

4 placements Erasmus+ Traineeship

## **Join IFOAM Organics Europe**

A guide for applicants

September/25 – February/26

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 About IFOAM Organics Europe



**IFOAM Organics Europe**, is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels representing the interests of the organic movement in front of EU institutions. We are composed by almost 200 member organisations from 34 different countries and span the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy groups.

Additionally, we collaborate with diverse environmental and social NGOs to **fight for the adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound farming systems in Europe and the world**. In fact, we are embedded within

the IFOAM – Organics International movement with 800 affiliates in more than 100 countries.

We believe that only holistic farming models based on the four main principles of organic agriculture – health, ecology, fairness, and care – can cope with existing threats like climate change or soil and water pollution and will lead to more resilient and sustainable farming systems. Our aim is to encourage and disseminate knowledge, principles and practices about organic agriculture that can bridge language and cultural barriers, to IFOAM Organics Europe affiliates, to public authorities and to society. In short, IFOAM Organics Europe is striving to make Europe greener and more resilient and sustainable – more organic! Further information on IFOAM Organics Europe can be found on [www.organicseurope.bio](http://www.organicseurope.bio).

## 2 Erasmus+ Traineeship

### 2.1 What is the Erasmus+ Traineeship?

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. While mostly known for enabling students to study across Europe, it also provides grants for young people to work abroad through the traineeship program. These traineeships are open to students and recent graduates registered in a higher education institution that takes part in the Erasmus+ program. **To be eligible for this traineeship you need to have successfully applied for a grant at your higher education Institution through the international or Erasmus+ office.** More info about the program can be found on the [Erasmus+ website](http://Erasmus+ website).

### 2.2 The placements

This year, there are four placements available within different units at IFOAM Organics Europe, starting **on September 1<sup>st</sup>**. The duration will be 6 months, and you are expected to commit to the project for **35 hours per week** (7 hours a day) from Monday to Friday. The weekend is free, and you will be entitled to **two days of holidays per month worked** and days off during Belgian public holidays when the office is closed. Flexible conditions are applied for homeworking.

You will be assigned to a specific unit for the duration of your stay, however there is the possibility to be involved in some tasks from other units if agreed with supervisors. This will allow you to learn about a wider range of IFOAM Organics Europe's work.

Four placements will take place under the **Erasmus+ Traineeship** program:

- Traineeship in 'Projects and Partnerships' Unit
- Traineeship in 'Events and Membership' Unit
- Traineeship in 'Communication' Unit
- Traineeship in 'Policy' Unit

Depending on which position you apply for, different requirements and procedures need to be followed that will be explained in the following sections. Relevant experience for your placement is welcome but not needed if you are willing to learn.

IFOAM Organics Europe welcomes trainees from all backgrounds regardless of gender, cultural, ethnic background, or religion. We open our doors to open-minded and strongly motivated young individuals. As our organisation is an umbrella organisation, we enjoy welcoming trainees from diverse cultures as it helps to enrich our community and understand the challenges and opportunities for organic on a wider scale.

## 2.3 Traineeship in 'Projects and Partnerships' Unit

In this placement you will be a trainee in the Projects and Partnerships team, which primarily works on securing funding for the organisation, ensures the smooth execution of internal strategy, manages advocacy-focused grants and partnerships & sponsorships agreements. To secure funding, the team develops project proposals to private foundations, the EU Commission (mainly CINEA) and formulates value propositions for businesses. Furthermore, the unit plays a key role in the strategic development of IFOAM Organics Europe, looking at business trends, opportunities and challenges, and developing strategic choices related to its business model and financing to ensure the organisation's sustainability.

Your tasks in Projects and Partnerships will include:

- Grant management - coordinate grant management processes:
  - EU-funded LIFE operating grant (depending on the period of the year):
    - a) Technical report: oversee planning, prepare templates to set up the process for the final annual report, coordinate inputs and compile high quality report.
    - b) Technical proposal: oversee planning, prepare templates and collect input from colleagues to ensure a high-quality yearly proposal.
  - Support in the coordination of the European Solidarity Corps projects: reporting, follow-up with former volunteers.
  - Support in coordination and reporting of other projects granted by foundations or other funders.
- Fundraising - contribute to the execution of the fundraising strategic plan:
  - Identify funding opportunities from foundations and sponsors, maintaining and improving databases for it.
  - Develop appealing communication materials for sponsors and foundations

"During my time at IFOAM Organics Europe, I developed very useful professional skills in a welcoming environment. More specifically, I learned more about EU food policy, organic agriculture, and the functioning of EU institutions while developing fundraising skills. On a personal level, I met inspiring people, created long-lasting friendships, and explored the amazing city of Brussels!"

