



EUROPEAN RESPONSIBLE HOUSING AWARDS

14-17 June 2022 | www.responsiblehousing.eu
International Social Housing Festival, Helsinki



The European Responsible Housing Awards 2022



The fourth edition of the European Responsible Housing Awards (ERHA) was celebrated again this year, following the previous edition of 2019. The pandemic prevented us from meeting in person, but the European Responsible Housing Initiative did not stop! On the contrary, our mission to accomplish a more social, sound and affordable housing sector was reinforced as the value of a safe home became more and more important. Social and affordable housing, in fact, is not only about providing people with “a roof over their head”, but it should encompass a set of responsible practices to effectively achieve the social inclusion of tenants and residents. This means involving people in the decision-making process, providing homes in proximity to services and jobs, offering relevant information, training opportunities, long-term housing and energy affordability, and security of tenure.

Meet the awards Jury and their challenging task

The health, energy and affordability crises showed the resilience of the affordable and social housing sector, which developed several innovative and social solutions. As a result, 70 projects from 20 countries applied for this year’s 2022 European Responsible Housing Awards!

The Jury¹, composed of 15 international and European housing experts and key stakeholders from the European Investment Bank (**Andrea Colantonio**), Tenant Unions (**Marie Linder (SE)**, **Melanie Weber-Moritz (DE)**, **Anne Viita (FI)**, **Maja Staleska (MK)**, **Eddie Jacquemart (F)**, **Zeno Winkels (NL)**), Urbanists (**Laura Colini**), European Cities representatives (**Michaela Kauer**, **Christian Hellevang**, **Javier Buron**), the European Commission (**Ruth Reichstein**), professional bodies for housing standards (**Sander Scheurwater**) and housing NGOs (**György Sumeghy**) chaired by **Barbara Steenbergen** (Head of the EU office of the International Union of Tenants) was eager to evaluate such a large variety of outstanding projects from all over Europe.



*ERHA Jury meeting March 7th at the Vienna House, Brussels- in front **Christian Hellevang** and **Anne Viita***

On the 7th of March 2022, the **Jury members** met in Brussels to select 23 finalist projects² and the winners of each of the five categories in the 2022 European Responsible Housing Awards edition.

Considering the high quality of the applications, it was definitely a difficult task! All the projects, in fact, proved of great value and a source of inspiration, reflecting the current pressing challenges to providing social and affordable housing and providing hands-on solutions to tackle them in the respect of the Corporate Social Responsibility, the Code of Conduct and Responsible Housing Principles.

The Jury went through the five categories of the ERHA 2022:

1. **‘Fair financing for housing affordability’**, which aims to create simpler solutions that allow everyone to have access to sustainable financing options which are a business model for landlords and tenants as well.
2. **‘More than a roof – supporting communities of equal opportunities’**, which is meant to prove how tenants’ and residents’ well-being is the very first step to achieve: promoting social cohesiveness, creating job opportunities, integrating the entire neighbourhood, and preventing any forms of segregation is essential!
3. **‘Leaders of innovation, agents of fair energy transition’**, which values innovative sustainable construction and renovation solutions. Housing cost neutrality, preventing “renovictions” (evictions by renovations), fighting energy poverty, and reducing the environmental footprint are possible even with reasonable budgets and a chance for everyone to contribute especially tenants and housing associations.

¹ <https://www.responsiblehousing.eu/jury>

² IUT press release: <https://www.iut.nu/news-events/finalists-erha-2022/>

4. **'Building strategic alliances'**, which highlights the importance of community participation and cooperation between key stakeholders (housing associations, local authorities, tenants, and residents) for achieving inclusive, vital and liveable neighbourhoods.
5. **'Going the extra mile in extraordinary circumstances'**, which awarded the efforts made to protect tenants and residents during the COVID-19 crisis.

