

Finnova Foundation receives the Aquí Europa Award for its contribution to European construction and innovation diplomacy

- *The Spanish-Belgian foundation, recognised for its commitment to sustainability, entrepreneurship, and economic diplomacy, highlights its role in connecting public and private sectors across Europe and beyond*
- *The award adds to previous recognitions such as the European Enterprise Promotion Award (EEPA) 2021 granted by the European Commission for its pioneering “Firefighting Open Innovation Lab - CILIFO” project*

Finnova Foundation has been honoured with the [Aquí Europa Award](#) for its outstanding contribution to European construction, innovation, and international cooperation. The ceremony took place at the **Permanent Representation of Spain to the European Union (REPER)** in Brussels, presided over by Spain’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, **José Manuel Albares**. **Juan Manuel Revuelta**, CEO of Finnova, received the award accompanied by **Frédérík Leloup**, President of the Foundation.

This recognition reinforces the trajectory of a foundation that, for over fifteen years, has acted as a bridge between institutions, businesses, and territories through projects promoting **innovation, sustainability, green employment, and digital transformation**. Finnova has managed initiatives exceeding **€110 million** in Europe and Latin America, consolidating its position as a leading example of **economic diplomacy through innovation**.

The Foundation has implemented more than 50 European projects under programmes such as [LIFE](#), [Interreg](#), [Erasmus+](#), and [Horizon Europe](#), focusing on areas like **circular economy, renewable energy, wastewater management, waste recovery, and sustainable tourism**. Its open innovation model fosters **public-private partnerships** to address global challenges, including **climate change, forest fire prevention, and sustainable urban development**, accelerating the deployment of scalable and replicable solutions.

In 2021, Finnova received the **European Enterprise Promotion Award (EEPA)** from the **European Commission** and the **European Committee of the Regions** for its work in the project **“Firefighting Open Innovation Lab - CILIFO”**, developed under the **Interreg POCTEP Spain–Portugal 2014–2020 programme**. With a total budget of **€24.6 million**, the project established the world’s first **accelerator and incubator focused on forest fires**, promoting international cooperation and technology transfer in the field of climate resilience.

During the EEPA ceremony in Portorož (Slovenia), Juan Manuel Revuelta highlighted the project’s contribution to global climate efforts:

"We are facing the greatest challenge of humanity – climate change. Every year, 400 million hectares of forests are burned, which amounts to 3% of the planet's surface. That is why a week ago we co-organised an event at COP26 with the European Commission and the United Nations in Glasgow to present this project, which pledges to create green jobs as well as to

contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation. This award encourages us to extend the network of innovation centres in the Mediterranean, Atlantic, Baltic, Atlantic, Macaronesian, Danube, etc. areas via the optimisation of Next Generation EU recovery funds and those that we have in this period 2021-2027, such as LIFE or Horizon Europe, EuroClima and Triangular Cooperation (international scope)."

Finnova also plays a leading role in **youth training and employment**, being the top Spanish foundation participating in the **EU's Youth Guarantee programme**, recognised by Spain's Ministry of Labour and Social Economy. Through its internships and fellowships, Finnova has trained over **700 young professionals** in Brussels and Spain, preparing a new generation of leaders committed to a **greener, more innovative Europe**.

The Foundation continues to expand its work in **innovation diplomacy**, linking European funding opportunities with global sustainability agendas. Among its current initiatives is the organisation of the **Glocal Circular Economy Summit**, to be held in **Ibagué (Colombia) in April 2026**, an event that will bring together leaders from government, business, and academia to foster circular and sustainable solutions worldwide.

"Receiving this award is an honour and a responsibility," said Juan Manuel Revuelta. "At Finnova, we believe that supporting innovation and training young talent are essential tools for building a sustainable and inclusive Europe."

About Finnova Foundation

Finnova is a **Spanish-Belgian non-profit foundation** that supports public and private entities, including startups, SMEs, municipalities, universities, and NGOs, in accessing European innovation, funding, and training opportunities. With headquarters in **Brussels** and offices in **Spain and Chile**, Finnova operates across all EU Member States, connecting innovative ideas with European funds to turn them into real, scalable projects.