

Secretary General

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Association Européenne pour le Fleurissement et le Paysage / aisbl

Entente Florale Europe Regulations and Guidelines 2024



1. General Information

- a. These regulations and guidelines are provided for both information and active participation. National organisations of member countries, board and jury members, and applicants to the competition are expected to comply with these requirements, as they relate to their involvement with the competition.
- b. The regulations and guidelines shall be reviewed annually after the completion of judging, and along with any changes which might be necessary, approved for the coming year, at the Spring Meeting of the jury.
- c. In accordance with their membership of the AEFP, the international jury, national bodies, their representatives, jury members and applicants to the competition, all agree to the statutes, articles, regulations and guidelines of the association, as set out below.
- d. Applicants chosen to take part in Entente Florale Europe are usually selected because of their success in national competitions.
- e. The common language is English.
- f. Entries may take part in the European Competition at intervals of 5 years free of participation, irrespective of their awarded medal. The settlement itself or any part of the settlement is not allowed to re-enter the competition within 5 years in any other combination. If that happens, the jury chair has the right to refuse assessment at the spot, and no medal may be given.
- g. There are 3 populations bands for entry, up to 5000, 5001 – 50.000, 50.001 and over.
- h. Every year, each member country may put forward 1, 2 or 3 entries. Member countries have to make every effort to find two participant settlements of different population bands. In exceptional cases, if there is no potential candidate, the two entries may be from the same size category.

2. Judging Agreements

All participants are responsible for their own performance and are obliged to accept and respect the final result of the A.E.F.P. – E.F.E. competition. After each visit, Jury members as a group, provide an assessment which includes feedback on aspects of the visit which comply with the criteria, advice on matters which need attention and proposals for improvement. Final marks for each participating entry are calculated from the combined marks of all jury members who visited that centre. After the A.E.F.P. board has an opportunity to ratify the verdict of the jury, the final results of the competition for that year, are determined. However, these results are confidential until they are announced at the award presentation (usually in September). A.E.F.P. – E.F.E. cannot entertain any form of lobbying/representation/negotiation to change the final decision.

3. Responsibility and liability

The AEFP Board's Decisions regarding the results of the Entente Florale Europe competition, which are based on the recommendations of the Jury, shall be final.

No legal liability will be accepted for the legitimate and formal decisions made by the AEFP Board or Juries in respect of the results/outcome of the competition, including the awarding of marks, medals or prizes.

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This applies to the AEFP organisation as a whole and to individual officials such as board members, judges, secretary general, treasurer and national coordinators of AEFP and all competition participants.

4. Legal Jurisdiction and Interpretation.

These “E.F.E. Regulations and guidelines” shall be governed by and interpreted according to the laws of Belgium and the A.E.F.P. accepts the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of Kortrijk (Belgium).

5. Information documents

The regulations and guidelines are set out in a series of information documents as follows:

- 5.1. Application Procedure.
- 5.2. Preparation for the Assessment Visit.
- 5.3. Requirements for the Assessment Programme.
- 5.4. Recommended Timings for the Assessment Programme.
- 5.5. Appointment and Formal arrangements of the Jury.
- 5.6. Duties of Jury Members.
- 5.7. Jury Marking Guidance Notes.
- 5.8. Green list- most important deadlines
- 5.9. Judging Criteria.

5.1. Application Procedure

- a) Entry to the competition is made by completing an official Entry Form and submitting it to the Secretary General, to be received by the 15th of January of the relevant assessment year. Entrants shall designate a 14-day continuous period between the 25th of June and the 31st of July, to facilitate the Jury Visits and this should be stated in the form. No other preferences can be considered during planning of the jury itinerary.
- b) The final schedule of the assessment itineraries will be announced after the Spring Meeting. The date and time of judging will be based on the most logical and economical option available. The length of the working day will be a major consideration when planning the legs.
- c) General information about the participant can be provided for the Spring Meeting of the jury. This can be in the form of small promotional brochures or other media.
- d) A clear and visible Entente Florale Europe logo should be used in all documentation in connection with the competition. The logo can be downloaded from the EFE homepage or obtained from the Secretary General EFE.