The jury members of the ERHA did a huge work in identifying the 23 shortlisted and winners among the 70 submitted projects. In their one-day meeting in the Vienna House Brussels, the projects were screened and assessed thoroughly and presented by the rapporteurs **Eddie Jacquemart**, **Laura Colini**, **György Sumeghy**, **Michaela Kauer**, **Zeno Winkels** technically guided by the data visualization expert **Jeroen Hovens** (Groeneblij) and his decision support tool as well as **Iman El Alami** (IUT project manager ERHIN) and **Barbara Steenbergen** (Chair of the jury).

After several considerations and tight voting results the jury constated that there are many promising and encouraging responsible housing projects which need to be put in the spotlight-those efforts deserve publicity to be replicated in Europe and worldwide.

We invite you to have a look at the ERHA 2022 Handbook³ that collects all the finalist and winner projects. Get inspired!



*Barbara Steenbergen,
IUT, Chair of the Jury*

³Handbook:https://www.responsiblehousing.eu/files/ugd/8ac5c3_2e3d4168a7eb441c84a934ce7548ad39.pdf

The European Responsible Housing Awards Ceremony

◆◆◆ Fourth edition ◆◆◆

On the 16th of June 2022 the fourth edition of the European Responsible Housing Awards Ceremony took place in Helsinki as a main event of the International Social Housing Festival.⁴



Helsinki Oodi Central Library, location of the ERHA Ceremony



Jaana Nevalainen, Senior Ministerial Advisor for the Ministry of the Environment of Finland

The ceremony was moderated by **Jaana Nevalainen** (Senior Ministerial Advisor for the Ministry of the Environment of Finland) and started right after the opening remarks given by the three representatives of each of the organizations behind this initiative: IUT, Housing Europe, and Delphis.



Marie Linder, IUT President

Marie Linder, President of the International Union of Tenants, emphasized the importance of this initiative, which, through its innovative projects, shares and inspires good practices with regard to the inclusion of tenants in the decision-making process- at a level playing field.

Bent Madsen, President of Housing Europe, welcomed the audience with an overview of the five categories of the Awards: Fair financing for housing affordability; More than a roof – supporting communities of equal opportunities; Leaders of innovation, agents of fair energy transition; Building strategic alliances, fostering community participation; Going the extra mile in extraordinary circumstances.

Anne Behlouli, delegate from Delphis, emphasized the importance of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CRS) criteria and its relevance when assessing the applications.



*The ERHIN Team proudly presenting the Handbook 2022 in Helsinki- **Andreea Nacu**, **Chiara Massarotto**, **Anne Behlouli**, **Iman El Alami***

Afterward, the moderator led the public from category to category through an inspiring journey of good practices and innovation.

By calling on stage a jury member for each category to give the laureate speech, the winners have been announced and shared their good practices with regard to the realization and implementation of their outstanding projects.

⁴ https://socialhousingfestival.eu/events/festival-program/?event_id=1245

Fair financing for housing affordability



Sander Scheurwater (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors), **Sarai Martínez** (Municipal Councilor Mataró) and delegate from the Mataró City Council.

Sander Scheurwater (Head of Public Affairs Americas, Europe, Middle East and Africa, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, Brussels) provided a smart overview of each of the finalists' projects of this category.

The winner is **"Yes We Rent! - Leveraging vacant private property to build up a cooperative affordable housing scheme (ES)"**⁵ from Mataró City Council, which tackles a dramatic lack of affordable rental housing. It is a project that aims to explore solutions based on the cooperative economy to generate an alternative supply of affordable and stable housing in the city of Mataró, Spain. The project focused on the renovation of privately owned long-term empty flats with high attention to energy efficiency through the application of energy-saving measures.

The project offers owners a guaranteed rent, and financial and organisational support to renovate the properties, incentivising them to rent their flats at a cost below market prices. In parallel, the project has tested an organisational model of a multi-stakeholder cooperative, which can be publicly funded and controlled.

