



Competition Rules 'IVAN TOLPE' AWARD 2027

As a tribute to **Ivan Tolpe**, a pioneer in manure processing, the **Flemish Coordination Centre for Manure Processing** (VCM) organizes the **Ivan Tolpe Award**. This biennial award is granted to the applicant of an innovative, market-ready technology that contributes to sustainable and cost-efficient manure processing for the future.

The purpose of this award is to stimulate and support innovative and promising technologies, thereby helping the Flemish manure processing sector to maintain its leading position in innovation.

Target group

Organizations, companies, individuals, researchers, scientists, and other stakeholders with a practical, innovative technology that is ready for implementation and applicable to manure processing in Flanders.

Eligible themes

All aspects of manure processing are eligible, with a particular focus on:

- Technological innovation;
- Improved energy efficiency;
- Enhanced valorisation of nutrients or other resources recovered from manure.

The proposed concept must be innovative and address a demand-driven challenge within the Flemish manure processing sector. The technology must be ready for practical application and suitable for implementation within the Flemish context.

What does the award include?

The winner will receive:

- An award trophy and certificate;
- A cash prize of €2,000;
- Promotion of the technology on the VCM website and in the VCM newsletter;
- The opportunity to present the project during the 8th International ManuREsource Conference in 2028, including complimentary conference registration.

The other nominated projects will also receive complimentary registration for ManuREsource 2028 and will have the opportunity to present their technology. In addition, all nominated projects will receive a certificate acknowledging their nomination.

Award ceremony

The award ceremony will take place immediately following the VCM Annual General Meeting in May 2027 in Flanders.



From the submitted applications, the jury (see below) will select at least two nominees. These nominees will be invited to present their concept during the Annual General Meeting. Following the presentations, VCM members will have the opportunity to vote, after which the winner will be announced in the presence of the press.

Participation in the Ivan Tolpe Award is free of charge. Travel and, where applicable, accommodation expenses incurred by nominated candidates will not be reimbursed and remain entirely at the nominee's own expense. Subject to prior agreement with the organizers, nominated candidates may present their pitch online.

Timeline

1. Applicants must submit the duly completed application form, available for download from the VCM website (www.vcm-mestverwerking.be), no later than Friday, 12 March 2027.
2. The jury will select a minimum of two and a maximum of four nominees by Friday, 23 April 2027.
3. During the award ceremony, which will take place immediately following the VCM Annual General Meeting in May 2027, the nominees will present their project to the audience through a short presentation (maximum 10 minutes). Following the presentations, VCM members will have the opportunity to ask questions and subsequently vote for their preferred project. The winner will then be announced in the presence of the press.

Jury

The nominees will be selected by a jury composed of the following members:

- The Chair of VCM;
- The Vice-Chair of VCM;
- The Secretary of VCM;
- Other representatives of VCM Category A members;
- Members of the VCM Board of Directors who have expressed an interest in participating;
- The VCM Secretariat;
- Prof. Erik Meers (Ghent University);

Other experts proposed by a jury member and approved by the above-mentioned jury members.

The jury may also seek additional scientific advice from external experts.

During the nomination phase, the jury may invite candidates to an online meeting to provide further clarification regarding their submitted application.

All VCM members will have the opportunity to vote for the nominated projects presented during the award ceremony. Voting will take place through a voting application. Each VCM member present is entitled to one vote (one voting right per organization or per Category A membership contribution).



In the event of a tie, a second voting round will be organized, in which only the two tied candidates can receive votes. Should a tie persist, the ranking established by the jury during the nomination process will determine the winner.

Application file

1. The application file must be prepared in either Dutch or English.
2. Applicants must use the template provided by the organizers and available for download on the VCM website. The application file may be supplemented with supporting annexes, including videos of the technology or other visual materials.
3. The digital version of the application file must be submitted by email to info@vcm-mestverwerking.be no later than **Friday, 12 March 2027**. Upon receipt, the applicant will receive a confirmation email acknowledging the submission.
4. By submitting an application, participants agree that information regarding the proposed project may be communicated through the media, the VCM website, and VCM events and study days. Participants retain the right to request corrections should any inaccurate information be published in such communications.

Criteria

Eligibility

Only fully completed application forms (application file prepared according to the official template) will be considered for evaluation..

Project evaluation criteria

Criteria	Weighting
Applicability/market readiness Does the project address a demand-driven challenge within the sector? Was the sector involved in the development of the technology (preparation, implementation, evaluation)? Has the technology already been tested or applied in pilot installations or demonstration projects? Is the technology ready for market implementation? What is the economic potential and financial feasibility of the technology? Has the performance of the technology been verified through scientific research? In other words, does the technology achieve its intended results? Is the technology applicable within the Flemish context?	.../40
Innovative character Is the technology innovative? Are similar projects known? What are the distinguishing innovative elements? Does the project provide sufficient added value for practical application?	.../30

Sustainability Does the technology contribute to reducing environmental emissions? Can the technology result in energy savings? Does the technology support the recovery and reuse of nutrients?	.../30
Has the societal impact of the technology been taken into account? What is the long-term vision of the project?	
TOTAL	.../100

Evaluation procedure

The jury members will evaluate the applications individually and score them independently. Based on the submitted applications, the jury will nominate at least two projects.

The jury may invite applicants to provide additional clarification or to present and defend their proposal in person in Flanders. The jury may also request supplementary information regarding the proposed project.

General rules and conditions

1. Participants must be willing to present their project orally to the jury in Flanders. Nominated candidates are expected to attend the VCM Annual General Meeting in May 2027 to present their project to the audience.
2. The organizers reserve the right not to award the prize if an insufficient number of high-quality applications are received.
3. The jury's decisions regarding the selection of nominees and the awarding of the prize will be substantiated and justified. No appeal can be made against either the jury's decision or the methodology used for awarding the prize.
4. By submitting an application, participants acknowledge and accept these competition rules and regulations.
5. If it is subsequently determined that information provided by a participant is inaccurate or misleading, the jury reserves the right to withhold or withdraw the award and, where appropriate, designate an alternative winner.