Ethics Forum International

Ethicality & Ethics Recognition Framework

Version 1.0 — November 2025

A cross-professional framework defining criteria, governance, and renewal for EFi Recognition across all pathways.

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EFi Ethicality & Ethics Recognition Framework

Defining recognition standards, criteria, and renewal processes across all EFi pathways.

Last updated: 1 Nov 2025 • Applies globally • EFi review cycles: March & August

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1) Purpose & Scope

EFi (Ethics Forum International) advances ethics and **ethicality** across professional life. This framework defines the common criteria, evidence standards, review process, and governance for EFi Recognition across all pathways. It is cross-professional and membership-independent.

Two-year recognition cycle. Recognition is granted for two (2) years and is renewable. This cadence keeps recognition current, credible, and accountable to practice.

Review cadence. Applications are reviewed **twice per year** by the EFi Recognition Council (March & August). Submissions received are allocated to the next cycle.

2) Core Principles

- **Integrity in practice** — ethics lived as a way of being, not just compliance.
- **Reflection & learning** — ongoing development through structured learning, supervision/mentorship, and peer dialogue.
- **Transparency** — clear criteria, documented evidence, directory publication.
- **Proportionality** — criteria scaled appropriately to each pathway.
- **Independence** — recognition is **not** contingent on membership of any body.

3) Pathways (overview)

Currently open:

- **Professional Recognition** — for individual practitioners, educators, and leaders.

- **Associations & Small Businesses** — professional associations, networks/societies; small or privately run training providers and schools; independent small businesses.
- **Institutions & Organisations** — universities, colleges, professional schools; larger or nationally accredited training providers; public/private organisations with structured governance.
- **Corporations** — medium to large companies; regional/global/multinational enterprises.

Each pathway has tailored criteria, evidence expectations, and fees (published on the EFi site).

4) Professional Recognition — Pillars, Criteria & Evidence

EFi recognises individual practitioners, educators, and leaders against four practice pillars. Applicants submit evidence from the most recent two-year period aligned to these pillars.

4.1 Professional Recognition — Pillars

1) **Learning & Ethical Scholarship**
   ~ Ongoing, structured learning that strengthens ethical awareness and judgement.
2) **Reflective Practice & Support**
   ~ Regular supervision and/or mentorship that deepens discernment, safeguards clients/learners, and develops professional judgement.
3) **Community Dialogue**
   ~ Active, collegial engagement in ethics-focused conversations (e.g., circles, peer groups) to test assumptions and broaden perspective.
4) **Contribution & Stewardship**
   ~ Tangible contributions that advance ethical reflection in the field (publishing, presenting, teaching, podcasts, policy/white papers, etc.).

A cross-cutting safeguard applies to all pillars: ***Integrity & Accountability*** *(complaints disclosure and evidence of learning where relevant).*

Champions of Courage awardees: if you received a **Champions of Courage Award** within the last two years, include the award category and year, attach your certificate, and add a 2–3 line reflection on how this recognition informs your ethical practice.

Integrity & Complaints Declaration
Declare whether you have had any professional complaints in the last two years. If yes, provide a short statement outlining the nature of the complaint (no names required), outcomes, learning, and any changes made.

Evidence format
Where tables are requested, combine into single Word/Excel files for upload. Public links are preferred where applicable.

5) Organisational Pathways

Final criteria will be published before applications open.

5.1 Associations & Small Businesses

(Professional associations, networks, small training providers, and independent small enterprises.)

Indicative elements:

- Ethics learning embedded for members or staff (through *Ethics Beyond the Code*™ or equivalent ethics learning).
- A clear, published code of ethics or ethical statement.
- Accessible complaints route and clear corrective action mechanism.
- Public accountability statement with basic transparency on how ethical issues are managed.
- Demonstrated engagement in ethics dialogues, learning circles, or reflective forums within the EFi ecosystem or broader field.

5.2 Institutions & Organisations

(Universities, large NGOs, accrediting bodies, or training institutions with structured governance.)

Indicative elements:

- Programme-level ethics integration across curricula, professional training, or organisational learning.