Maelis Juvin, from France  
Volunteer in the Projects & Partnerships Unit  
2024

- Support development and writing project proposals: carry out background research, develop project log frames and theory of change, and design monitoring plans.
- Participate in sponsors' acquisition & in approaching new foundations by drafting pitch presentations.
- Partnerships - contribute to the implementation of the sponsorship and media partnership commitment plans:
  - Draft sponsorship & media partnership agreements.
  - Support the overview of main sponsorship commitments & ensure their fulfilment (communication material, logos, invoices).
  - Liaising with sponsors for communication material if needed.

During this period, you will develop the following skills and knowledge:

- Writing project proposals and reports to different target groups, including the European Commission, foundations and businesses.
- Working knowledge about project management approaches, processes and their optimisation.
- Understanding of the key sustainability topics (environmental, health, carbon management, etc.) and how they link to business values.
- Communication skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Organisation skills, including prioritisation and time management
- Networking and presentation skills
- Coordinating and managing relations with partners.
- Analytical thinking
- Fundraising skills

## 2.4 Traineeship in 'Events and Membership' Unit

Want to learn how professional conferences come together? In the Events & Membership team, you would have the chance to do so. During your placement you would be part of the organization of European Organic Congress 2025, and coordinate IFOAM Organics Europe's webinars.

Of course, nothing comes together without a strong base of the organisation – our membership is key, while at IFOAM Organics Europe, you would get the possibility to learn more about the vast organic sector reach, also closely observe and be part of our governing bodies activities, including, the General Assembly.

Your tasks will include:

- Contribute and implement events communications activities (website coordination, mass mailings sending & drafting, newsletter contributions).
- Coordinating event programme development (contact with speakers, invitations etc)
- Coordinating and keeping the events calendar up to date
- Coordinating member only webinar series " Lets discuss organic".
- Keeping membership database information and membership lists up to date.
- Co-assisting in the preparation of events and meetings involving IFOAM Organics Europe Members and governing structures.

During this period, the trainee is expected to:

- Learn the processes of event coordination & backend of the physical & digital events management
- Learn how to communicate to different sector representatives, people involved in events & membership

- Learn how to work with different service providers, how to compare offers and make the best choice

I can truly say that my time at IFOAM Organics Europe helped me develop excellent organisational skills and gain experience in managing and planning a large event, such as the Organics Europe Youth Event. The IFOAM Organics Europe team is very welcoming and supportive, and they are dedicated to helping young professionals grow. Additionally, Brussels is a vibrant city with numerous events to participate in after work!

Lumi Hultkrantz, from Finland  
Volunteer at the Events and Membership Unit  
2024

## 2.5 Traineeship in 'Communication' Unit

IFOAM Organics Europe's Communications unit is responsible for IFOAM Organics Europe's external communication, including traditional channels (our website, newsletters, mailings and printed publications), as well as new media (social media, infographics, GIFs, videos, and online publications) and communication tools (Hootsuite, CiviCRM, intranet and extranet).

You will have the following tasks:

- Content support (60%):
  - Create content for our social media presence and website
  - Leading on the production of [IFOAM Organics Europe newsletter](#): from planning to collecting articles & liaising with colleagues and sending it out.
  - Assist in monitoring and analyzing social media presence
- Database and SharePoint support (10%):
  - Responsible for sending mailings from our database (CiviCRM) and helping keep it up to date.
  - Supporting maintenance and development of our SharePoint environment (intranet, extranet and IT WIKI), managing the publication inventory and occasionally ordering corporate communications-related goods & materials.
- Other tasks (30%):
  - Managing the integrated mailing planning and the calendar with upcoming communication.
  - Tracking our media presence.
  - Assisting with basic designs: creating visual materials for IFOAM Organics Europe's online presence.
  - Providing secretarial support: first point of contact for shared inboxes, reporting, lending your eye for detail to various (online and printed) publications/infographics, populating our digital publications.

## 2.6 Traineeship in the 'Policy' Unit

The policy unit is working on many different policy topics related to organic farming such as the Common Agricultural Policy, sustainable food systems, GMOs, seeds, pesticides, food policies, biodiversity and climate change. The work may include advocacy meetings, working with the different IFOAM Organics Europe interest groups, research and analysis work, the development of position papers, and contributing to EU research projects.

You will be involved in the following:

- Advocacy for developments within agricultural, food and/or environmental legislation, specifically:

- Researching, identifying and analysing relevant legislative developments in the environmental and agricultural policy fields.
- Coordinating the gathering of inputs from members for public consultations and position papers and drafting IFOAM Organics Europe's position on relevant topics.
- Conducting background research to support the development of IFOAM Organics Europe's positions.
- Assisting the policy unit in coordinating internal structures such as the IFOAM Organics Europe Interest Groups, Expert groups and Task Forces and/or supporting IFOAM Organics Europe colleagues in developing the content and identifying the speakers for IFOAM Organics Europe events.
- Support in coordinating and implementing IFOAM Organics Europe projects. For instance, assisting in organizing project workshops and roundtables with external experts.
- Producing minutes and reports with the project results after meetings, workshops, etc. to communicate project outcomes to the project funders.
- Networking with policy makers, external partners and IFOAM Organics Europe members, specifically:
  - Organising, preparing for, attending, taking minutes and follow up on meetings/online conferences, external and internal events and others as requested.
  - Supporting internal coordination of meetings and organising the participation of IFOAM Organics Europe members to the DG AGRI CDGs (Civil-society Dialogue Group of DG AGRI) and managing the dedicated mailbox.