5.2. Preparation for the Assessment Visit.

5.2.1. Prior to the Assessment Visit.

- a) Participants may if they desire, in advance of the assessment visit, submit any relevant information to the Secretary General, setting out how their community has prepared for the awards scheme. This can include photographs and text referencing all year-round activities. The information should be set out in accordance with the 10 criteria.
- b) The submitted information should not exceed 24 pages (including the cover) or a print out of the slide presentation, to be arranged on the morning of the assessment visit. The submission of this written information is **optional** and will not be considered by the Jury or awarded any marks as part of the overall assessment process.
- c) In case an entrant applies for a thematic award, a maximum 2 pages report (in min. 12pt. font) about their specific project or activity, should be submitted as a separate document.

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- d) In addition to Thematic prizes, the participant receiving the highest mark under each criterion will receive a special award. Participants are only permitted to receive one such award in any given year.

5.2.2. Arrangements for the Assessment Visit

- a) All entrants are advised to consult the Entente Florale Europe web page www.entente-florale.eu.
- b) The following tasks are required.
- (i) Drafting a programme for the jury visit to the country.
 - (ii) Preparation of an Itinerary/route plan for the assessment visit.
 - (iii) Organisation of presenters, sponsors and others involved within the community.
- c) When visiting the entrant, the jury will be guided by the country's own jury member.
- d) Costs and arrangements for jury travel, accommodation, and catering inside the country are the responsibility of the participating entrants and/or their national organisation. Travel costs from country to country are the responsibility of the jury members/national organisations themselves.
- e) After a welcome and introduction of the Jury for a maximum period of 15 minutes (which is not part of the assessment period), the suggested programme should commence with an oral presentation (maximum 45 minutes, including time for questions). This is then followed by the assessment tour.

5.2.3. To be provided to the Jury on Judging Day.

- a) One hard copy of any relevant information supplied by the participant as outlined above, **may** be made available for each jury member on site, the day before or on the morning of the visit.
- b) A tour guide booklet (Route Handbook) shall be provided for each jury member the day before or on the morning of the visit, showing the various stop off points and exact schedule of the assessment visit, with space available for note taking.
- c) A map shall be provided for each jury member the day before or on the morning of the visit, so that jury members can relate the footprint of the settlement within the overall geography of the region. The map shall clearly show the Entente Florale assessment boundary including the settlement and its hinterland i.e., enclosing the exact area to be assessed during the visit. This can also be incorporated into the tour guide / route handbook.

5.2.4. Practical considerations.

- a) Every effort should be made to reduce travel costs, including early booking of flight tickets, and local agreements between geographically adjacent countries to share bus transport. A bus should be adequate in size, providing a double seat for each jury member, and should be equipped by air conditioning. All local agreements to be approved by the Secretary General, and their own national organisation. With the preliminary approval of their national organisation[s], observers take part completely at their own cost.
- b) The beginning and end of a leg will be at the closest international airport to the entrant. At the beginning of a leg, jury members must be able to report to an agreed meeting place at the airport by 4.00 pm on that day, or later by agreement if travel distances to the entrant allow. At the end of a leg,