- Regular staff/faculty development in ethics (learning, supervision, mentorship norms).
- Institutional code of ethics and transparent governance around complaints or disciplinary processes.
- Ongoing evaluation of ethical culture and organisational learning from challenges, complaints, or incidents.
- Structured engagement with external ethical dialogues or networks (e.g., through EFi, CEF, or EEI).

5.3 Corporations (Regional/Global)

(Medium to large enterprises, multinationals, or public organisations.)

Indicative elements:

- Executive sponsorship and visible leadership commitment to ethical culture.
- Ethical leadership and governance systems are demonstrably active — through leadership accountability, ethics committees, transparent reporting, or equivalent mechanisms appropriate to scale and context.
- Active engagement of employees and partners in ethics learning, dialogue, and reflection (through structured education, facilitated conversations, or integrated development programmes).
- Alignment between stated organisational values and daily decision-making, leadership conduct, and accountability practices.
- Multi-region implementation and coherence across all operational contexts (for regional or global recognition).
- Established speak-up and remediation mechanisms, with transparent review and learning processes when ethical concerns arise — strengthening ethical culture and practice over time.

6) Review & Decisions

- **Allocation:** Applications are placed in the next March or August cycle.
- **Assessment:** The EFi Recognition Council reviews each submission against the published criteria and evidence standards.
- **Outcomes:** Decisions are classified as **Approved**, **Request for Further Information (RFI)**, or **Declined**

If further information is requested (RFI):

Applicants have up to **six months** to provide additional or clarifying evidence without reapplying or paying a new application fee.

- If the additional evidence satisfies the criteria, recognition is issued as of the original cycle.
- If no response or sufficient evidence is received within six months, the application lapses and must be resubmitted in a future cycle with a new application fee.

If declined:

Applicants may reapply in the next review cycle (March or August) after addressing the criteria gaps identified in the feedback report. A new application fee applies.

- **Directory & badge issuance:** Approval is conditional upon payment of the recognition fee. Once paid, the certificate and digital badge are issued and the public EFi Recognition Directory listing is published.
- **Appeals:** Applicants may request a reconsideration once per cycle by responding to the specific grounds noted in the decision. Appeals must be lodged within 30 days of notification.

7) Safeguards, Directory & Badge Use

- **Directory is definitive.** Only those currently listed may use the badge and certificate.
- **Expiry & misuse:** Using the badge/certificate after expiry or without approval constitutes unauthorised use. Unauthorised or continued use after notice may trigger removal of listing (if applicable) and a one-year waiting period before re-application.
- **Multiple professional listings:** Professionals may request additional profession tags in the Directory for a nominal administrative fee per additional category (see site for current details).

8) Fees & Payment (policy summary)

- **Fees are published on the EFi website** for each pathway and may change.
- **Application Review Fee:** non-refundable; payable on submission.
- **Recognition & Directory Fee:** payable only upon approval; non-refundable once paid (including later withdrawal or request for removal).
- Recognition remains **valid for two years** from approval.
- **Renewal** follows the same review process and fee structure and requires full, updated evidence covering the latest two-year period.
- **Independence:** EFi recognition is independent of membership; no membership is required to apply.

9. Governance & Data

- **Governance:** The EFi Recognition Council upholds the integrity, quality, and consistency of the recognition process. It reviews applications, ensures fair and transparent decision-making, and periodically refines criteria to reflect evolving ethical practice. Council members are appointed by EFi for their relevant expertise and act independently of any professional association or commercial interest.

- **Data Protection:** EFi complies with EU GDPR and French law. Evidence is used solely for recognition purposes and retained in accordance with data-retention policy.

- **Brand Use:** Badge and certificate use requires an active listing in the EFi Recognition Directory. Misuse or continued use after expiry may result in removal of listing or future ineligibility.

- **Policy Updates:** Frameworks, criteria, and governance procedures may evolve over time. The current version and revision history are maintained on the EFi website for transparency.

10. Renewal

- At the end of each two-year cycle, applicants resubmit full evidence covering the preceding two years.
- Reviews follow the same process and standards.
- Renewal maintains or updates directory listings upon approval.

Appendix A — Recognition Pathways and Organisational Framework

This appendix summarises the recognition structure and classification principles that underpin all EFi Recognition pathways.

