



FEDERATION SPELEOLOGIQUE EUROPEENNE

European Cave Protection Commission

EuroSpeleo Protection Label 2026

Call and Guidelines for cave and karst protection projects

It is with great pleasure that the FSE announces this year's call for cave and karst protection projects to receive the "EuroSpeleo Protection Label" (ESPL) from the European Cave Protection Commission of the FSE (ECPC). Since its origin in 1990, the FSE has been trying to promote cave and karst protection in Europe and introduced the ESPL in 2007. Many projects have been awarded since that time.

The "**EuroSpeleo Protection Label**" is a European speleological award managed by the ECPC and financed by the FSE. The EuroSpeleo Protection Label will help to promote amongst the speleological clubs of Europe, cave and karst protection activities that are designed in an integrated ecological way, taking into account besides FSE Charta and rules also EU environmental directives, the principles of administration of the Natura 2000 sites and the IUCN Guidelines on caves and karst protection.

With what kind of project can you apply?

The EuroSpeleo Protection Label will be awarded every year to one unique cave and/or karst protection/conservation project. A European speleological jury established by the ECPC Board will make the selection. Any project aiming at protecting caves and/or karst developed by a club, a local or a national commission from a member country of the FSE can apply.

What are the criteria to receive the FSE EuroSpeleo Protection Label?

There is no need for participation of cavers from different countries, but the application should be a quality project, and the broadcasting of the project presentation and results should be made in a spirit that can be reproduced in other European regions and countries. The application must be sent to protection@eurospeleo.eu before the **30th of April 2026** in English language.

A project proposal includes the following components:

1. A fully completed and accurate Application Form.
2. Project summary (abstract) in a separate file (250 words).
3. Presentation of the protection relevant needs in alignment with the European Speleological Charta for Cave Protection (FSE) including steps for implementation (300 words);
4. Description of the expected project results and long-term integrated ecological sustainability while emphasising the used approaches that will advance the current state of the field (350 words);
5. Explanation of the involvement of cavers, co-organisations, partners and stakeholders (100 words);
6. Overview of media and public outreach strategies (50 words);
7. A project Budget (in EUR), with a breakdown of the main budget categories (i.e. income, travel, equipment, consumables, and other expenses);
8. Inclusion of a letter from the national speleological organization, which is a member of the FSE, certifying its support for the project.

What prize can be awarded for the Label?

For the label 2026 there will be **800.- Euro** as financial assistance for the winning project plus, caving gear from **Aventure-Verticale**. (www.aventureverticale.com)
The winner receives a certificate indicating the project that has won the award.

What are the winner's obligations after receiving the confirmation of the "EuroSpeleo Protection Label"?

As soon as the winner has been announced, before receiving the sponsoring equipment, the EuroSpeleo Protection Label prize winner must send a contribution in form of half a page with a narrative description of the event in English, together with a few general images outlining the project to be posted on the Social Media sites of the FSE and/or its Official Partner and sponsor.

Both, text (in pdf and doc file format) and images (in jpg format) should be sent at the latest 3 weeks after the ESPL Prize Awarding to protection@eurospeleo.eu. If photographs are to be credited, please provide a list with their names. Copyright of images remains with the photographer who has to be acknowledged.

After having received the sponsored items the ESPL winner should deliver a few pictures showing the sponsored items in action. Further it would be an added value if the winner is announcing this sponsored prize on his own social media sites.

Under this agreement, the FSE Official Partner is granted a licence to reproduce the photos for promotion (e.g. in catalogues or advertising). Also, FSE is granted a licence for internal use of the images in all its media. FSE Official Partners licences are limited to a period of five years from the date of transmission of the photos. If any FSE Official Partner or FSE itself wishes to use any image outside this agreement (e.g. after five years) further agreement will need to be negotiated with the photographer(s).

The winner of the ESPL must submit the final report in the form of a digital document (pdf) no later than November 30th of the same year to receive the funds of 800.-€ before the end of the year. If this deadline is not met, the ECPC will make a decision regarding the payment of the prize funds.

If the afore-mentioned deadlines or other financial rules are not met, the FSE Bureau reserves the right to reduce its financial grant to the EuroSpeleo Protection Label prize. Furthermore, any publication completed after receiving the award must include the sponsor's logo alongside the FSE and ECPC special ESPL logo. It should also explicitly mention the **"FSE EuroSpeleo Protection Label 2026"** in the publication. The prize certificate, along with the equipment, will be awarded during a major speleological event supported by the FSE. The financial assistance will be made available after the reception of the report.

It is expected that the winner will be present at the event where the Prize handover will take place.

Very Best Speleo Wishes,
FSE-European Cave Protection Commission

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EuroSpeleo Protection Label is supported by the FSE Partners:



Aventure Verticale Equipment



Korda's Ropes



Scurion Lamps