During the traineeship, you will develop the following skills and knowledge:

- Develop advocacy and time management skills, as well as the ability to summarize, in a clear and effective way, policy-related positions.
- Learn about organic agriculture and its positive impacts on the environment, as well as about the organic sector.
- Acquire an understanding of the functioning of EU institutions.

“Being at IFOAM Organics Europe has been one of the most enriching experiences of my life, both on a professional and personal level. Working in the policy unit, I acknowledged the importance of IFOAM OE in the development of European and national policies and, above all, the fundamental role of organic farming for the sustainability of the agri-food system. The multicultural working environment and the stay in Brussels also gave me the opportunity to get to know other cultures, and to feel part of one big community: the European one. In addition to having acquired new competences and working skills, one of the most stimulating and satisfying aspects of this project has been the awareness of contributing with one's own work to a better future from an environmental, ethical and social point of view.”

Maria Vittoria Borghetto, from Italy  
Volunteer in the Policy Unit in 2021



## 2.7 Financial and linguistic support



The financial support will be determined in an agreement between you and your higher education institution. This might vary to each educational institution.

Your university or higher education institution will transfer you the grant. You will receive access to the Erasmus+ Online Linguistic Support (OLS) to help with learning languages such as French or Dutch.

## 2.8 Travel and accommodation

IFOAM Organics Europe is committed to supporting our trainees in securing accommodation. While we aim to

assist with covering accommodation costs, the specifics of financial support will be discussed during the interview stage, depending on available budget.

## 2.9 Insurance

As an Erasmus+ Trainee you will be fully insured during the length of your traineeship.

- You are obliged to have the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) from more than 15 days before the start of your traineeship.

You are entitled to an insurance by your own university or higher education institution. Please, let us know in the application form if you need additional insurance.

## 2.10 Who can join the Erasmus+ Traineeship at IFOAM Organics Europe?

Do you want to join IFOAM Organics Europe with the Erasmus+ Traineeship?  
Then you have the following characteristics:

- You are a recent graduate or still enrolled in a higher education institution in the EU.
- Your higher education institution is participating in the Erasmus+ Traineeship program.
- You already inquired about the possibility of an Erasmus+ Traineeship scholarship **at your higher education institution.**
- You have not done an Erasmus+ Traineeship before, or it was less than 1 month (Erasmus Traineeships can last maximum 12 months within the same cycle of studies).

You, IFOAM Organics Europe and your higher education institution will sign a Learning Agreement for Traineeships to ensure a transparent and efficient preparation of the exchange abroad. This document sets out rights and responsibilities of all parties, a detailed programme of the traineeship, information on insurance, and how your traineeship will be recognised upon successful completion.



### 3 What to expect from joining IFOAM Organics Europe

IFOAM Organics Europe offers a wide array of opportunities such as learning more about EU institutions, our advocacy work, the activities and mission of other like-minded NGOs, organic farming practices and the impact of environmental and climate policies, but also about Belgian/Brussels culture. This learning will be enabled through:

- Trainings on content and practical skills provided by IFOAM Organics Europe staff on various topics such as GMOs, the organic regulation, project development and management, communication, writing, climate change, organic seeds, how to write CVs or have interviews, etc.
- Public events in Brussels such as conferences at the European Parliament or the Commission, workshops, festivals, IFOAM Organics Europe events and meetings, seminars and many other events constantly happening in this vibrant city.
- Meetings and exchanges with other young people from like-minded Brussels NGOs. i.e. through the YEP Brussels (Young Environmental Professionals of Brussels) network, which was founded by previous volunteers of IFOAM Organics Europe and now has over 200 members that regularly interact, organise seminars of pertinent topics in their premises; as well as working on common projects (such as the organisation and facilitation of a workshop on access to land for young farmers that was organised by former volunteers for the 2018 European Youth Event in Strasbourg).
- Supporting the daily work of IFOAM Organics Europe, allowing you to develop professional experience by helping with tasks within your unit (more information on specific tasks is further described in section 2).
- Supervision and mentoring are provided to you, as you will have a supervisor that guides you through your individual projects and supports you in your tasks, and a mentor that serves as guidance in personal development and helps you to get integrated within the organisation, the project and community.