EXCEL Awards—In It to Win It

Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019
Welcome

Stephanie Kern
Editor, American Staffing Association
EXCEL Awards Committee Chair
2020 AM&P EXCEL AWARDS

Presented by

Debbie Bates-Schrott
Founder/CEO, Beyond Definition

Sarah Erickson
Senior Designer & Data Visualization Specialist, GRAPHEK

Stephanie Kern
Editor, American Staffing Association
EXCEL Awards Committee Chair
What Are the EXCEL Awards?

The EXCEL Awards recognize excellence and leadership in association media, publishing, marketing and communications. The competition is open to nonprofit and for-profit associations, as well as industry service partners submitting on behalf of association clients—regardless of whether they are members of AM&P.
EXCEL Awards Overview

Submission Requirements

• Published between Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2019
• 500 word or less description of the intended audience, significance, and outcomes achieved
• An item can be entered in more than one category
• Physical copies mailed to AM&P for printed materials (links for digital copies)
• Supporting images/screenshots for entries
EXCEL Awards Overview

Why Should You Enter?

• Helps your company’s marketers emphasize your work in their messaging
• Deepens company leaders’ buy-in to your work, and creates competitive excitement around your successes
• Demonstrates your value to members, at a time when companies are looking to grow subscriber revenue and demonstrate value in an information-overload world
• Helps build team morale
“Our Silver Award for General Excellence helps assure our members that their magazine is among the best around. It’s also useful currency internally, as the magazine staff seeks support for exciting, digital-forward endeavors.”

Meghan Stromberg
Editor in Chief, American Planning Association

Planning
## 2020 Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates/Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Nominations</td>
<td>By Jan. 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Nominations</td>
<td>Jan. 18–Feb. 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge Sign Up</td>
<td>By March 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Judging</td>
<td>March 25–April 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Person Judging</td>
<td>April 22, 9 a.m.–7 p.m. National Restaurant Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalists Announced</td>
<td>May 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winners Announced at EXCEL Awards Gala</td>
<td>June 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXCEL Awards Overview

ENTER TODAY!

siia.net/excel

Early Bird: through Jan. 17, 2020
Member: $125
Nonmember: $325

Regular Deadline: Jan. 18–Feb. 14, 2020
Member: $160
Nonmember: $350
EXCEL Awards
Categories

Stephanie Kern
Editor, American Staffing Association
EXCEL Awards Committee Chair
Categories Overview

117 categories under 7 overarching media types:

- Books
- Digital Media
- Journals
- Magazines
- Newsletters
- Newspapers
- Promotional Content
New Categories (2019)

- Awareness Campaign
- Pro-bono (only 1 per organization allowed)
- Rebranding
- Infographics

New in 2020: Last June the AM&P Advisory Board of Directors approved by-law changes granting for-profit associations the opportunity to become a member of AM&P and enter the EXCEL Awards. Companies will be required to note their for-profit or non-profit status on their entry forms.
Circulation Size

Some categories require entries in one of five classes of circulation size:

- 10,000 or fewer
- 10,001 to 20,000
- 20,001 to 50,000
- 50,001 to 100,000
- More than 100,000
Categories With the Most Entries

BOOKS: Technical Book
MAGAZINES: Cover - Photography
MAGAZINES: Cover - Illustration
MAGAZINES: Feature Article (All circulation levels)
MAGAZINES: General Excellence (20,001 - 50,000)

These categories account for 24% of overall entries.
EXCEL Awards Categories

Categories With the Fewest Entries

NEWSPAPERS: Redesign
DIGITAL MEDIA: Podcast (Promotion) and (Other)
PROMOTIONAL CONTENT:
Advertisement Single Piece (Membership) and (Other)
Direct Mail - Campaign (Membership) and (Other)
Direct Mail - Single Piece (Other)
Directory, Buyers Guide, or Catalog (Digital)
Onsite Convention Program (Digital)
Social Media Campaign (Membership)
EXTRA! Award

Distinguished award presented to associations pushing the edge of the envelope further to innovate in an ever-changing publishing environment.