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- jury members must be returned to the airport by mid-day at the latest or earlier by agreement if travel distances allow.
- c) In case a jury member is arriving later, leaving earlier or cannot join the group, special transfer has to be arranged and financed by the jury member him/herself.
 - d) If possible, all jury members should be accommodated in one hotel in separate rooms. Luxury accommodation is not required. The required standard is for the rooms to be clean, preferably with air conditioning, have ensuite facilities, and to be sufficiently large to enable a jury member be comfortable and relaxed.
 - e) All information for the arranged visit, the judging programme, and accommodation must be completed, and sent to the Secretary General for approval by 15 May. This will then be passed on to the relevant jury members visiting. Any changes to the programme have to be agreed by the jury chair. A special diet (vegetarian, gluten free etc) should be available for jury members if requested in advance. During long travels no hot meal is necessary; cold food can be arranged.
 - f) The success of the assessment visit by the jury will depend on the preparation made by the national jury member in mentoring the entrant, and the collaboration of the various interested bodies. The most important objective during the preparation will be the arrangement of the tour, what to put in and what to leave out, to cover all the aims and objectives of Entente Florale within the designated judging time.
 - g) The time period allowed for the assessment visit is critical and must be respected. The maximum time allowed is based on population of the entrant as follows:
 - (i) Population up to 5,000 max. 4 hours judging plus a maximum of 1 hour for lunch.
 - (ii) Population 5,001 – 50,000 max. 6 hours judging plus a maximum of 1 hour for lunch.
 - (iii) Population 50,001 max. 7 hours judging plus a maximum of 1 hour for lunch.
 - h) The jury will adhere strictly to the time schedule; therefore, planning should include knowing in advance which presentation points to leave out if time runs short. The beginning and end of the assessment visit has to be clearly highlighted in the written programme and announced to the judges.
 - i) The most important areas should be visited by foot, longer distances between “stopping off” points by coach. It is not necessary or desirable to use unusual means of transport. Jury members have the personal right to refuse the arranged transport, if, in their view, it carries a risk to their personal safety or comfort.
 - j) Because of the close relationship between projects, and the individuals, volunteers, and sponsors who are involved, the projects should be presented by those responsible, and their involvement made clear.
 - k) The jury welcomes the opportunity to meet as many representatives of the community as is practical, in order to be able to judge the involvement of all sections of the community. In particular,

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activities and commitment must be demonstrated by the public sector [the municipality], the private sector [commercial bodies, businesses and organisations] and the voluntary sector [individuals and groups undertaking activities on an unpaid voluntary basis. Nevertheless, it is not desired that large crowds of local residents or representatives join the jury during the assessment visit.

- l) The time given for assessing any project or area within the programme should be in relation to their importance in the total context of the judging criteria.
- m) If a translator is required at any stage of the judging tour, ensure that they are competent for the task, and fully briefed to only repeat accurately what is being presented. The help of the mentor judge(s) in translations is to be avoided. The use of headphones and earphones is acceptable.
- n) For the comfort of jury members, plan sufficient breaks, and due to uncertain weather, umbrellas for rain and sufficient drinks if it is hot.
- o) The tour should end at an appropriate facility, where a room can be provided for the jury to have a 15-minute break and meet for an initial private deliberation of approximately 1.5 hours. This will be followed by a short private meeting with representatives of the entrant to give initial feedback.
- p) The press should be advised beforehand that time will be given for one posed photograph of the jury either at the beginning or end of the tour, or at lunchtime. Press or television interviews need to be negotiated with the jury chair and can be arranged to take place during the day as long as they do not impede the judging process. The press must not approach individual jury members on the tour when judging is taking place.

5.3. Requirements for the Assessment Programme.

- a) When visiting an entrant for judging purposes, the jury must be confident that the visit is well planned and organised in order to afford the applicant the best chance of success. To ensure that all applicants get the best opportunity to present their community and to be fair to all participants, the following essential elements of the judging process shall be provided for all entrants.
- b) The assessment tour when judging is undertaken remains the total responsibility of the entrant.
- c) Along with the assessment tour adequate time must be included for the initial deliberations, and the press conference along with adequate time for the jury members to prepare for any social event arranged afterwards. Entrants are referred to the suggested **blueprint programmes -see below** for a judging day with maximum 7-hour, 6-hour and 4-hour assessment tours.
- d) If an entrant intends to arrange a programme with different time allocations, then written approval must be obtained from the Entente Florale Europe Secretary General. The Chair of the Jury reserves the right to reject a programme that differs from the recommended time allocations.

