

Livelihoods Foundation launches The Young Farmers Learning Award

A new award celebrating the education programs where a new generation of farmers, women and men alike, truly learns to cultivate the land, for productive, sustainable and fairly paid agriculture. The first edition is open to programs in nine African countries; applications close on 28 February 2027.

PARIS, 22 October 2026. Today, the Livelihoods Foundation launches The Young Farmers Learning Award, which recognizes and supports innovative education programs that prepare a new generation of farmers for an agriculture that is productive, sustainable, and fairly paid. Each year, the Award gives selected programs greater visibility and a financial incentive, helping them mobilize partners and reach more young people. Judged by an independent jury, the first edition is open to programs operating in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal and Uganda. Applications open today and close on 28 February 2027.

The world needs a new generation of farmers who can feed a growing population while protecting the soil, water and biodiversity that farming depends on. Yet too few young people choose to farm: it has too often meant hard work for little reward, and many leave the countryside for the city. The programs that prepare those who do choose it already exist, rooted in the field and close to real farms. Many of them work very well, often with little recognition, few networks and scarce resources. The Award sets out to find these programs, celebrate them and connect them.

*"We expect a young farmer to be at once an entrepreneur, an agronomist, someone able to deal with a bank and a cooperative, all while caring for the land. We must prepare a new generation of farmers, yet public and private investment remains far too scarce. But around the world, people are already doing this work, often with very few resources, and doing it remarkably well. This Prize exists to highlight the most impactful programs and help them grow," said **Bernard Giraud, President of the Livelihoods Foundation.***

The Award rewards learning, not teaching. What counts is not how a program teaches but what young farmers actually learn, and whether it changes how they farm and live. The jury will look for education that is practical and grounded in local realities, carried by real lead farmers rather than theoretical trainers, that accompanies young people until they settle and succeed, that includes young women as fully as young men, and that spreads regenerative practices farmers truly adopt.

The Award is open to any kind of organization whose program is already running and has results to show, whether a cooperative, an NGO, a company, a school, a local authority or a university. Selection is based on the quality and impact of the program, not on the organization profile.

For this first edition, two laureates will be selected: EUR 30,000 for the winning program and EUR 15,000 for the runner-up. Laureates also receive communication support to raise their profile and open doors to new partners. They will join a growing network of like-minded organizations, recognized figures in the field and potential funders. The Award is recognition, not a grant: it rewards what already works.

Funded by the Livelihoods Foundation but judged by an independent jury of recognized figures in sustainable agriculture and education, chaired each year by someone from the region in focus, the Award is an open platform. Foundations, companies, agencies and networks are invited to join it, shape it together and make it their own: the first step of a wider movement for the education of a new generation of farmers.

“The goal is to recognize field programs through which a young farmer truly learns. For its first edition, the Young Farmer Learning Award is open to applications from several African countries. Going forward, we aim to expand it to other countries and continents, with the ambition of creating a movement by inviting other actors to join the initiative: enabling young farmers, women and men alike, to access quality training and better learning methods,”
added Bernard Giraud.

How to apply

Applications are open from 22 October 2026 to 28 February 2027, in English or French. The Call for Proposals and the applicants' questionnaire are available at yflaward.org. Applicants send the completed questionnaire, up to five pages of supporting evidence (testimonials, data, photos or video) and a one-page profile of their organization by email to contact@yflaward.org.

Call for Proposals, questionnaire and all information

yflaward.org

The Young Farmers Learning Award at a glance

What An award recognizing and supporting education programs that prepare a new generation of farmers for regenerative farming. An initiative of the Livelihoods Foundation, judged by an independent jury.

Who can apply Any organization whose program already helps young people become farmers and can show results.

Where 1st edition: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda.

Prizes EUR 30,000 the winning program; EUR 15,000 for the runner-up. Both receive communication support.

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About the Livelihoods Foundation

The Livelihoods Foundation, established in 2025, is the philanthropic arm of Livelihoods. A general-interest, not-for-profit organization, it works to improve the sustainable livelihoods of farmers, women and men alike, through ecosystem restoration, sustainable farming, and farmer education, expecting no return from the initiatives it supports. The Young Farmers Learning Award is its first project.

About Livelihoods

Livelihoods is a global initiative that connects companies, local organizations and communities to turn climate ambition into tangible action. Since 2009, it has mobilized private investment and field expertise to co-design and deliver long-term projects that restore natural ecosystems, improve livelihoods, and strengthen resilience. Learn more: livelihoods.eu

Media contact

Cécile Mercier, Communications Manager, cmercier@livelihoods-venture.com, +33 6 99 11 12 52