

BIOEAST Student Challenge



APPLICATION GUIDELINES

1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The BIOEAST Student Challenge is a dedicated innovation competition for students across the BIOEAST macro-region. It is a unique platform designed to unlock the next generation of bioeconomy thinkers and doers, turning classroom knowledge and fresh perspectives into real solutions for real problems.

The BIOEAST HUBs – national collaborative platforms that gather key bioeconomy stakeholders – have identified key problems to overcome, and opportunities to realise for the development of a sustainable bioeconomy in Central and Eastern Europe. These have been grouped into eight key themes, each focusing on specific issues that need to be addressed. Students are invited to submit their ideas or early-stage solutions addressing one or more of these themes.

2. SCOPE OF THE CALL

The BIOEAST Student Challenge is organised under 8 themes, each describing a problem statement, and key issues to be addressed. The BIOEAST Student Challenge themes are:



Resilient small and medium-sized farms



Biomass logistics



Biowaste reduction and valorization



Sustainable bioenergy



Innovative wood technologies



Monitoring agri-food and forestry systems



Stakeholder engagement and collaboration



Raising awareness of the bioeconomy

3. PRIZES

Mentoring session focused on Innovation Readiness, supporting students in developing and refining their solution.

Pitching skills training to help you communicate your idea with clarity.

Invitation to Pitching session at the Bioeconomy Austria Summit organised by the Bioregions Facility.

Visibility at the BOOST4BIOEAST Final Conference in Brussels on 25 November 2026.



Funded by
the European Union



4. APPLICATION

Theme-specific awards

- Applications must be submitted via an online form, available at: bioeast.eu/student-challenge-application-form
- Participants are requested to carefully read the questions in the form.
- Only completed applications submitted via the online form will be accepted.
- Only the information included in the application form will be considered by evaluators.
- Withdrawal of an application shall be done in writing.

Multiple submissions

The same person or student association can submit different proposals to the same or to different themes of this call. If the selection panel deems two proposals as very similar, only the latest submission will be taken into the account.

Deadline

The deadline for submitting an application is **31 July at 23:59 CET**.

Only applications submitted before the deadline will be accepted. After the closure, no additions or changes to received applications will be taken into account.

Data protection

Data processing will be carried out based on the free and informed consent of applicants. The rights of applicants will be fully respected in accordance with ethical standards and the applicable data protection laws. Personal data will be collected only as necessary for the purposes of the BIOEAST Student Challenge, will not be shared with external parties without explicit consent, and will be securely deleted after **January 2027**.

Intellectual property rights

The intellectual property rights to the solution submitted will stay exclusively with the applicant.

Absence of conflict of interest

A conflict of interest occurs when an applicant and an evaluator are from the same organisation or have any other form of association. Evaluators will need to declare any potential conflict of interests before doing the evaluation. If a conflict of interest is identified, external evaluators will be appointed to ensure a fair and impartial assessment.

Declarations

As part of the application form, all applicants, either individual or as a team will be required to confirm the following declarations:

- The applicant declares that all the provided information is correct and accurate.
- The applicant is over 18 years old, and if applicable case they are a legitimate represent of a student association or a club.
- The solution proposed is based on original work.
- The applicant agrees with data handling in compliance with the GDPR regulation.
- The applicant is enrolled in, or has graduated within the last 12 months from, a recognised higher education institution.





5. EVALUATION PROCESS

Eligibility assessment

Only eligible applications will proceed to evaluation. The first step in the assessment process is therefore an eligibility check, based on the following criteria:



Eligibility criteria	Description
Country	Applicants must be residents or nationals of BIOEAST countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.
Language	Applications must be submitted in English.
Student status	Applicant is currently enrolled in, or has graduated within the last 12 months from, a recognised higher education institution.
Submission Deadline	Only applications submitted before the official deadline will be accepted. The deadline for applying is 31 July at 23:59 CET .
Duplicate submissions	If two applications from the same applicant are found to be very similar, only the most recent version will be evaluated.
Completeness	Only complete applications will be considered eligible.

Application evaluation and winner selection

Eligible applications will be evaluated against the following award criteria:

Award criteria	Description
Adequacy of submitted solution	Does the proposed solution match the theme? Does the proposed solution address the problem and key issues to be addressed?
Quality of the submission	Is the proposal clear, logical and well structured?
Novelty	Is the proposed solution innovative, significantly different and better than what is currently existing and available?
Impact	Impact of the solution according to the following parameters: economic, social and environmental.

The assessment will be carried out by a panel of experts from the Boost4Bioeast project.

Final selections will be primarily based on evaluation scores. However, to encourage broad participation and impact, evaluators may also consider geographic diversity criteria to ensure balanced representation among winners.



6. INDICATIVE TIMELINE OF APPLICATION AND EVALUATION

BIOEAST OIC call open: **15 June – 31 July**.

Evaluation process: **August 2026**.

Announcement of the winners:
4 September 2026.

The Bioeconomy Austria Summit:
05 October 2026.

The BOOST4BIOEAST final conference:
25 November 2026.

7. POINTS OF CONTACT PROCESS

BIOEAST Student challenge info at:
bioeast.eu/bioeast-student-challenge

Application form: bioeast.eu/student-challenge-application-form

Questions regarding the application process may be sent to the following address: bioeast@efi.int