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- e) The Jury team are not visiting the entrant as tourists. If any extra events or activities are arranged during the jury's stay, then it is done on the understanding that any individual jury member's attendance is optional.
- f) If other activities or visits are arranged where jury members' attendance is deemed essential by the entrant, then written agreement from the Entente Florale Europe Secretary General must be obtained beforehand. Otherwise, jury members reserve the right to treat them as optional. Any programmes in close relation with the judging criteria before the official start of the judging (especially the day before judging) should be avoided.
- g) Whilst hosting the jury, there may be one official dinner. Other mealtimes and any activities outside the judging period will be unofficial. Unofficial dinners should be informal, relaxed with no dress code, and be of short duration. At an informal dinner allowance should be made for jury members to retire should they so wish.
- h) At the beginning of a judging leg, the jury requires a facility/meeting room for a 1-hour familiarisation meeting. At the end of each leg, the jury require a facility/meeting room for 2 hours for deliberations.
- i) The Jury's itinerary will be divided in several legs. Apart from the assessment tour, some time has to be allowed for relaxation. Therefore, evening invitations to the jury for formal or informal events should not extend longer than 2 hours 30 minutes and should be completed by 22.30 hours at the latest.
- j) Travel for the jury will entail coach, train and plane within each leg. Personal effects and documentation will generally result in relatively heavy luggage. If only for this reason alone, entrants are requested to confine any gifts to small, token souvenirs of the visit. Jury members may need to leave behind extra documentation given on the day.

5.4. Recommended Timing for Assessment Programmes

With the judging times strictly designated depending on the population of the entrant, **the following blueprint programmes are advised to be used by the entrant.** If a different programme is considered more suitable, written permission must be obtained from the Secretary General.

5.4.1. Judging period maximum 7 hours, population 50,001 plus.

Maximum of 30 minutes from hotel to venue

8.15 am Meet jury at venue for welcome and presentation. Group photograph.

8.30 am Start of judging with a presentation

10.30 am Coffee break included in judging period.

12.30 am Lunch 1 hour, morning judging of 4 hours completed.

1.30 pm Lunch completed; afternoon judging commences.

4.30 pm Judging completed, travel to venue for initial deliberation.

Maximum of 30 minutes transfer

4.45 pm 15 minutes break.

5.00 pm Judges initial deliberation of 1 hour and 30 minutes.

6.30 pm Feedback meeting of 30 minutes with entrants.

7.00 pm Jury returned to hotel.

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7.45 pm Meet jury for transport to official dinner.

8.00 pm Official Dinner, 2 hours 30 minutes.

10.30pm Return jury to hotel.

5.4.2. Judging period maximum 6 hours, population 5,001 – 50,000.

Maximum of 30 minutes from hotel to venue

8.30 am Meet jury at venue for welcome and presentation. Group photograph.

8.45 am Start of judging period with a presentation

10.45 am Coffee break included in judging period.

12.00 pm Lunch 1 hour, morning judging of 3 hours 15 minutes completed.

1.00 pm Lunch completed; afternoon judging commences.

3.45 pm Judging completed, travel to venue for initial deliberation.

Maximum of 30 minutes transfer

4.00 pm 15 minutes break.

4.15 pm Judges initial deliberation of 1 hour and 30 minutes.

5.45 pm Feedback meeting of 30 minutes for entrants.

6.15 pm Jury returned to hotel.

7.45 pm Meet jury for transport to official dinner.

8.00 pm Official Dinner, 2 hours 30 minutes.

10.30 pm Return jury to hotel.

5.4.3. Judging period 4 hours, population up to 5,000.

The 4-hour judging period can be managed using the same time elements as in the above 2 examples, with the 4 hours judged nonstop, either in the morning or afternoon. The half day left free can then be used for travel. If travel timing requires the jury staying all day, then judging could be split, 2 hours in the morning and 2 in the afternoon, with the hour lunchtime mid-day.

It is imperative however that the various extra timed requirements as shown for the 7 hour and 6-hour judging are then included.

Please note before or after 4 hours judging period no longer than 3 hours' drive should be arranged!

