

## 2016 AESOP AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

### Innovative Approaches to Interdisciplinarity in Planning Education - Building Capacity to Respond to Interconnected Contemporary Planning Challenges

#### AIM OF THE PRIZE

Teaching in the broad field of planning is one of the main activities of AESOP Member Schools. Thus, in 2002, AESOP introduced a prize ([http://www.aesopplanning.eu/en\\_GB/excellence-in-teaching](http://www.aesopplanning.eu/en_GB/excellence-in-teaching)) which recognizes and encourages Excellence in Teaching. Through this award, AESOP celebrates and disseminates innovative practices in teaching in its Member Schools. The broad aim of the Prize is to stimulate the development of planning courses or groups of courses in order to better prepare students for their forthcoming practice, to further educate practitioners, and to promote the development of a critical perspective. The specific purpose of the prize is to promote and encourage planning schools to apply new pedagogy, theories and/or technologies/techniques in ways that enhance the knowledge and skills necessary to respond to new global planning challenges. The Award provides an important opportunity to disseminate effective practice and importantly to celebrate teaching quality amongst European Schools of Planning.

#### THE THEME OF THE PRIZE IN 2016

One of the key features of planning as a disciplinary field is the interconnected and diverse range of challenges that it is called upon to respond to. As Ritter and Webber (1972)<sup>[i]</sup> noted, many of the problems which planning seeks to address may be characterized as 'wicked' in that they are complex, highly interrelated, and defy the 'traditional' models of 'expert-led' definition and resolution which apply to many areas of the natural sciences or engineering. Given this reality, planners are often called upon to work at the interface of many different kinds of knowledge and disciplinary spheres drawing from an eclectic range of theoretical perspectives, methods, and professional traditions. This characteristic of planning has long been a theme of reflection for planning practitioners, scholars and students, and the design and delivery of teaching on many planning programmes seeks to take this into account. In recognition of this, in 2016, the AESOP Excellence in Teaching Prize Committee are keen to encourage entries from courses that seek to use innovative approaches to develop learners' capacity to reflect on and develop interdisciplinary perspectives and solutions in response to contemporary planning challenges.

Because the Committee is seeking to encourage entries from a diverse range of courses we are not being prescriptive in terms of the definitions of interdisciplinarity and innovativeness, which will always to an extent be subjective. Entrants may however, find it useful to consider some of the previous work which has explored notions such as multi-, cross- and interdisciplinarity<sup>[ii]</sup>. As regards innovation, entries are called upon to demonstrate how the approach adopted represents a change, or evolution, from the previous pedagogical approaches used in the specific Member School, with additional credit for demonstrating that the approach adopted is innovative as regards teaching in the wider field. Entries must also demonstrate how the capacity of learners to reflect on and respond to planning challenges is being developed through the interdisciplinary teaching approach which is being used.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Only AESOP member schools can be nominated for this prize. The course must have been successfully implemented for at least one year. Applicants can either be:

- a planning school;
- a planning department within a university; or
- a group of teaching staff or an individual belonging to an AESOP Member school.

## HOW TO APPLY

Please, use the electronic [application form](#) available from the AESOP web site.

**All material must be submitted electronically.**

**Applications must be received by 30th of May 2016.**

**Applications must include a full description of the course or module, as it is described and structured in the 2016 application form.**

## THE JURY

A panel of academics (AESOP Excellence in Teaching Award [Committee](#)) will judge the nominees.

The panel will consist of AESOP members, including a representative from AESOP's Young Academics Network.

## AWARDING THE PRIZE

A prize of **€1000** will be presented to a representative of the winning programme during the [IV World Planning School Congress](#) in Rio de Janeiro, at the AESOP General Assembly which will take place on **8th July 2016**.

The winner will be expected to make an audio-visual presentation of the programme at the subsequent year's congress. He/she/they will also be expected to allow the programme to be presented on AESOP's website.

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[i] Rittel, H. W. J. & Webber, M. M. (1973), 'Dilemmas in a general theory of planning', *Policy Sciences*, 4, pp.155-169.

[ii] See <http://www.arj.no/2012/03/12/disciplinarity-2/> for a brief summary of views on different 'disciplinarity'.