2019 Winner: C&EN BrandLab
The Chemistry of Delight
American Chemical Society
Leadership Awards

Emerging Leaders Award
Honors up-and-coming association publishing and communications professionals age 35 and under. Recipients are individuals who are already making a clear impact on their organizations. 2019 recipients: Ryan Cross, Assistant Editor, Chemical & Engineering News, American Chemical Society; Stephanie Kern, Editor, American Staffing Association; Ashley Reid, Senior Managing Editor, The YGS Group

Mitch Mohanna Lifetime Achievement Award
Special merit award chosen and presented by the AM&P board of directors to an industry service provider that has performed an outstanding service to the AM&P community and achieved noteworthy accomplishments spanning a career in association media and publishing. Founded in 2016 in honor of loyal AM&P member Mitch Mohanna, who passed away in 2015. 2019 recipient: James Meyers, CEO and Founder, Imagination
Crafting a Winning Entry

Sarah Erickson
Senior Designer & Data Visualization Specialist, GRAPHEK
Crafting a Winning Entry

What Makes an Entry Strong?

• Involving Key Stakeholders
• Thinking of the Big Picture
• Focusing on Your Description
What Makes an Entry Strong

Key Stakeholders

● Get feedback and input from members of your team to get all perspectives to better showcase your entry
● Writers, designers, and editors, etc.
What Makes an Entry Strong

Thinking of the Big Picture

● Make sure to include all of the collaterals that make up the project to show the breadth of your entry
● It’s better to provide too much than too little
● Show your collaterals in a way that will make them shine
What Makes an Entry Strong

Descriptions Can Be EVERYTHING

● Even if this is optional, ALWAYS provide a description
● Include metrics and data when applicable
● Write to areas that the judges will be evaluating
● This is your opportunity to provide context and insight into your entry so that the judges truly know what your project is about
● Try bullet points
Sample—Awareness Campaign

Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA)
Won two 2019 Silver EXCEL Awards in Educational Advertising Campaign and Awareness Campaign categories

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION: The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) educates the public each November on the importance of registering to be a donor, cornea donation and transplantation, and acknowledges the work of member eye banks. The EDM campaign is centered around the theme, “The Power of You,” and acknowledges the community of people who are involved in sight restoration, demonstrating the “power” individuals have in restoring sight. The campaign uses highlights and color blocking to accentuate the impact eye donors have in giving the gift of sight. Elements from the EDM logo and a bright color palette emphasize the hopeful tone of the campaign. The campaign is flexible to be able to emotionally target and depict a wide audience, including eye tissue donors, transplant recipients and medical professionals. There were nearly 1,375 downloads of the Marketing Toolkit materials. The most downloads were: Infographics—148, Myths vs. Facts—103, Fast Facts & Stats—191. In Nov. 2018, EBAA received 30 new Facebook followers. #eyedonationmonth2018 was included in 269+ Tweets between Nov. 1-30, 2018, generating 509,000 impressions. The EBAA Twitter account achieved 24,000 impressions throughout the month. EDM Media Outreach stories aired in 7 television markets, reaching an estimated 591,000 viewers. 6 stories appeared in print/online articles, with an estimated reach of 143,525 readers. A PR Newswire press-release was picked-up by news media 185 times, with potential audience reach of 10.3 million.
Sample—EBAA
Eye Donation Month Video Screen Captures

Register as a donor.

Over 50,000 corneas were provided for transplant in the U.S. last year.

Over 100,000 corneas were provided to be transplanted in the U.S. last year.

#EyeDonationMonth2018
www.eyelectionmonth.org
Crafting a Winning Entry

How to Stand Out

● Make an emotional impact
  ○ The goal of all of our projects is to make our audience feel something. The same can be said for the judges. Projects that have a strong concept or message that invokes a feeling is key in standing out

● Let the judges see your passion shine through your description
National Association of Social Workers (NASW) - Social Work Advocates Magazine

Won three 2019 Gold EXCEL Awards in Design Excellence, Redesign, and Feature Article Design and one 2019 Silver EXCEL Award in Feature Article Design