5.5. Appointment and Formal Arrangements of the Jury

- a) Each ordinary AEFP member may have at least two jury members and has to provide one ordinary member to the International Jury Entente Florale Europe to judge each leg. If an AEFP member does not put forward any entrants, then for one year, they are able to put forward a jury member, but for the second year, if no entrants are put forward again, then the right to judge is forfeited.
- b) Appointed jury members should have a good working knowledge of English, sufficient to actively take part in discussions. They should be experienced in comparable national competitions, and their professional backgrounds and experience are most likely to be in the fields of landscape planning and management, horticulture, environment, tourism, or other professions related to the competition criteria.
- c) In the interest of fairness and uniformity, member countries must make every effort to ensure that without question, proper arrangements are made in suitable time, for all jury members to be present on all judging legs, and that commitment has the highest priority.

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- d) The allocation of a jury member to judge each leg must be made by member bodies as soon as possible after the spring meeting, and at the latest 6 weeks before judging takes place. Once allocated a judging leg, it is the responsibility of the jury member to make that commitment of the highest priority within their professional calendar. There should be no change in the jury panel within the leg.
- e) In case no jury member is representing a country, it has to be announced at least two weeks before the start of the leg, with a written justification. In case this is not done, the host community has the right to ask for the costs of accommodation from the national organization of the judge.
- f) At the Spring meeting of the Jury, the Jury shall elect a Chair, and Vice Chair[s], from amongst its members. All members of the jury are eligible. The post of Chair and Vice Chair is for the duration of 2 years and may be renewed for a further successive period of 2 years. The election process shall entail receipt of nominations by the Secretary General with a deadline of one month before the Spring meeting. Each nomination shall have a proposer and seconder. In the event of more than one nomination, an election is required with each country having one vote.
- g) The Chair acts as public spokesperson for the jury and presides over all meetings. The Chair of the Jury is a member of the Executive Committee, by virtue of the office, and shall report to the AEFB Board at least once a year.
- h) At each judging leg, if the Chair is not present, then the Vice Chair represents the Chair and operates with the full responsibility of the Chair.
- i) At each judging leg, the Chair for the leg will arrange a jury familiarisation meeting where the Jury will agree the rules of the forthcoming assessment tour. At the end of each leg, [except the final leg when final deliberations will take place], the Chair for the leg will arrange a further meeting, for initial deliberation of the judging on that leg.
- j) At the end of each leg, hosting arrangements will need to be made with the Secretary General, for a deliberation meeting. Board members and national coordinators may be allowed to attend this meeting as observers.
- k) After each leg, the jury will undertake their Final Deliberations, reveal, and discuss their points and the final decision about the entries of the leg will be taken. The thematic awards will be decided upon at this stage.
- l) The results of the final deliberations will be treated as strictly confidential and will be announced only on the day of the Award Ceremony.

5.6. Duties of Jury Members

- a. Jury members shall prepare the entries for their own country for the jury visit in the summer, acting as an advisor or mentor. They will use the "Regulations and Guidelines", as well as their own experience. They should also be present for the assessment tour and all other functions on the day of the visit of the international jury, but they do not raise questions, help in the explanations or translation.
- b. All Jury members who are expected to judge that year shall attend the jury preparation meeting in spring, the final deliberation meeting and the award ceremony meetings. If they are not able to be present, it is

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the jury member's responsibility to ensure that they are fully informed and updated by their national jury representative to maximise their effectiveness as a jury member.

