



Competition organized by RDÉE Canada

RECOGNIZING ENTREPRENEURIAL EXCELLENCE IN FRANCOPHONE AND ACADIAN COMMUNITIES

This competition highlights the importance of Francophone businesses outside Quebec in the Canadian economy. More and more of them are creating jobs and diversifying the local economy. The increasing number of such companies is a guarantee of prosperity for Canada's Francophone minority communities.

The *Lauriers de la PME* Awards are given to companies that strive for excellence in regional, provincial/territorial, national or international markets. These companies are well established, financially sound and respected for quality and service. They support community economic development efforts and create a work environment where employees can grow and learn.

In short, the award winners are flagship companies; they serve as models for others who strive for the same success.

AWARD

The award given to the winning companies includes:

- Media coverage in a series of Canadian newspapers
- Promotion on the RDÉE Canada's Web site
- A trophy with the winner's name engraved on it
- Right to the use of the *Lauriers de la PME*'s official logo for promotional purposes
- New contact network with businesses from every region in Canada
- Souvenir DVD of the *Lauriers de la PME* Awards Gala
- Recognition in future promotional material of the *Lauriers de la PME*

You will find attached comments by the winners of the last edition of the competition held in 2007.

ELIGIBLE COMPANIES

The competition is open to small and medium-sized Francophone businesses (Francophone SMEs) outside Quebec.

A Francophone SME is a company that has fewer than 500 employees, is run by one or more French-speaking owners involved in administration and technical management of operations and in ongoing contact with their staff, and encourages the development of the Francophone economy outside Quebec.

At least one of the owners of a business interested in entering the competition must reside in a province or territory outside Quebec.

The following businesses are not eligible to compete:

- Cooperatives
- Not-for-profit businesses
- Businesses whose owners are community associations
- Businesses belonging to entrepreneurs who are members of the RDÉE Canada's Board of Directors
- Businesses that have already won or received the "Coup de coeur" prize in the last four editions of the competition

In addition, a business cannot enter this national competition more than three times.

CATEGORIES

The *Lauriers de la PME* keeps pace with the evolving trends in the Canadian economy. The 2009 edition offers interested businesses categories:

- Processing company
- Commercial services company
- Specialized services company
- Micro company

RDÉE
Canada

The national Francophone
economic development network

www.rdee.ca

DESCRIPTION OF THE CATEGORIES

Processing company

A "processing company" is one whose principal activity consists of transforming, processing or manufacturing goods from raw products or materials. In general, processing involves transforming materials or substances into new products by means of mechanical or physical processes. The primary products undergo some transformation, processing or some form of modification that, with the addition of inputs (other elements or sub-products) create a value-added product. The candidates in this category can work, for example, in marine or agro products processing as well as in the production of furniture involving various processes. Interested companies must be operating commercially for at least three years; this means that their products must be on the market for at least three years.

Commercial services company

A "commercial services company" is one whose activity involves the sale of services directly to consumers or to other businesses that use these services as production inputs. The services are marked more by the creativity with which they are provided than by their level of industrial or technological intensity. Companies eligible in this category may, for example, be involved in retail sales or wholesale distribution, in brokerage (insurance, accounting), in tourism, in the hospitality industry or in recreation, leisure and entertainment. Applicants must be operating commercially for at least three years; this means that their services must be on the market for at least three years.

Specialized services company

A "specialized services company" is one whose activity involves the sale of services directly to consumers or to other businesses that use these services as production inputs. The services have a major industrial and technological component and a specialized workforce. The category is open, for example, to companies with expertise in industrial design, research, communication and marketing (both the vehicle and the content), custom study and consulting, specialized construction and eco-technology. Applicants must be operating commercially for at least three years; this means that their services must be on the market for at least three years.