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION: The National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards and to advance sound social policies. As a member benefit, NASW’s members receive the magazine that includes a broader scope of information to engage/inform its members. Each issue captures an energetic and humanistic tone that appeals to its members. With a distribution of over 120,000, each issue touches on important issues within the social work community in a visually dynamic way to add deeper meaning to the stories and draw the reader in. The response has been overwhelmingly positive from readers who think the magazine is an immersive experience that is relatable to their day to day lives. The content changes from issue to issue to cover topics that will engage readership of all ages and specialties. The articles are custom designed to relate to the audience, whether it encompasses a human element or is more abstractly designed. Custom spot illustrations are created for departments to bring an NASW specific element to the stories. Clean white space is consistent throughout the issue to make it a very easy read for a busy social worker.
Sample—NASW (General Excellence)

When submitting in multiple categories, write separate and distinct descriptions for each.
SAMPLE DESCRIPTION: The National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, works to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, to create and maintain professional standards and to advance sound social policies. The Oct-Nov 2018 issue of NASW’s Social Work Advocates is focused on the topic of suicide, and how social workers can help aide in suicide prevention. The custom illustration created for this article depicts a lone, solid figure amongst a loosely drawn crowd, embroiled in their thoughts and emotions. The people around him are transparent, as though he is unable to see what is around him through his turmoil—feeling disconnected from the world. Using primarily black and white, minimal splashes of color to draw attention to the central figures thoughts. To create the illustration, two graphite drawings were scanned and composited on top of on another to achieve the transparent effect, with the central figure being added in digitally. The final visual effect is both striking and stark, emphasizing the serious tone of the topic. The masthead color was also intentionally made a bright spring green, a subconscious hint that there is hope to be found.
Sample—NASW (Feature Design)
Crafting a Winning Entry

Common Problems to Avoid

● Make sure all websites are active and easy to navigate. If there are passwords required, provide the passwords for the judges.

● For Magazine Entries—specifically features—mark the pages the judges should be judging.
  ○ Saves the judges time trying to find the feature
  ○ The judge won’t be influenced by the other pages or ads in the magazine and will judge just the pages you want them to

● Clearly label all collateral.

● Spell check!
EXCEL Awards
Judging
Debbie Bates-Schrott
Founder/CEO, Beyond Definition
EXCEL Awards Judging

Judging Process

Two options for judging:

- Virtual (can be done anywhere)
- In-Person (must attend live)
  - April 22, 2020: 9:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.
  - Location: National Restaurant Association in Washington, DC

*Judges recuse as necessary to avoid conflicts of interest*
Judging Criteria/Scoring System

- Entries are scored on a 0-10 point scale, based on certain criteria depending on the category.
- All criteria is listed out in the category section of the EXCEL Awards website.
- Award winner rankings are Gold, Silver, Bronze. And the EXTRA! Award is judged separately (invite only) and reviews the top scoring entries to deliberate the grand winner.
EXCEL Awards Judging

Who Can Judge?

● Editors, content managers, art directors, designers, production artists, communication directors/managers, printers.

● If you have questions about whether you’re eligible, reach out to awards@associationmediaandpublishing.org.

*No limit on how many from a company can sign up to judge.*
What Does It Entail to Be a Judge?

- **Virtual and in-person** judges can be expected to review up to 20 entries each (#subject to change depending on how many entries are submitted and how many judges sign up).

- **Virtual judges** should plan to set aside 10-15 hours to judge entries, using the EXCEL Awards judge portal. You are given nearly 4 weeks to complete your scoring. All scoring must be complete by Friday, April 17, 2020.

- **In-person judges** must be present for judging all day (9:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.) or whenever your scoring is complete. Judging takes place in Washington, DC. You should expect to be out of office, and really commit the day to reviewing and scoring your assigned entries.
EXCEL Awards Judging

Why Should I *REALLY* Judge?

- A great opportunity for service to your profession
- A learning experience as you evaluate a diverse cross-section of association content outside your industry
- A networking opportunity
- A day of inspiration seeing what others are doing
siia.net/excel
Save $35 per entry when you enter by Jan. 17.

More Questions? Contact Allison Bostrom at awards@associationmediaandpublishing.org.