Call for Initiatives – Living With Rivers 2027

Specifications

Important information for initiatives applying for certification

1. WHO ARE WE?

Alerting people to the challenges of rivers and the impacts on them, inviting them to adopt more sustainable practices, raising awareness among as many people as possible, these are the objectives of our NGO, Initiatives for the Future of Great Rivers, created in 2015 by Erik Orsenna (academician, economist, author of reference books on water resources) and the Compagnie Nationale du Rhône (CNR, Lyon).

Our action is focused on 3 missions:

1. Production and sharing of expertise, scientific dialogue

2. Advocacy and Outreach

3. Development of solutions, with the actors in the field

Thanks to our multidisciplinary approach, bringing together experts from all over the world and from different fields of expertise (hydrologist, specialist in energy, ports, shipping, urban planning, social sciences, agriculture, industry, etc...), we promote a more global vision of the issues. We organize annual missions to rivers, at the request of project leaders or local stakeholders, to provide an additional diagnosis and make recommendations.

We advocate through conferences and reports in local, national and international bodies.

We develop communication actions and tools to engage citizens and the various stakeholders on the challenges and solutions of rivers, in all their complexity.

More information here: https://www.initiativesfleuves.org

2. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE "LIVING WITH RIVERS" LABEL

Created by IFGR in 2024, the "Living with Rivers" label aims to promote positive initiatives relating to rivers, in response to the major challenges they are experiencing, and to highlight the commitment of actors rooted in the territories.

Through the certification of concrete initiatives around the world, we wish to encourage a respectful, sustainable, balanced and reasoned use of rivers, a source of hope for future generations, and to promote dialogue between the world's rivers.

Our label is aimed at any type of initiative related to rivers and their watersheds, which can cover the following themes:

Food security, health, energy, transport, industry, agriculture, recreation, biodiversity, planning and urban planning, culture and heritage, flood management and prevention and warning systems, hydrodiplomacy/cross-border cooperation, education, industry/R&D.

A reference system of indicators, built by our committee of experts, makes it possible to select initiatives according to a systemic and nuanced vision of uses, promising the future of rivers, their watersheds, territories and populations.

Our intention is to support initiative leaders as closely as possible to their needs, to facilitate their actions (visibility, networking, expert support, scientific endorsement, etc.).

We are convinced that it is through action on the ground that we can make things happen collectively, inspire other actors; for this reason, we want to put ourselves at the service of those who are taking concrete action in the territories.

Important: As such, the labeling of an initiative does not guarantee funding. Only the 3 winning initiatives each year (selected by our River Committee) receive a financial endowment (15,000 euros per project in 2027).

We also try to support the labelled initiatives as best we can, according to their needs (monitoring of the call for proposals, support in the review of applications, letter of support, support as project partners, putting them in touch with potential sponsors or donors at demand and depending on the opportunities, etc.).

3. THE BENEFITS FOR LABELLED INITIATIVES

1. Multidisciplinary scientific endorsement

The labelled Initiatives will be able to assert on their documents and communications the scientific and multidisciplinary endorsement of our association and its experts. They will be able to promote it to their partners/stakeholders, in order to demonstrate additional external credibility.

2. Partner logo

The "Living with Rivers" logo will be made available to labelled Initiatives free of charge for the duration of their project (maximum 3 years) according to the conditions of use specified in a communication charter.

3. Referencing on the web platform

The labelled initiatives will be referenced on our internet platform and will thus benefit from international visibility.

4. Expert support, networking

The labelled initiatives may, depending on their needs, be put in touch with other initiatives in other territories or with our experts.

Integration into the Living With Rivers community with at least two webinars per year organized as well as a WhatsApp group to share good practices between project leaders.

5. Dissemination and communication

Labelled initiatives will be able to benefit from IFGR's communication tools to communicate on their initiative, disseminate results, and mobilise stakeholders.

6. Invitation to IFGR events

Labelled Initiatives will benefit from an invitation for 2 people to the annual award ceremony as well as to other institutional events organised by IFGR (without travel costs).

7. Financial allocation for the 3 most virtuous Initiatives

The 3 winning Initiatives will receive the "Living with Rivers" prize, with funding of 15,000 euros per Initiative (for 2027).

The prize will be awarded to them during an annual ceremony, in person or remotely (for the year 2027, it will take place between June and September (exact date and place to be confirmed).

4. OUR JURY

The members of our jury are all passionate about rivers, experts in their field of expertise (hydrology, river governance, ports, biodiversity, urban planning, architecture, social sciences, culture and heritage, energy, agriculture, river transport, ports, etc.).) with territorial representation at the international level.

They are all members of the " Scientific and Technical Committee " of our association.

More information here: Our IFGR experts | Initiatives for the Future of Great Rivers (initiativesfleuves.org)

Please note: some members of the Scientific and Technical Committee may be involved in structures interested in applying. For ethical reasons, they will be excluded from the deliberations and decisions if applications come from their organizations.

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

THE FOLLOWING ARE ELIGIBLE:

→ initiatives that address at least one of the following themes, related to a river or its watershed:

Education & awareness-raising, culture & leisure, transport & mobility, agriculture & biodiversity, drinking water & sanitation, research & technology, urban planning & development, energy, health & depollution, cooperation & governance

→ initiatives that bring added value (sufficiently documented thanks to knowledge of the territorial context by the initiative leader) **for the river, local populations, and the watershed.**

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ELIGIBLE:

Initiatives:

→ Unrelated to at least one river/river and/or its catchment area (source, bed, confluence, tributaries, aquifers, wetlands/lakes, mouth, delta, etc.).