Micro company

A "micro company" can operate in a variety of sectors, but must employ a maximum of three employees (including the owner). In general, such a business provides commercial, accounting, technical, legal, informatics or other skills. Micro companies can also involve a self-employed worker (without employees). Applicants must be operating commercially for at least three years; this means that their products or services must be on the market for at least three years.

SELECTION COMMITTEE AND CRITERIA

At the national level, the selection committee is made up of experienced members of the French-Canadian business community and of federal economic development agencies (Business Development Bank of Canada, Industry Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and Western Economic Diversification Canada).

The members' names will remain secret until the winners are announced. The winners will be selected from among the finalists in each category, nominated by each province and territory. The selection committee will choose the four winners on the basis of a series of criteria within the following themes:

- Economic performance (70% of the points)
- Social commitment (30% of the points)

With respect to the theme of social commitment, the companies must demonstrate their contribution to the community and their efforts to promote the francophone presence. You will find attached the detailed evaluation criteria applied by the selection committee for each category.

APPLICATION PACKAGE

Each participating company must file their application package with their provincial or territorial RDÉE network. This package must include the application form, a profile of the company and a letter from the company's banking institution describing the applicant's financial situation, essentially by means of ratios. The application must also include three digital photos of the company.

Financial information entered on the form will remain confidential. Information entered on the form will not be released without the express consent of the owner of the company. The owner must sign the application form to attest that all the information provided therein is true.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please submit your application by _____ to your provincial or territorial RDÉE, which will conduct the initial selection. Your RDÉE will then send the files of the finalists who will be representing your province or territory to the national office of RDÉE Canada in Ottawa no later than **June 26, 2009**.

The names of the winning companies will be announced at the Awards Gala for the *Lauriers de la PME* to be held on **November 7, 2009**, at the Fairmont Château Laurier in Ottawa.

All the finalist companies from each province and territory will be invited to attend the Gala in Ottawa free of charge. This covers transportation costs and lodging for one person and two tickets to the Gala. Each business will also receive a souvenir DVD.

The *Lauriers de la PME 2009* Awards Gala provides an opportunity to meet entrepreneurs from every region of the country and to celebrate excellence in the world of Francophone business.



APPLICATION FORM

The information requested is the minimum required for the selection committee to assess the company adequately. Incomplete forms will not be considered.

Province or territory of the applicant

CATEGORY *(tick one only)*

- Processing company Commercial services company
 Specialized services company Micro company

GENERAL INFORMATION

Company name

Address

Telephone no.

Fax no.

E-mail

Headquarters address *(if different from above)*

Name of owner(s)

Start date of commercial activities

Type of company *(tick the most appropriate)*

Sole proprietorship

Partnership

Corporation

Has the company ever been the target of a government investigation? If yes, explain.

In the past five years, has the company been taken to civil or criminal court? If yes, explain.

COMPANY PROFILE

Write a description of your company (maximum 5 pages, one side only). We suggest that you take into account the criteria (attached) that will be considered by the selection committee to assess the finalists from the provinces and territories.

FINANCIAL DATA

Each applicant must provide a letter from its banking institution attesting to the company's financial health and giving two ratios:

- Ratio of short-term assets to short-term liabilities
- Ratio of tangible debt to equity

We also request the number of employees and a brief description of the applicant's fixed assets (see example of banking institution's letter attached).

PHOTOS

In addition to the above-mentioned elements, each participating company must provide three high-definition digital photos of the company on CD (e.g., photos of the owner at work, the owner with his or her product, serving a client or interacting with employees).

No additional material will be accepted (e.g., brochures, company videos).

I, the undersigned _____, confirm that the

(name and title of company owner)

(company name)

meets the eligibility criteria for the competition, and I certify that the information given above is true. I also authorize RDÉE Canada to disclose the name of the company and its owner when the award winners are announced and in all subsequent communications.

Signature

Date

I, the undersigned,

(name and title of company owner)

from the RDÉE

(province or territory)

, confirm the filing of this application

in the category

Signature

Date