



ESPO AWARD 2024

ON SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF PORTS

Sixteenth Edition

Port projects or strategies in the field of circular economy that benefit the city and/or the surrounding community

Terms of Reference

1. Background

The erosion of public support for seaports has been recognised in the last few years as an issue that needs attention from port management. Competition for land use, negative externalities of port operations as well as safety and security concerns have contributed over the last few decades to a negative public image of many ports. This has been reinforced by the fact that ports, in many cases, moved out of sight of citizens. Ports are at best acknowledged as a necessary evil, but more often the general public and policy makers alike ignore the fundamental contributions ports make to the economy and society. The result is that ports often stand alone, without allies, when they run into opposition to their development.

Embracing cohabitation and dialogue with cities and local communities is for many port authorities a difficult learning process since it often seems to be a distraction from the commercial rationale of port operations. Moreover, the distance between ports and cities has in many cases been widened through processes of globalisation.

The economic role of ports can however only be sustained in the longer run if the social role is taken seriously. Port authorities are therefore more and more becoming aware of the need to devise innovative ways to develop cooperative synergies with cities, to improve the quality and accessibility of port areas and to generally promote a positive image to the general public. The European Commission has also recognised the issue and highlights the need to establish a better dialogue between ports and cities as a priority area in the context of both its maritime and ports policies.

2. Objective

The ESPO Award aims to promote innovative projects of European port authorities that improve social integration of ports, especially with the city or wider community in which they are located. In this way, the award wants to stimulate the sustainable development of European ports and their cities.

3. Theme of the 2024 edition

For the 2024 competition the theme is “Port projects or strategies in the field of circular economy that benefit the city and/or the surrounding community”.

As multimodal hubs in the supply and logistics chain, nodes of energy and clusters of industry and being located very often in or nearby urban agglomerations Europe’s ports can play a crucial role in the transition towards more circularity.

The **ESPO Award 2024** will go to the port managing body which has been developing a circular economy strategy and/or significant circular economy projects engaging the port as such, involving different stakeholders in or around the port and/or playing an active role in setting up circular economy projects with and to the benefit of the surrounding community.

The ESPO award winner 2024 will be the port managing body which is considering circularity at different levels as a priority and integral part of its greening strategy and is aiming at engaging all relevant stakeholders in its circular approach strategy to the benefit of the citizens and the surrounding community.

Project submissions have to reach the ESPO Secretariat by Friday 5 July 2024 at the latest. The application form and the terms of reference are available on [the ESPO Website](#).

4. Participation and selection criteria

Necessary criteria for participation are:

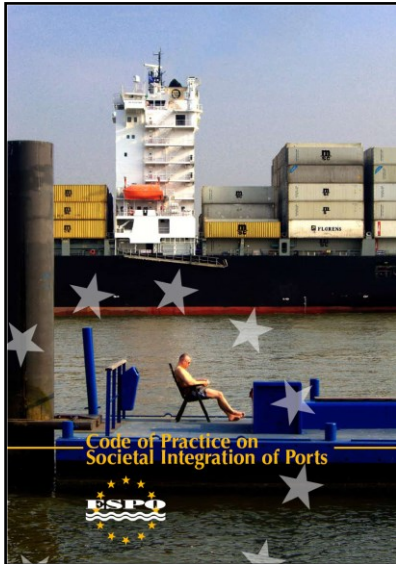
- a) the project must be proposed by one or more port authorities that are directly or indirectly associated with ESPO (i.e. as direct full or observer member of ESPO or as member of a port association or administration which is full or observer member of ESPO) – this does not prevent candidates from developing the project together with city authorities, private operators or local stakeholder organisations
- b) the project must correspond to the theme port projects or strategies in the field of circular economy benefitting the city and/or the surrounding community
- c) the project must be at least in the first stages of implementation
- d) there can only be one project submission per port authority / group of port authorities

The winner selection will be based on:

- a) original and innovative character of the project
- b) vision and leadership deployed by the senior management of the port authority
- c) involvement of partners and stakeholders concerned
- d) progress status, feasibility, commitment by investors and timing
- e) assessment of the contribution in practice to the objective of the award
- f) overall presentation and documentation

5. ESPO Code of Practice on Societal Integration of Ports

Applicants may find inspiration in the ESPO Code of Practice on Societal Integration of Ports that was published in 2010. This code brings together practical experience based on the cooperation project 'People around Ports' that ran from 2009 to 2010.



It can be downloaded from the ESPO website:

<http://www.espo.be/media/espopublications/ESPOCodeofPracticeonSocietalIntegrationofPorts2010.pdf>

In addition, the project submissions for the previous editions of the Award were brought together in illustrated booklets. These are also available on the ESPO website:

<http://www.espo.be/our-gallery#texte-2>

6. Jury

The selection will be carried out by an independent jury of experts and specialists on the theme of the Award. The composition of this year's jury will be communicated at a later stage.

The ESPO secretariat attends the meetings of the jury in an observer and non-voting capacity to oversee the application of the criteria.

7. Selection procedure

The 2024 call for project proposals was launched on 21 March 2024. Interested candidates are invited to fill out a specific application form that can be downloaded from the ESPO website. The completed form and any supporting documentation need **to reach** the ESPO secretariat by Friday 7 July 2024 at the latest and should be sent by email to secretariat@espo.be. An acknowledgement of the submission will be sent as proof of reception of the application.

For any supporting material deemed relevant for the jury to consider and which cannot be sent by email (such as professional quality photographs or other illustrations, brochures, flyers, reports, etc.) they may be sent by post to the ESPO secretariat. In this case, 8 copies, if possible, of this material should be provided so that they can be distributed to the jury members. Please limit the documentation to what is really relevant to support your application and make sure that **all material is in English**.

After receipt of all applications, the jury Chairman will prepare a long-list of candidates that meet the participation criteria. At a first stage, the jury will then prepare a shortlist of nominees based on the selection criteria. From these nominees, the jury will then select the Award winner during the morning of the Award ceremony. During this final selection process, representatives of the nominees will be invited to present their project to the jury in Brussels. The winner of the award will be announced by the jury Chairman during the ESPO Award Ceremony.

8. Description of the award

The award is symbolic (i.e. non-financial).

Since 2016, a painting has been offered to the winner. Exclusively for ESPO, the Dutch port painter Sasja Hagens has developed a new series reflecting the overall scope of the ESPO Award, i.e. how ports and cities are living and working together.

9. Award ceremony

The 16th ESPO Award will be officially handed out during a ceremony which will be held in November 2024 in Brussels.



ESPO Award 2023: North Sea Port wins the ESPO Award