

UNIL-EPFL Durabilis Award

The UNIL-EPFL Durabilis Award was created to:

- a) reward Bachelor's and Master's level projects that address **sustainability issues**¹
- b) grant cash prizes of up to **CHF 10,000** per year
- c) **promote** the award-winning projects

1. Student eligibility

Any student enrolled in a Bachelor's or Master's program at EPFL or UNIL may enter a project carried out as part of his or her degree program, provided the project:

- a) incorporates sustainability-related concepts studied as part of a mandatory or optional EPFL or UNIL course providing ECTS credits;
- b) receives a grade of at least five out of six from the lecturer in charge, including for work that is awarded a certificate;² and
- c) is carried out individually or by a group of up to four people. Project teams with students from both EPFL and UNIL and from different schools within those universities are encouraged.³

Students who have been exmatriculated after obtaining their UNIL or EPFL Bachelor's or Master's degree must have completed their project report during their degree program, and no later than one calendar year before applying for the award.⁴

The award is not open to students in a joint UNIL Bachelor's or Master's program who are enrolled at a partner university, or to incoming exchange students at EPFL or UNIL.

¹ Sustainability can be defined in many different ways. This award does not promote one definition in particular.

² For projects that will not be graded according to a study plan, students must provide a recommendation from the lecturer in charge attesting to the excellence of their work.

³ If only certain individuals of a project team decide to apply for the award, they must notify the other team members of their decision to apply for the award.

⁴ For example, students who obtained the grades for their Master's projects in September 2023 can apply for the award until August 2024, but that would be too late for students who obtained their grades in June 2023.

Students can apply for an award several times, including in the course of the same academic year, provided that each application concerns a different project. A separate application must be submitted for each project (see Section 3).

2. Project eligibility⁵ and selection criteria

2.1 The award is open to student projects that address sustainability issues and that are one of three types:

- a) an analysis, or a solution, integrating human/social and environmental dimensions of sustainability,
or
- b) a reflection on the concept of sustainability or one of its dimensions; and/or a reflection on its implementation.

2.2 Selection criteria

The jury awards the prizes following a two-round procedure.

1st round criteria: works are pre-selected based on the executive summary, mentioned in article 3 below, using the following criteria:

- a) the work meets the entry requirements of paragraph 2.1.
- b) quality of the executive summary (effectiveness of the synthesis, quality of the writing, clarity of the message)

2nd round criteria: the works shortlisted in the first round are analyzed in depth by the Jury, which then awards the prizes to the winners. The Jury considers the context in which the work presented has been carried out and judges its content accordingly: it is its responsibility to judge in a differentiated way - i.e. according to their level of study - a semester, Bachelor or Master's work.

The Jury selects the winners by analyzing the work based on the following criteria:

- a) if the work proposes an analysis, or a solution, integrating several dimensions of sustainability, it does so in a balanced way between these dimensions.
- b) if the work proposes a reflection on the concept of sustainability or one of its dimensions, and/or a reflection on its implementation, it does so in an original way.
- c) the work contains a critical reflection on the research carried out and the results obtained.
- d) the work has practical application or future research implications.

⁵The student's work and executive summary (see Section 3) will constitute the project submitted for an award.

3. Application process

In order to register, the student (or group of students) must submit an application in electronic format, which must include, in French or in English:

- a) the written work
- b) the public summary of the work (see below)
- c) the registration form completed and signed by the student or group of students
- d) a certificate signed by the teacher who graded the work or, if the work is ungraded, with the recommendation of the teacher responsible, attesting to the excellence of the work (in accordance with art. 1b, see note 3) and its relevance to the criteria under 2.1

Executive summary

The application should include a public summary of two to three A4 pages (not to exceed 6,000 characters) that includes a description of how the project addresses the issue of sustainability. This will require students to explain their research in a concise, easy-to-understand manner – an essential skill for cross-disciplinary projects.

4. Application addresses and deadline

Students should send their applications to:

EPFL students: the Research Associate for Student affairs and outreach

Geneviève Rossier
EPFL VPT DURABILITE
BCH 4103 (Batochime)
Av. Forel 3
1015 Lausanne
genevieve.rossier@epfl.ch
Tél. : 021.693.17.92

UNIL students:

Céline Surmont
UNIL Centre de compétences en durabilité
Vortex – bureau 8062
Route de Praz-Véguey 29
1022 Chavannes-près-Renens
celine.surmont@unil.ch
Tél. : 021.692.23.11

The application deadline is 31 August each year.

5. Prizes

A total of CHF 10,000 in prize money will be awarded each year, in two project categories:

1. Master's dissertation or Master's project: CHF 1,000/winner
2. Other Bachelor's or Master's level projects: CHF 500/winner

If the winning project was carried out by a group of students, each student will receive the prize amount. A student may receive more than one prize if each is for a different project.

The prizes will be funded equally by EPFL and UNIL, regardless of which school the winning students come from. The prizes may also be funded by third-party donations.

6. Jury

6.1 Composition

The jury generally has at least seven members:

- a) A chairperson: a vice rector, vice president or faculty member from EPFL or UNIL (on an alternating basis), who serves a two-year term. The chairperson is responsible for making sure the awards run smoothly. The EPFL Vice Presidency for Education (VPE) and the UNIL Rectorate take turns appointing the chairperson. If the EPFL VPE is nominated as chairperson, the appointment will be made by the EPFL Presidency.
- b) A UNIL faculty member, an EPFL faculty member and two outside members who are particularly knowledgeable about sustainability. Jury members cannot vote on projects they have personally graded or supervised in any way, or if any other conflict of interest exists.
- c) The individuals in charge of sustainability at EPFL and at UNIL.

The goal is to have at least two female and two male jury members.

6.2 Duties

- a) Select the award winners under the process described in Section 2.2.
- b) When making the selection, take into account the kind of degree program the students are enrolled in (Bachelor's or Master's level).
- c) Write a two-sentence commentary on why they selected each award-winning project.

6.3 Appeals

- a) The jury's decisions cannot be appealed.

7. Awards ceremony; promoting the winning projects

The winning projects will be showcased through articles (written by EPFL and UNIL) and posted on the UNIL and EPFL websites, subject to the award-winners' consent.

An awards ceremony will take place, where the award-winners can briefly present their projects. The ceremony will be held in conjunction with an event on sustainability. During the ceremony, the jury will share its short commendation of each award-winning project.

8. English translation

An English translation of this procedure has been made available to students for information only. In the event of dispute, the French version will prevail.

Approved by the UNIL Rectorate on 19 March 2019

Approved by the EPFL Vice Presidency for Responsible Transformation on 5 May 2022