



2017

ACHIEVEMENT

AWARDS

CELEBRATING 47 YEARS
OF INNOVATION



COUNTIES MATTER CHALLENGE:



BRILLIANT IDEAS AT WORK



2017 | ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM

WHAT IS THE ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM?

The Achievement Awards Program is a non-competitive awards program which seeks to recognize innovative county government programs. One outstanding program from each category will be selected as the “Best of Category.”

ELIGIBILITY AND CRITERIA

What is Required to Apply?

For each program nominated, general information, program summaries and payments must be submitted to the National Association of Counties (NACo) via the online application portal and payments processed via P.O. must be postmarked by the application deadline. For more information, please see the **HOW TO APPLY** section. Judging and review will not take place for unpaid or incomplete applications.

Who is Eligible to Submit applications?

Only county governments and state associations of counties are eligible to submit applications. There is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted by a single entity. Regional partners are welcome to submit applications for a collective project; however submitters must identify **a single county or state association to submit the application on the group’s behalf.**

What are the Eligibility Standards?

1. The start date of the program must be **explicitly stated**; the program must have become operational after **January 1, 2012** and must have **measurable results.**
2. County officials and/or staff, as part of their official duties, must have played a significant role in developing and implementing the program, with limited assistance from outside technical experts and/or consultants.

3. All steps in the application process must be completed and all application fees must be paid in full by March 27, 2017 **at 11:59 PM EDT.**
4. The program must meet the conditions outlined in the next section, **Program Criteria.**

Program Criteria

In order to be eligible for an Achievement Award, all programs must meet the following criteria:

1. Programs must accomplish one or more of the following:
 - Offer new services to county residents, fill gaps in the availability of services, fill gaps in or tap new revenue sources.
 - Improve the administration of an existing county government program.
 - Upgrade the working conditions or level of training for county employees.
 - Enhance the level of citizen participation in, or the understanding of, government programs.
 - Provide information that facilitates effective public policy making.
 - Promote intergovernmental cooperation and coordination in addressing shared problems.
2. In the case of a program that is in response to a federal or state law, regulation or order, the program must go beyond mere compliance with the statute, regulation or order and must display a creative approach to meeting those requirements.

3. The program must have measurable results (e.g. cost savings, employee productivity, constituent services, better intergovernmental cooperation).
4. The program must be innovative and not rely on the application techniques or procedures that are common practice in most counties of similar population or size.
5. All aspects of the program must be consistent with acceptable governmental and financial management practices and must promote general governmental accountability.

Ineligible Programs Include:

- Programs designed to influence laws or regulations.
- Certification or accreditation programs.
- Events that ONLY take place one time, such as conducting a conference, the formation of a task force or the establishment of a committee.
- Programs that are adopted, whole or in part, from other public or private entities.
- Programs, whole or in part, that have received a previous NACo Achievement Award.
- Programs that only purchase new technology or equipment, the construction of a building or the privatization/contracting out of a function.
- A newsletter or a publication.

2016-2017 Presidential Initiative

Under the leadership of NACo President Bryan Desloge, NACo is launching a friendly competition to identify and share 100 examples of visionary county leadership that results in improving residents' quality of life. By applying for the 2017 Achievement Awards, your entry will be in the running for the Counties Matter Challenge: Brilliant Ideas at Work. We will build an honor roll that highlights county innovation at its best.

Through this presidential initiative, NACo is working with county leaders, state associations, affiliates and other partners to share best practices that bolster our nation's ability to thrive amid ever-changing physical, social and economic conditions. Though no two of America's 3,069 counties are alike, many face similar challenges and learn from one another's experiences.

Winners of the Counties Matter Challenge: Brilliant Ideas at Work will be announced the last week in May 2017.





TIPS:

- INCLUDE WRITING THAT IS CLEAR AND CONCISE. THE AVERAGE READER NEEDS TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THE OBJECTIVES AND JUDGE THE MERITS OF THE PROGRAM.
- HAVE MEASURABLE RESULTS. PROGRAMS COULD HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED FIVE MONTHS AGO OR FIVE YEARS AGO, BUT OUTCOME MEASURES MUST BE AVAILABLE AND CLEARLY EXPRESSED.



HOW TO APPLY

To begin the application process, visit www.naco.org/achievementawards click on the “Apply Now” button. In order to submit a 2017 Achievement Award, you must have NACo log in information. If you do not have a NACo log in, you may create one by clicking “Create an Account.”

