



## ***Blue Sky Awards for the Global Forest Products Sector 2024-2025***

### ***About the Blue Sky Awards***

The Blue Sky Awards is a global competition for students and young researchers and professionals who are passionate about a range of activities relevant to forest based science, products using forest-based raw materials, process improvements, or other innovations throughout the forest sector value chain.

The Blue Sky Awards are not just about research and development – they are also about showcasing the work of students and early-career researching professionals who are passionate about climate positive forestry and forest products, clean manufacturing, and the forest bioeconomy.

Sponsored by the International Council of Forest and Paper Associations (ICFPA), the Blue Sky Awards offers 2 categories: Blue Sky Young Researchers Innovation Award and Blue Sky PRO Young Professional Award. Awards are presented to up to three worthy recipients from around the world in each category. The international finalists will have the opportunity to share their projects at the ICFPA CEO Global Roundtable in May 2025 in New York City, United States (specific location and date to be confirmed by late 2024).

### ***Categories & Eligibility***

#### ***Blue Sky Young Researchers Innovation Award***

Applicants must be students or researchers who are **30 years old or younger on 19th September 2024**. Applicants must be carrying out research and innovation projects relevant for forestry, forest products, and/or forest products processing technologies – with links to academia, public or private research centers, and/or corporate research and innovation departments.

#### ***Blue Sky PRO Young Professionals Award***

Applicants must be young professionals who are **35 years old or younger on 19th September 2024**. Applicants must be carrying out research and innovation projects relevant for forestry, forest products, and/or forest products processing technologies – with links to private research centers and/or corporate research and innovation departments.

***Theme: Time for forest-based sector to showcase its innovative solutions for forest products, wood bioindustry, and forest conservation management, and restoration***

To carry out research work that promotes innovation and decarbonization in the forest products sector either in the forest, at production facilities, along the supply chain, or via product innovation, some of the topics related can be (but are not limited to):

- Artificial intelligence
- Social and inclusive innovations (better life for people and natural resources)
- Efficiency improvements in using resources
- Faster restoration techniques
- Forest tree breeding and biotechnology
- Precision forestry, measurements and inventory
- Bioproducts and wood chemistry , material substitution with wood
- Facilities, instrument and process control
- Recycling, de-inking and environment (circular economy)
- Analysis and properties of pulp and paper, panels and energy-products
- Timber for construction (mass timber, CLT, etc.)

### **Regional Competitions and the International Awards**

- Each ICFPA member organization<sup>1</sup> will be asked to run their own regional/national competition and will advance up to 2 candidates to compete internationally.
- Applicants advancing to the international competition will be requested to submit a short video describing their project.
- Three submissions will be shortlisted by an international judging panel to receive the international awards.
- Travel and accommodation expenses for the three international finalists will be covered to present at the ICFPA CEO Roundtable in May 2025 in New York City, United States.

### **Schedule**

<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
September 2024	Announcement and Call for Applications in Country Regions
By 20 December 2024	Regional Evaluation of Applications (Short List) and Regional Award
20 December 2024 to 07 February 2025	International Judging and Global Final Selection
By 14 February 2025	Country Regions Notified of International Finalists
5 or 6 May 2025 (TBD)	Presentations and International Awards – CEO Roundtable New York City, USA

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<sup>1</sup> <https://icfpa.org/who-we-are/>

## Application

Applicants are invited to submit their application containing the following documents:

- Short CV (maximum one page)
- Summary of the project, including:
  - 550 words; double spacing; font Calibri 12
  - Objectives
  - Description of the project
  - Summary of Methodology
  - Expected results
  - Relevance to forest products industry
  - What makes it innovative
  - How is it fitting with the selected theme
  - Links to UN SDGs
- Please disclose whether, and to what extent, applicant used artificial intelligence to develop this project or prepare this application
- One letter of support

## Evaluation

A jury composed by industry representatives and well-respected researchers will evaluate the finalists both in regional and international level, based on evaluation form with predefined premises.

## General Information

**Deadline for U.S. Blue Sky Awards is December 9, 2024.** For general information, please contact Jamie Tiralla, Senior Director, Strategic Communications, American Forest & Paper Association: [Jamie.Tiralla@afandpa.org](mailto:Jamie.Tiralla@afandpa.org)