→ In the emergence or diagnostic phase (our label aims above all to highlight and support initiatives already launched but not projects under construction).

The initiative leaders:

→ No legal name/structure. Any structure with a company name can apply (companies, associations, start-ups, research centres, NGOs, local authorities, etc.).

→ Without territorial anchoring in the watershed/river/stream.

→ No history of action in the watershed/river/river/territory.

The files:

→ Incomplete, not filling in the different parts of the application template.

→ Insufficiently clear and precise to allow us a refined vision of the initiative (in terms of context, objectives, actions, deliverables, budget in particular).

Please note:

→ There is no minimum or maximum amount for the projects submitted. We only check that the budget is consistent with the expected impact and the stakes.

→ There is no maximum or minimum duration imposed, but the label is only given for 3 years, renewable (a renewal application must be submitted after 3 years if the project is spread over a period of more than 3 years).

→ An initiative leader may submit several (but must submit 1 application per Initiative).

6. SELECTION CRITERIA

Our association has defined a set of criteria allowing the classification of initiatives in an objective way.

A maximum of 100 points can be awarded. Only initiatives with a score of more than 50 will be labelled.

Examples of selection criteria (non-hierarchical, non-exhaustive and unweighted):

- Coherence of the Initiative with respect to the issues of the river, the watershed, the territory, the populations; Real added value with regard to local needs
- Cross-cutting vision of the targeted themes
- Capacity of the Initiative to (re)create links between populations and their river(s)/rivers/watersheds, promote awareness, allow them to marvel at the assets of the latter.
- Capacity of the Initiative to raise awareness and even involve local residents/inhabitants on the issues of river preservation and sustainable management.
- Positive link between the Initiative and the environment/fight against pollution/climate change/water resources
- Innovative nature of the Initiative (local or international)
- Capacity of the Initiative to promote dialogue between stakeholders, to facilitate exchange between different categories of actors, from different territories.
- Possibility for the Initiative to inspire other territories/rivers, to promote twinning between rivers at the international level.

- Cross-border/multi-basin dimension of the initiative.
- Balanced vision of the different uses of the resource, reconciliation of the different uses
- Capacity of the Initiative to inspire coherent public policies for rivers/watersheds, at the local, national and even international levels
- Communication actions/broadcasts planned by the project leader
- Consistency of partnerships and budget
- Capacity of the Initiative to demonstrate indicators for project management and monitoring

These examples of selection criteria are not eligibility criteria: they allow you to obtain more or less points.

7. FORMALIZATION OF THE LABEL

Once labelled, project leaders will be invited to sign a partnership agreement to frame the respective conditions of collaboration (communication kit, project reporting, etc.).

An additional specific agreement will be proposed to the winners.

The model agreements are available on request.

The agreements must be returned to us signed within two months of being sent, otherwise the label will be withdrawn.

8. CALENDAR

- **Before March 31, 2027**: Submission of applications

- **Between April 1 and May 9, 2027**: Selection of labelled Initiatives by the Jury

- **10 May 2027**: Information to candidates selected to be labelled (all applications fulfilling at least 50% of the points will be labelled, with no limit on the number) and applications preselected to be winners (10 applications maximum).

- **20 May 2027**: The 10 best applications pre-selected to be 2027 winners will be invited to present their initiative to the Jury (by videoconference, with translation) = The 3 most virtuous initiatives according to the Jury will be selected to receive the "Living with Rivers 2027" prize (15,000 euros per Initiative).

- **Mid-June 2027**: Information to the three winners

- **Between June and September 2027 (exact date and place to be confirmed):** Award ceremony event for the Laureates and presentation of the 2027 labelled

All candidates (labelled or not) will be invited to participate in person (without payment of travel costs) or remotely. As places are limited, the organizers reserve the right to offer the format in person in order of receipt of applications.

9. FILING PROCEDURES

Deadline for submission: **March 31, 2027**

→ Send in **Word version** to the **following two** email addresses (to avoid errors such as spam or firewalls): contact@iagf-ifgr.org and contact.livingwithrivers@gmail.com

→ In French **or** English. For those who have a different mother tongue and who have difficulty submitting their application in these two languages, the automatic translation of a Word document into these two languages is accepted (go to the revision tab, Language, Translate, Translate document).

→ An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to you within 15 days of your submission. **= If you do not receive anything within 15 days of your application or if you encounter technical problems:** please call the following number: 06.84.32.42.31 (please use it in case of technical problems).

⇨ **If you need advice on submitting your application**, two participatory webinars, to answer candidates' questions, will be organized:

- **In English**:

Thursday, January 14, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Paris time)

Join the meeting now

Meeting ID : 340 017 384 090 351 6

Secret code : rz6Tu3io

Thursday, March 11, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Paris time)

Join the meeting now

Meeting ID: 328 061 389 025 362

Code secret : kq2x628z

- **In French** :

Thursday, January 14, from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (Paris time)

Join the meeting now

Meeting ID: 317 463 888 313 942 8

Code secret : Wg2cs9Vj

Thursday, March 11, from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (Paris time)

Join the meeting now

Meeting ID: 317 649 727 637 863 6

Secret code: f22TF7tX