STEP ONE: PREPARING THE NOMINATION SUMMARY

Please prepare your nomination summary according to the guidelines below. **All applications must have the county name and page number on each page and must be submitted in PDF format. A nomination summary can be no larger than 2MB.**

Abstract of the Program

In approximately 300 words or less, summarize the program include the program description, the purpose and outcomes.

Please note that abstracts of award winning programs may be published. Provide concise, accurate information as this section will be used in whatever format it is submitted in.

The Problem or Need for the Program

Discuss the problem or need that prompted the development of the program and the county’s legal obligation, if any, to take action. Approximately ¼ pages.

Description of the Program

Provide a description of the nominated program including its objectives, time frame for development and implementation, clientele, the county’s role in implementing the program and the contributions of any other partners where applicable (e.g. states and the federal government, consultants and private partnerships). Approximately 2 ½ pages.

Responding to Economic Downturn (Optional)

If applicable, describe how the program responded to recent county budget constraints or addressed the county’s new economic reality. Approximately ¾ pages.

Use of Technology

Describe all the items of technology that your program utilized in its implementation. This could include intranet, internet, websites, GIS, GPS, cable, kiosks, software, LAN, WAN, databases, etc. You may provide this information in list or paragraph format. Approximately ¼ pages.

The Cost of the Program

Describe both the operating and capital costs incurred in developing and implementing the program. List all costs that would be incurred by a county attempting to replicate the program. Approximately ¾ - 1 page.

The Results/Success of the Program

Provide a description of the results and the success of the program in meeting its objectives. Include specific examples and outcome measures. Approximately ¾ to 1 page.

Worthiness of Award

Give justification for why this program meets the outlined criteria and should be awarded a 2017 Achievement Awards. Approximately ¼ - ½ page.

Supplemental Materials (Optional)

Supplemental materials such as pictures and charts may be uploaded in separate PDF documents once you complete the check-out process. Supplemental materials are not required but are highly encouraged. Please note that supplemental materials may be published.



2017 ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CATEGORIES

ARTS AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION • CHILDREN AND YOUTH • CIVIC EDUCATION AND PUBLIC INFORMATION • COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT • COUNTY ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT • CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY • COUNTY RESILIENCY: INFRASTRUCTURE, ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY • FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT • HEALTH • HUMAN SERVICES • INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY • LIBRARIES • PARKS AND RECREATION • PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING • PLANNING • RISK AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT • TRANSPORTATION • VOLUNTEERS

HOW TO APPLY

STEP TWO: PROVIDING GENERAL ENTRY INFORMATION

Contact Information

The individual listed as the contact in the application should be the primary point of contact for this program.

All correspondences and logistical communications about the program will be directed to the person listed on the application. Applications for the 2017 Achievement Awards Program will be submitted online at www.naco.org/achievementawards.

To complete the application process, each person must have a log in (your email address). If your email address is not registered in the NACo database or if you are not a NACo member, please follow the directions to create a log in. Once logged in, your contact information will automatically populate the online application form.

Please note, if you are submitting the application on behalf of another person in your county, please be sure to indicate the other person as the **PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT** at this time so that we can reach the appropriate party with any programmatic questions.

Program Information

Program Title

Should your program win an award, the program title you provide will appear, exactly as it was submitted, on the certificate as well as any media channels. The title should be no more than 75 characters and **should not include the name of the county.**

Program Category

Please choose one category from the drop down list on the online application. Note that the selection of a program category should be determined by the content of the program, not the organizational department implementing it. If you feel your application fits into two or more categories, please choose one that best covers the main topic area of the program.

Abstract

Please submit the abstract that was drafted as part of the nomination summary (300 words or less).

Terms and Conditions

All applicants must agree to the following terms and conditions in order to continue with the application process. By agreeing to these terms and conditions, the chief elected official (CEO) of the county certifies that this program is conducted in accordance with any applicable local, state and/or federal laws. In addition, the CEO certifies that this program is operated as described in the submitted award application.





Payment Options

The fee for each application until March 6, 2017 is \$75. On March 7, 2017, the fee will increase to \$100 until the 2017 Achievement Award deadline of March 27, 2017. There are two payment options for Achievement Award applications. Any application received without payment will not be judged or awarded.

- Online – Payment by credit card may be made through our online application system. Once payment is submitted, a receipt will be emailed to the email address provided.
- Mail – Payment by check, voucher or purchase orders must be stapled to the invoice emailed to you along with any other payment instructions to the following address:

**NACo ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM
PO BOX 79007
BALTIMORE, MD 21279-0007**





Open Air Country &
PARK ZOO

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PARK ZOO

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT AWARDS@NACo.ORG



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COUNTIES MATTER CHALLENGE:



BRILLIANT IDEAS AT WORK