Recognition Pathways

EFi Recognition is available through multiple pathways. Each pathway applies the same ethical pillars, with criteria and evidence scaled appropriately for scope and governance.

Pathway	Typical Eligibility	Evidence Focus
Professional Recognition	Individual practitioners, educators, and leaders.	Ethics learning, supervision/mentorship, peer dialogue, ethical contributions.
Associations & Small Businesses	Professional associations, networks, small training providers, or independent businesses.	Ethics integration, reflection processes, community engagement.
Institutions & Organisations	Universities, colleges, NGOs, accrediting bodies, or large training institutions.	Governance alignment, training integration, transparency.
Corporations	Medium to large enterprises, regional/global companies, or public organisations.	Leadership accountability, multi-region implementation, transparent reporting.

Application & Review

Fees, evidence templates, and application forms are published on the EFi website and in the pathway-specific checklists.

Recognition is renewable every two years and subject to review by the EFi Recognition Council (March & August cycles).

Detailed evidence requirements for each pathway are provided in the downloadable EFi Recognition Checklists available on the EFi website.

For queries: **efi.recognition@ethicsforuminternational.com**

Organisational Recognition Framework (2026 Edition)

Overview

The EFi Organisational Recognition Framework acknowledges organisations that demonstrate a clear and sustained commitment to building ethical infrastructure. Recognition validates that an organisation has transparent safeguards, active training, and meaningful contributions to the wider community of practice. Recognition is valid for two years and renewable upon evidence of continued practice.

All applicants are assessed against the four pillars of the EFi Organisational Recognition Framework:

Pillar	Focus
1. Core Ethical Infrastructure	Code of ethics, leadership commitment, embedded ethical culture.
2. Ethics Training & Learning	Staff participation in *Ethics Beyond the Code*™ or equivalent programs.
3. Safeguards & Accountability	Transparent, fair complaint mechanisms and internal accountability.
4. Community Contribution	Engagement in ethical dialogue, learning, and cross-sector collaboration.

Champions of Courage Awardees

Awardees of the *Champions of Courage Awards* (within the past two years) may include this as supporting evidence of ethical impact or community contribution under Pillar 4.

Renewal & Governance

- Recognition is valid for two years.
- Renewal requires updated evidence across all four pillars.
- Expired recognitions are removed from the EFi Directory unless renewed.
- Applications are reviewed by the EFi Recognition Council twice per year (March & August).

Benefits of Organisational Recognition

- Recognition certificate and badge.
- Public listing in the EFi Recognition Directory (with tier and validity period).
- Enhanced credibility with clients, funders, and stakeholders.
- Communications support, including media release templates and LinkedIn announcements.
- Visibility at EFi / CEF events and publications.

Recognition Classification Policy

EFi recognition is determined by the scale, governance, and ethical reach of an entity rather than its legal label. This ensures equitable and context-sensitive assessment across all organisational forms — whether non-profit, educational, or commercial.

Classification Principle

Recognition pathway assignment is based on organisational scope, infrastructure, and influence, not merely its stated category or corporate structure.

For example, a professional association operating globally with paid staff and complex governance (e.g., multiple country chapters, formal board structures, and annual revenue exceeding approximately €2M) will be assessed under the *Institutions & Organisations* pathway rather than *Associations & Small Businesses*, regardless of its non-profit status.

Illustrative Guide

Category	Typical Profile	Example
Associations & Small Businesses	Small non-profits, private training providers, or local associations (under 20 staff, turnover below ≈€2M).	National coach training body, small professional network.
Institutions & Organisations	Universities, large NGOs, accrediting bodies, or global associations with structured governance.	ICF, EMCC, AC, large NGO, or university network.
Corporations	Medium to large enterprises, multinationals, or public entities with commercial governance.	Regional or global corporations, consultancies, or government agencies.

Note

This classification policy supports fairness, proportionality, and transparency in the EFi Recognition process. Entities are encouraged to select the pathway most aligned to their operational scope, with final confirmation made during pre-assessment or application review.

For further details and downloadable checklists, visit www.ethicsforuminternational.com/recognition.

Attribution

Ethics Forum International (EFi) – Organisational Recognition Framework, 2026 Edition.