

2026 European Responsible Care Awards: Shaping a Resilient Future

Submission Guidelines

The closing date for applications is **10 July 2026**.

Theme: *Shaping a Resilient Future: Honouring organisations driving resilience through safety excellence, digital innovation, climate action, circularity, and empowering the workforce.*

This year, our focus is on recognising organisations that are leading the way in safety excellence, digital innovation, climate action, circularity, and workforce empowerment.

The categories include the following:

- Operational Excellence: Process Safety and Cybersecurity; Digital Innovation for Responsible Operation; Responsible Supply Chain & Collaboration;
- Sustainability & Environment: Sustainability; Climate and Circularity;
- Caring about the Smaller: NAs and SMEs;
- People-Centred Transformation: Excellence in Talent and Workforce Development, as well as STEM Attraction.

For further information, please contact us at: RCAwards@cefic.be

Criteria for entries

- Include **additional supporting materials** such as photos, images, short videos, PowerPoint presentation, testimonials, etc **demonstrating the initiative's benefits** including **facts, figures**, along with how the project has been **communicated to employees and stakeholders** where relevant, **showing a long-lasting efforts/drive for continuous improvement** and if the projects is **towards sustainable and circular economy**.
 - Entries must be **in English** using the Responsible Care application form.
 - Applicants should **be located in Europe**.
 - The **project must have already started**.
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Guidance for entries

- Entries should include a **clear description of the projects**, outlining its aim and list of actions.
- An independent jury will assess valid entries and give comments.
- Only provide **information that can be made public** in compliance with applicable law. All information will be verified before publication.
- All applicants will be notified with regard to their submission.

- Please **note that generic marketing material is not appropriate**. Jury members will be considered as not applicable to the projects as product placement/"advertising". Please **remain as factual/objective and to the point as possible**.

Description of the Categories

Category 1: Operational Excellence

- **Process Safety and Cybersecurity Award**
Honours chemical sites demonstrating outstanding leadership and performance in process safety, as well as effective integration of cybersecurity in line with the European NIS Directive principles. Recognised initiatives may include enhanced process safety practices that create safer workplaces, protect people, assets, and the environment, and embed a culture of safety excellence. Examples of cybersecurity excellence may include the development of a strong culture, cooperation, sharing good practices and dissemination lessons learned between stakeholders.
- **Digital Innovation for Responsible Operations Award**
Recognises the creative use of digital technologies to optimise processes, enhance operational efficiency, and foster innovation across chemical production and supply chain management. Deploying digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics and Distributed ledger technologies (DLT) like blockchain, amongst others. Demonstrate the business benefits of innovation, the novelty value and the acceleration of the industry's transformation through digital technologies implementation all towards sustainable and circular economy.
- **Responsible Supply Chain & Collaboration Award**
Celebrates projects that extend Responsible Care principles across the value chain. Recognises excellence in sustainable sourcing, logistics and transport excellence, partnerships, and supply chain transparency that improves safety and environmental performance.

Category 2: Sustainability & Environment

- **Sustainability: Climate and Circularity Award**
Celebrates organisations demonstrating leadership in Responsible Care through measurable actions on climate neutrality, resource efficiency, and environmental protection, supporting the resilience of the company by enhancing the future business case. It honours initiatives that reduce emissions, adopt green technologies, safeguard biodiversity, and implement effective waste reduction and circular economy practices, making chemical operations cleaner, greener, and more sustainable.

Category 3: Caring about the Smaller: National associations - SMEs

- **National association and SME Award**
Recognises the exceptional contributions of National Associations and SMEs in advancing Responsible Care. National Associations drive industry-wide collaboration and best practices sharing, while SMEs lead innovation and integration of Responsible Care principles at every operational level. The award celebrates their leadership, commitment, and impact on sustainability, safety, and continuous improvement in the chemical industry.

Category 4: People-centred Transformation

- **Excellence in Talent and Workforce Development and STEM Attraction Award**
Honours organisations that nurture talent, develop future leaders, and strengthen workforce capabilities to meet the challenges of industrial transformation. It recognises initiatives and programs that build skills in safety, sustainability, innovation, and digital transformation, foster a culture of continuous learning, and deliver measurable benefits in staff resilience, talent attraction, retention, and productivity. It honours initiative that leverage incentives to attract STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) development, and ensuring inclusive access and equitable outcomes for all.

Who can participate?

The European Responsible Care Awards are open to all companies and /or sites that are practicing Responsible Care along the supply chain in Europe. National associations and affiliate associations are also eligible to participate provided they have signed up to Responsible Care or have a Responsible Care Partnership Agreement with Cefic. Specifically the category 4 honours individuals or teams whose submitted projects are recognised/supported by the Responsible Care organisations they work for.

All Responsible Care participants, including members of Cefic and national federations are invited to join us and share projects and initiatives. All relevant projects will be showcased with a spotlight on winning organisations.

Why to participate?

Join us and gain recognition for your company's commitment to safety, sustainability, and innovation. Don't miss this opportunity!

Submission Deadline:

10 July 2026

Questions?

Should you have any question regarding the submission of your entry or any other aspects, please contact: RCAwards@cefic.be