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Vinitech-Sifel names 30 Innovation Trophy winners from 55 entries

The awards elevated projects in worker safety, agroecology, robotics, digital tools, new approaches to wine service.

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Organizers of the Vinitech-Sifel trade fair on Tuesday announced the winners of the 2026 Innovation Trophies, naming 30 projects from a field of 55 entries less than three months before the event opens in Bordeaux. The awards recognize equipment, processes, and services judged most likely to bring practical gains to winegrowing and winemaking professionals, with this year’s results highlighting worker safety, agroecology, robotics, digital tools, and new ways to market and serve wine.

The competition, which Vinitech-Sifel describes as a long-running technology benchmark for the sector, was judged between July 1 and Sept. 9 by an independent panel drawn from leading French scientific and technical bodies, including the French Vine and Wine Institute, ISVV, INRAE, and Bordeaux Sciences Agro. Organizers said projects were scored on field usefulness, economic return, safety, ergonomics, and environmental impact. Sébastien Cavaignac, co-chair of the scientific and technical committee, said the strongest entries were not just technically sound but also met stricter expectations on workplace safety, user protection, and economic and environmental relevance.

The special jury prize, which had not been awarded since 2022, went to Agrocampus Bordeaux Gironde for “Terroir d’idées,” a wine innovation hackathon aimed at younger participants. The project is designed to encourage new ideas for products, services, uses, and customer experiences that can support the sector’s economic development and attractiveness. It is led by the La Tour Blanche institute, part of Agrocampus Bordeaux Gironde, with support from Fusion Jeunesse, Château d’Yquem, the Regional Vine and Wine Campus, the regional agriculture authority in Nouvelle-Aquitaine, the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region, and industry professionals.

In the cultivation techniques category, the gold trophy went to Surus Connect, based in Bègles, for a connected lone-worker alarm system redesigned for agriculture and viticulture. Organizers said the device works even in areas without normal coverage by relying on redundant communications networks. It is also designed to reduce false alarms, stop machines automatically in the event of an incident, and continuously map risk factors on a farm, including heat, vibration, and noise.

The silver trophy in that category went to Souslikoff of Arcins for EXTRALEX, a post-harvest mechanical tool that removes and recovers vine leaves from the row and the ground. The company says that by removing primary inoculum found in plant debris from one season to the next, the tool can sharply reduce epidemic pressure, especially from downy mildew, without using chemicals.

Three bronze trophies were awarded for cultivation techniques. The Gironde Chamber of Agriculture was recognized for VitiSCENARIO by MATEVI, a technical and economic simulator that allows growers and advisers to model changes in practice, including hand labor, mechanization, and outsourced services, to improve farm organization and profitability. Hofstaetter Technologies of Austria won for HELIOS Wine, an active protection device against late frost that organizers said can operate down to -5C, or -7C in extreme conditions, while using limited energy. Multifolia SAS received a bronze trophy for VITIFOLIA, a natural nematicidal organic amendment approved as a basic substance of European origin. The product is intended to act on the nematode that carries grapevine fanleaf degeneration and to support root uptake as a way to restore vine vitality.

Several projects in the same category received honorable mentions. Senseen was recognized for Nutriscope, a decision-support tool that measures 16 nutritional indicators in the field through sap analysis to help adjust fertilization and irrigation. Agrex of Italy was cited for an inter-row fertilizer spreader with integrated continuous weighing and Isobus regulation. Groupe Ethicae was mentioned for an organic spring fertilizer meant to stimulate natural vine defenses, and Veragrow for a foliar biostimulant derived from vermicompost and enriched with humic and fulvic acids.

The transformation category, which covers winery and production technologies, was led by M&Wine of Fontaines-Saint-Martin. Its gold-winning IAssemblage platform is a decision-support tool for winemakers based on artificial intelligence and mineral and qualitative data. Organizers described it as a winery assistant that simulates the effect of aging decisions and compares optimized blending scenarios to help reach a target sensory profile.

