

PRESS RELEASE

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Town and city finalists bidding to be named the most “liveable communities 2012” are announced

A record number of communities from around the world have been named as finalists in the International Awards for Liveable Communities (LivCom), the UN-backed global awards scheme for civic environmental achievement.

A continued growth in community focus on sustainability has sparked not only a record number of entries but has resulted in the highest ever number of finalists in the event’s 15 year history.

Communities are making their debut at the finals from six countries new to the award scheme. These are from; Portugal, Egypt, Peru, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Mexico and Kuwait.

After a special award was made two years ago to Medellin in Colombia, the country has another finalist for 2012, the Metropolitan area of the Aburra Valley.

Founder and chief executive Alan Smith said: “There is strong evidence that it is local government and local communities where despite the world’s economic problems, solutions are being found to improve living standards from healthy lifestyles to enhancement of the landscape – a major benchmark of the awards. These awards are a unique way of recognising the outstanding efforts being made by individuals committed to finding innovative answers to their communities problems.”

A total of 60 towns and cities, 66 Sustainable Projects and 26 Bursary Award applications have reached the finals after an initial round of judging over the summer. These go forward to the finals and awards event being hosted by Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 22nd - 26th November 2012.

Finalists this year reflect a wider geographic spread than ever before with entries from across the five continents.

Previous success stories include a project to “green” Johannesburg with a million trees which won a LivCom Award ahead of South Africa’s World Cup football bid.

Last year's "winners" ranged from the small town of Pfaffenhofen an der Ilm in Germany (popn 23,000) won praise for the quality of its environmental best practice while at the other extreme, Nanjing in China (popn 6.4million) collected a gold award and received a commendation for its focus on arts and heritage.

Submissions annually cover a range of key areas such as healthy lifestyles, lifelong learning, local transportation and communication issues, urban planning, environmental engineering, heritage management, community safety and security, economic development, and community sustainability.

Alan Smith added: "One of the best aspects of bringing experts in the field together is that despite the fact that they come from a range of different cultures and countries, the problems they face are similar. LivCom is not only about recognising achievement, it is about sharing best practice and there is growing evidence to suggest that since the development of the awards, taking part in LivCom has benefitted and improved the quality of life for people around the world."

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Note to editors:

The International Awards for Liveable Communities (The LivCom Awards) was launched in 1997 and is endorsed by the United Nations Environment Programme, with which it partners an MoU.

LivCom is non-political, embracing all nations and cultures, and over 50 countries are represented within the Awards. LivCom Awards are made annually in three categories covering Whole Cities, Sustainable Projects and a Bursary Award.

The LivCom Awards are the only forum in which International best practice may be observed and developed, and participation in the Awards is an investment in the future of a community. Observers are welcome to attend.

LivCom Awards 2012

Finalists

Venue: Al Ain, UAE, 22nd to 26th November 2012

Category A: Population up to 20,000

Abbeyleix, Co. Laois County Council, Ireland
Baishihsu, Chinese Taipei
City of Manzuru, Japan
City of Serpa, Portugal
Dujia Community, Tainan City, Chinese Taipei
Galesti Commune, Republic of Moldova
Limen Village - Zhongzheng Community, Chinese Taipei
Moynalty Village, Kells, Co. Meath, Ireland
Port Fairy, Victoria, Australia
Prachatice, Czech Republic
Tangbu, Chinese Taipei
Town of Rosemere, Canada

Category B: Population 20,001 to

75,000 Chrudim, Czech Republic
City of Greater Geraldton, Australia
City of Kladno, Czech Republic
Community of the City of Puschino, Russia
Dibba City, United Arab Emirates
Kogarah City Council, Sydney, Australia
Meinong District, Kaohsiung, Chinese Taipei
Moriya City, Japan
Oleiros City Council, Spain
Riviera Beach, USA
Siwa Oasis, Egypt
Statutory City of Jihlava, Czech Republic
Central-Western District, Tainan City, Chinese Taipei
Yangcheng District, Kaohsiung, Chinese Taipei

Category C: Population

75,001 to 150,000

Broadland, England
County of Wicklow, Ireland
Masdar City, United Arab Emirates
Mikolow Town and County, Poland
Municipalidad de Miraflores, Peru
Putrajaya, Malaysia
Sangju City, South Korea
South East County Gran Canaria, Spain
Xinying District, Tainan City, Chinese Taipei
Yingge District, New Taipei City,

Chinese Taipei

Category D: Population

150,001 to 400,000

Batangas City, Philippines
Chang'an, Dongguan, PR China
Cherkasy City Council, Ukraine
City of Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ivano Frankivsk, Ukraine
Jin Cheng City, PR China
Kuching City, Malaysia
Nilufer Municipality, Turkey
Paranaque City, Philippines
Siena Province, Italy
Tamsui and Bali, Chinese Taipei
Wellington, New Zealand

Category E: Population over

400,000

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Changzhou City, PR China
Cheongju City, South Korea
Donetsk City Council, Ukraine
Greater Ankara Municipality, Turkey
Kumamoto City, Japan
Metropolitan Area of the Aburra Valley, Colombia
New Taipei City, Chinese Taipei
Puebla, Mexico
Suining City, PR China
Suwon City, South Korea
Taichung City, Chinese Taipei