- c. The jury is managed as a team, and so each jury member must be prepared to contribute to the jury discussions, to maximise the jury effectiveness, and ensure the most accurate marking and allocation of an award. In the exceptional case that they cannot be present at the final deliberations it is their responsibility to ensure that their marking and award recommendation is available at the meeting.
- d. During the inspection visit, every jury member is expected to keep to time, and to attend all the meetings and presentations arranged, to do their best to hear, understand and mark everything presented.
- e. Jury members represent the Jury and their Country. They are not tourists but are jury members due to their professional background and recognised expertise. Jury members dress and behaviour must therefore reflect that role, and they should act with the dignity that is expected. Jury members should avoid extra demands from the hosting community.
- f. Whilst judging, mobile phones should be switched to silent mode, and any camera's used shall be reserved for professional purposes only. Phone calls and smoking during judging time is only acceptable in the coffee breaks and during lunch time.
- g. At the initial deliberation meeting after the judging of an entrant, the Chair will lead the discussion, and the jury will consider each of the marking criteria separately, including where the criteria fits onto the marking schedule.
- h. At the initial deliberation meeting, the jury will agree both the levels of excellence seen and areas for improvement, for the Chair to advise participants and the press conference if one is called.
- i. At the initial deliberation meeting, jury members from that country may attend, but just as observers. Board members and national coordinators from the country may also attend as observers. Only the jury member who mentored/prepared the entrant is allowed to respond to the discussions after each of the criteria is considered.
- j. At the end of each leg, a meeting will be held to further discuss the overall marking and a possible award of medals. Jury members are expected to attend and contribute to that meeting. Every jury member must be prepared to confirm their final marks, and their recommendation for the award of Gold, Silver, Bronze, Entente Florale Europe Diploma of Participation etc... The jury meeting is strictly confidential, outside communication is only allowed with the prior approval of the Chair.
- k. Each participant country must provide a written report, of the jury's findings and recommendations for improvement. The jury members of each country have the responsibility to ensure that this is done. The written report must be presented to the Secretary General within two weeks of the final deliberations, so that it can be included in the Awards Ceremony.

5.7. Jury Marking Guidance Notes

The current criteria and allocation of marks have been approved for 2022 and onwards, subject to any major changes taking place within the jury management. It is important that International Jury members are

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consistent when making their assessment and fully understand the levels of attainment that are required to achieve an Entente Florale Europe Award.

The standards that would normally be expected for a participant to achieve the following awards are:

Gold: 85 pts

An exceptionally high standard demonstrated throughout. A consistent approach which demonstrates both best practice and sustainable effort. Meets all of the judging criteria and objectives of Entente Florale Europe and scores very highly in each section of the judging criteria.

Silver: 75 pts

A high standard entry which meets the judging criteria and objectives of Entente Florale Europe, including sections of an exceptionally high standard. Generally, meets sustainability and quality thresholds, but these may not be entirely consistent throughout the area. Offers potential to be a Gold Medal winner in the future.

Bronze: 65 pts

Considered to be a good entry which meets most of the judging criteria and objectives of Entente Florale Europe. The entry will include more than one section which demonstrates exceptionally high standards. In particular, the entry will demonstrate good sustainable standards and the potential to progress to Silver standard.

Entente Florale Europe Diploma: below 65 pts

To recognise the participation of an entry, which made substantial effort to respond to the challenge of the Entente Florale Europe competition.

In the interest of fairness, when the average of all the jury marks is calculated, it is within 0.5 of a higher award, then that higher award shall be given. Also, if the average mark falls below a higher award, but a majority of the jury members give a mark compatible with the higher award, then again, that higher award shall be given.

During the assessment, the following matrix will be used:		
#	Criteria	Marks
1	Planning and Development	10
2	Sustainable Environment – Climate Change Mitigation	10
3	Built Environment	10
4	Landscape	10
5	Green spaces	10
6	Planting – Permanent and/or Seasonal	10
7	Environmental education	10
8	Effort and involvement	10
9	Tourism and/or Leisure	10
10	Communication	10
Total		100

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5.8. Green List:

The most important deadlines in Entente Florale Europe competition for sending information to the Secretary General (info@entente-florale.eu).

15th of January	Completed Entry forms for each participant including 10 pictures.
25th of January	Provide general information of the entrant in brochures or CD/DVD for the Spring Meeting.
15th of February	Detailed information about arrival and departure times at the beginning and end of each leg, and flights within the legs must be agreed and copied to the Secretary General.
1st of May	Names of judges participating in the legs to be finalised.
15th of May	All information from the entrants for the arranged visit, the judging programme, and accommodation to be completed, for approval by the board.
1st of June	All flight details of the jury members.
14th of June	Deadline for submissions for the President's prize and/or Thematic prizes.
1st August	Deadline for the prize giving ceremony booking forms for Jury, Board, National Coordinators, and participants to be submitted to event organisers and copied to the Secretary General
15th of August	Deadline for submission of assessment reports of the participant cities, towns, and villages