Two silver trophies were awarded in transformation. Tonnellerie Taransaud won for ADJUSTEC, a new generation of hoop tensioners for wooden vats and large casks that makes it possible to compensate for dimensional changes and restore tightness without outside intervention. Laboratoires Dubernet was recognized for DAD, or Dynamic Air Diagnostic, which organizers called the first cellar air-quality monitoring solution compliant with ISO 16000 using a 30-minute sampling process. The system is designed to identify sources of airborne contaminants and volatile compounds that could create organoleptic defects in wine.

The bronze winners in transformation reflected a broad push toward data collection, safety, and product development. The French Vine and Wine Institute was honored for TopDegust, a standardized digital platform for gathering and processing sensory data during vinification, experimentation, and quality control. Vini Solutions won for an all-in-one mobile unit that safely and evenly incorporates oenological products, provides continuous flotation clarification, and automates cleaning in place. Portugal-based Watgrid received a bronze for Winegrid Data-Driven Assistant, a predictive digital system linked to real-time sensors that alerts winemakers to risks and helps manage each fermentation stage from one interface. The Gironde Chamber of Agriculture won for OENODRINKS, a kit for natural aromatic experimentation and formulation that lets professionals design and prototype new beverage profiles in the lab. Biopythos completed the bronze group with Polytube, a modular aging vessel that combines a ceramic tube with different closure materials, including wood, glass, and stainless steel, to create multiple wine-aging options depending on the vintage.

Honorable mentions in transformation went to another Watgrid product, the Winegrid e-bung V2, a connected bung that tracks color, opacity, fill level, and temperature inside a barrel; Parsec of Italy for a motorized valve using power-line communication to simplify wiring and temperature regulation tank by tank; Lamouroux for VINISUB, a remote-controlled underwater drone designed for winery tanks that can pass through the cap and build a 3D map of physical and chemical parameters; and Technopompe for a mobile cart that centralizes gas transfers, deoxygenation, carbonation, flotation, and additive dosing for cooperative wineries.

No gold trophy was awarded in the packaging category. The silver trophy went to CG Industry for ECOFASS, a reusable keg with an integrated single-use airtight bag for serving wine under pressure without contact with the propellant gas. Organizers said the system is meant to prevent product losses and lower logistics costs for the hotel, restaurant, and catering market.

Three bronze trophies were awarded in packaging. Diam Bouchage won for Diam LiOX, a micro-agglomerated cork closure produced through an industrial desorption process that reduces initial oxygen release after bottling by 50%, a change aimed at preserving the freshness of white, rosé, and sulfite-free wines. Amorim France was recognized for TWIST & POP, a microgranulated cork closure that can be opened and resealed by hand without a corkscrew while remaining compatible with standard bottle necks and existing bottling lines. Oenoptimum of Spain won for RACK OMEGA and RACK OMEGALUX, a patented modular system for storing and displaying barrels that is designed to improve floor-space use and worker safety without expensive structural work. A packaging mention went to Vinventions France for WQS Nomasense CO2 C2000, a portable analyzer that measures dissolved CO2 in 30 seconds in the cellar or on line before packaging.

In the commercialization category, the gold trophy went to MyWah for Ma Petite Carafe, a stand-alone connected system that serves wine by the glass and by bottle from standard bag-in-box containers. Organizers said its patented instant thermal regulation can provide several service temperatures and is intended to modernize wine service in restaurants and wine tourism settings.

The silver trophy in commercialization went to the Gironde Chamber of Agriculture and the Lit Ceps et Cépages program for “Parcelle vivante,” an immersive serious game that places participants in the day-to-day management of a farm. The goal is to rebuild dialogue between winegrowers and nearby residents around lower input use and agroecological transition. No bronze trophy was awarded in that category. A mention went to Metay 3D for OENOFIL, a bio-based 3D printing filament that uses local grape pomace to make functional or promotional objects linked to a territory and to support reusable bulk wine pouches within a circular economy model.

The official awards ceremony is scheduled for Dec. 1 at 5 p.m. in Hall 1, Forum Area, at the Bordeaux Exhibition Center during Vinitech-Sifel. Organizers said the winning innovations will be on display and available for demonstrations throughout the three days of the fair at exhibitor stands across five exhibition hubs, in real conditions at the 3,000-square-meter Techno Show area, and at the Village Startups International, which is expected to host more than 30 startups.