p>C.1 Demonstrated achievements in integrated river basin management</p> <p>Provide details of key achievements in integrated river basin management which have led to the protection, maintenance or improvement and resilience in the aquatic ecosystem health of your river, wetland, estuary, lake and its catchment/watershed/basin.</p> <p>This includes an outline of adaptive on-ground solutions that made a difference.</p> <p>Evidence of success may include improvement in water quality, biodiversity and ecosystem health, as well as also social, cultural and economic results and achievements in health and liveability.</p> <p>Examples of demonstrated outstanding achievements which have led to a better ecosystem health include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures for river restoration and recovery • Monitoring data that demonstrate the achievements (e.g. water quality and/or biodiversity) • Survey results and other statistics which demonstrate the achievements • Management studies and strategic plans • Indigenous/cultural engagement • Community engagement and/or education programs • Partnership agreements • Letters or notes of acknowledgement <p>Where possible, please provide web-based references. All referenced documents and reports will be requested as supporting material in the Stage 2 Entry. <u>Please do not send books or other hardcopy paperwork as they will not be accepted.</u></p> <p>C.2 (optional) Supporting documents detailing your stated achievements</p> <p>Provide up to three (3) images, maps or documents to support the achievements outlined in sections A – C1. You are not obliged to submit any materials in this section; however, any materials provided here will be used to judge your submission.</p>
<p>STAGE 1 CLOSES Friday 15th July 2022. Shortlisted entrants notified mid-August 2022.</p>	

11.2 Appendix 2 – Stage 2 Application D-F

STAGE 2	
Open to shortlisted entrants only	
Section	Information and documentation to be provided
<p>SECTION D</p> <p>EFFECTIVE, INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>D.1 Describe your long-term vision and strategic plans (300-word limit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the vision? Include short, medium, and long-term targets to achieve the vision. • Demonstrate your plans and/or processes to ensure outcomes are maintained into the future and sustainable management plans are in place to achieve anticipated outcomes • Examples include river basin master plans; an agreed vision document, strategic plans/planning processes, schedules for funding and continuous program/business improvement, plan or program effectiveness evaluation and stakeholder engagement processes. Water source protection, Water Security, Flood management plans, flood risk planning. • Active engagement and participation by all relevant stakeholders in well-informed and transparent decision-making <p>D.2 Provide evidence of stakeholder engagement, communication and outreach incorporated into your stated achievements (300-word limit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building on SDG5 (gender equality) demonstrate diversity, inclusion and equality in your program or project. • How have you embraced diversity including gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and disability? • Demonstrate inclusiveness that promote behaviours that welcome and embrace diversity in enhancing river management. • Demonstrate any gender equity aspects and the inclusion of any indigenous groups and other minorities. • Include supporting documents such as corporate and community engagement plans, education programs, investment plans for improved land management practices or industry environmental plans etc. <p>D.3 Demonstrate an integrated and collaborative approach to river management (300-word limit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate your collaboration, partnerships and <u>co-investments</u>. • Provide evidence of social and economic aspects incorporated into river management

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include evidence of participatory planning, communications and interdisciplinary collaboration. <p>D.4 Describe your monitoring and evaluation program (300-word limit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the project outcomes measured, e.g. monitoring plans, project evaluations, surveys? • Include supporting documents such as report cards or other documents detailing the health, river management plans and processes aimed at improving or maintaining the aquatic ecosystem health. • How does your monitoring and evaluation feedback into your planning? • Demonstrated policies, plans or processes to ensure achieved outcomes are maintained into the future. <p>D.5 Describe your vision and approach for leapfrogging recovery to resilience of your river system (300-word limit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with the IRF’s Resilient Rivers Blueprint, describe how you are building resilience into environmental, social and infrastructure elements of river management – ensuring healthy rivers for future generations. <p>D.6 What have been the challenges and lessons learned (300-word limit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the challenges and difficulties faced. • What were the innovations you implemented? • What are your key lessons learned to share with peers? <p>D.7 If you were to win, how would you invest the prize money? (300-word limit) – Note: this criterion is not judged</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are potential programs, activities or aspects of your current project/program that could be funded with the prize money? • Do you have a “bankable” or impact-investment ready idea that can be pitched to achieve resilience of your river system?
<p>SECTION E</p> <p>VERIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY</p>	<p>Three independent referees must be supplied regardless of the scale of the project or the number of partner organisations involved.</p> <p>Referees may be contacted by the chair or a member of the judging panel. These referees must be qualified to attest to the authenticity of the content submitted.</p> <p>Referees should be able to provide comment from the perspective of science, policy, practice, collaboration and community participation, as well as proposed or achieved outcomes.</p>
<p>SECTION F</p>	<p>Include technical and scientific reports and other documents that are referred to both in Stage 1 and Stage 2 entry material.</p> <p>You can also include any other documentation, such as plans, policies, strategies, media reports, letters and maps to support your project</p>

**SUPPORTING
DOCUMENTATION**

achievements. These documents must be provided electronically via the online entry portal.

Note that the judges will be primarily English speaking, so providing documents in other languages may result in those not being fully appreciated.

You can upload up to 25 attachments with a total size of max 1 GB.

It should also include 5 to 10 high resolution images (300dpi) that can be used to promote your activities if you become a finalist.

STAGE 2 CLOSES Friday 16th September 2022. Shortlisted entrants notified mid-October 2022.