"More than a roof" – supporting communities of equal opportunities



György Sumeghy (Habitat for Humanity International), **Ronnie MacRae** (Communities Housing Trust)

György Sumeghy (Associate Director, Policy and Advocacy Europe, Middle East and Africa, Habitat for Humanity International, Bratislava) presented the finalists' projects with his personal remarks for each.

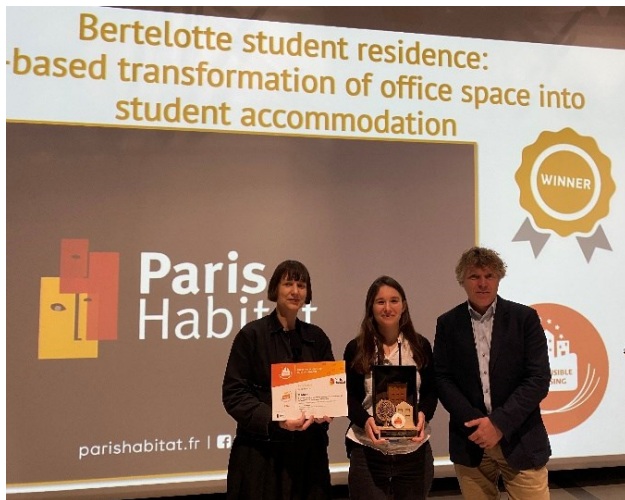
The winner for this category is **"Achtercairn, Gairloch: Regenerating A Rural Highland Community (UK)"**⁶ from the Communities Housing Trust. Communities across the Scottish Highlands have suffered depopulation, loss of services, challenges of increasing tourism and house prices and consequent loss of existing affordable housing stock and increased pressure on remaining businesses and services.

The project aims to transform the former derelict site in the center of the village into a mixed development, combining affordable homes with social, commercial and education facilities. The small village of about 750 inhabitants benefits now from a community-led development tailored to local and long-term needs coordinated by the Communities Housing Trust (CHT). Sustainability and circular economy are at the core of the project and only Scottish-grown timber was used.

⁵ Video Yes We Rent:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RAmEJNi1Hvk>

⁶ Video regenerating a Rural Highland Community:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5AKWbMmcvY>

Leaders of innovation, agents of fair energy transition



Zeno Winkels (Dutch Union of Tenants), H  l  ne Schwoerer, Lucie Lescud  -Plaa (Paris Habitat)

Zeno Winkels (Director of the Dutch Union of Tenants) introduced the finalists' innovative applications received for this category.

The winner is **"Bertelotte student residence: Bio-based transformation of office space into student accommodation (F)"**⁷ from Paris Habitat.

The project was awarded for having transformed the unused office building into affordable student housing, innovating in terms of construction practices and contributing to the achievement of the climate commitments. The project tackled different matters at the same time: technical innovation (bio-based material was used for the renovation), transformation of the building, and quality of life by investing into large common spaces for students and providing affordable rent price.

Building strategic alliances, fostering community participation

Michaela Kauer (Director of the Vienna House Brussels, Co-Coordinator of the EU Urban Agenda Partnership for Housing, Brussels) provided a great overview of the finalists' projects of this category.

The winner is **"Empowering tenants to co-create a strategic urban transformation (DK)"**⁸ from Aalborg Himmerland Boligforening.

Himmerland Boligforening delegation, accompanied by the Mayor of Aalborg **Thomas Kastrup-Larsen**, believes that renovations alone are not enough to change a city district. That is why the tenants were made co-creators in their project, to contribute to attracting new residents and to make them central in the city development. In this case, they have brought together tenants, local businesses, associations, and the municipality to work together to create a city district which can accommodate everyone's needs. The physical renovation achieved included an extensive refurbishment of a total of 1.100 residences spread over three main roads. It reached a 50% reduction in energy use and to an increase of green functions and biodiversity.



Michaela Kauer (Vienna House Brussels, EU Urban Agenda Partnership for Housing), Ole Nielsen (Himmerland Boligforening) and Thomas Kastrup-Larsen

⁷ Video Bertolotte:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A23mmsjJRIU>

⁸ Video Aalborg Himmerland:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hELri6TmLw&feature=youtu.be>

Going the extra mile in extraordinary circumstances



Maja Staleska (Housing and Tenants Organization, Skopje), Mrs. **Gerlinde Gutheil-Knopp-Kirchwald** (GBV), Mr. **Alexander Machatschke** (BAWO)

Maja Staleska (President of the Housing and Tenants Organization, Skopje) took the stage presenting each of the finalists of this category.

The Winner is **“Arriving Home. A sustainable initiative on combatting homelessness in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (AT)”⁹** from Vienna, by the GBV Austrian Federation of Limited-Profit Housing Associations and BAWO. Due to the financial consequences of the Covid-19 crisis, many more people became vulnerable to homelessness. The project solved this issue by financing tenants’ upfront contributions to the cooperatives and by allocating apartments in a participatory way. The biggest immediate impact of the project was the quality of life of tenants. More than 500 people benefitted from the scheme, more than half of which were women. The team is already planning the continuation and mainstreaming of Housing First for the whole country.

⁹ Video Arriving Home:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGq7L6P3h0k>

¹⁰ Handbook: <https://www.responsiblehousing.eu/files/>

The fourth edition of the ERHA was a great success, demonstrating once again that affordable housing and residents’ empowerment are achievable and economically feasible both for tenants and landlords!

We feel inspired by the amazing good practices presented and we are already looking forward to the next edition!

To get to know more about all the finalists’ and winners’ projects, please consult the 2022 European Responsible Housing Handbook¹⁰ and the IUT press release¹¹!



ERHA on the news:

- **The Press and Journal (16.06.22):**
<https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/highlands-islands/4421775/gairloch-award-passivhaus-achtercairn-loch-ewe/>
- **Ross-Shire Journal (16.06.22):**
<https://www.ross-shirejournal.co.uk/news/watch-wester-ross-regeneration-project-hailed-an-example-ot-278663/>
- **Dansk Byudvikling (17.06.22):**
<https://dansk-byudvikling.dk/himmerland-boligforening-vinder-europaeisk-pris-for-aalborg-model/>
- **Scottish Housing News (17.06.22):**
<https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/articles/community-led-regeneration-of-gairloch-wins-european-award>
- **Nordjyske (17.06.22):**
<https://nordjyske.dk/nyheder/aalborg/boligforening-vinder-stor-pris-for-storstilet-omdannelse/3009259>
- **APA-OTS (17.06.22):**
https://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20220617_OTS0014/sozialminister-rauch-ugd/8ac5c3_2e3d4168a7eb441c84a934ce7548ad39.pdf

¹¹ IUT press release: <https://www.iut.nu/news-events/erha-awards-winners-announced-press-release/>

[gratულიert-bawo-zum-european-responsible-housing-award](#)

- **Boligen (17.06.22):**
<https://fagbladetboligen.dk/alle-nyheder/2022/juni/flot-pris-til-himmerland-boligforening/>
- **El periódico (17.06.22):**
<https://www.elperiodico.com/es/vivienda/20220617/proyecto-viviendas-asequibles-mataro-gana-premio-europeo-13875847>
- **El Puntavui (18.06.22):**
<https://www.elpuntavui.cat/societat/article/5-societat/2155576-el-projecte-lloguem-de-mataro-rep-un-premi-europeu.html>
- **La Vanguardia (18.06.22):**
<https://www.lavanguardia.com/local/maresme/20220618/8349634/proyecto-lloguem-mataro-gana-european-responsible-housing-awards.html>
- **Urbact (03.08.22):**
<https://urbact.eu/inspiring-ideas-housing>

© IUT liaison office to the EU

Barbara Steenbergen, Iman El Alami and Chiara Massarotto

More info: Barbara Steenbergen, Head of IUT liaison office to the EU, Brussels.
barbara.steenbergen@iut.nu