

2021 NACo

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

CELEBRATING 51 YEARS OF INNOVATION





ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM

WHAT IS THE ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM?

The Achievement Awards Program is a non-competitive awards program that 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, 2016** 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 31, 2021 at 11:59 PM EST**.
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, enhanced employee productivity, improved constituent services, created better intergovernmental cooperation).
4. The program must be innovative and not rely on 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 center on the purchase of new technology or equipment, the construction of a building or the privatization/contracting out of a function
- A newsletter or a publication





TIPS

1. 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.
2. 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 2021 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 outline of sections below. **All applications must have the county name and page number on each page and must be submitted in PDF format. Files can be no larger than 2MB.**

Abstract of the Program:

In approximately 200 words or less, summarize the program include the program description, the purpose and outcomes.

Abstracts of award winning programs will be published. Please be sure to provide clear and concise information as this section will be used publicly in whatever format it is submitted.

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 county budget constraints or addressed the county’s new economic reality. Approximately ¾ pages.

Advancing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (Optional)

To ensure all residents have what they need to achieve their fullest potential, county leaders are taking actions to integrate

diversity, equity and inclusion into county operations.

If applicable, describe how the program advances diversity, equity and inclusion priorities within the county or addresses existing racial and socioeconomic disparities. Approximately ¾ page.

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 to 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 2020 Achievement Awards. Approximately ¼ to 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.

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CATEGORIES

Arts, Culture and Historic Preservation: Demonstrate how counties observe local heritage and/or leverage the arts to improve residents' quality of life and address challenges communities face

Children and Youth: Ensure children's development through a continuum of supportive services including health, education and childcare

Civic Education and Public Information: Enrich the public's understanding of county government and elevate awareness of county services

Community and Economic Development: Foster and create conditions to support community and economic development, including enhancing processes and partnerships that strengthen communities

County Administration and Management: Engage county workers and provide resources to staff to manage departments and services more efficiently

Criminal Justice and Public Safety: Improve public safety systems, justice systems, community crime prevention and crisis intervention

County Resiliency: Infrastructure, Energy and Sustainability: Optimize new technologies and other innovations to advance the county's energy goals and environmental stewardship

Financial Management: Utilize new models of managing county finances and improve stewardship of taxpayer resources

Health: Improve residents' physical and/or behavioral health, including through promoting healthy living and delivering health services

Human Services: Assist residents, particularly veterans, children, elderly residents and/or disabled residents

Information Technology: Implement creative uses of technology that make county processes more efficient and cost-effective

Libraries: Engage libraries to achieve community goals and support innovation and public outreach through county library systems

Parks and Recreation: Revitalize and reimagine existing or create new public spaces that benefit residents and visitors

Personnel Management, Employment and Training: Demonstrate strategic ways to recruit county employees, encourage professional development and maintain a first class workforce

Planning: Illustrate how counties think creatively about community design and development processes

Risk and Emergency Management: Bolster a county's ability to plan for, recover from and adapt to disasters, both natural and man-made, whose impacts can be physical, economic and social

Transportation: Improve the movement of goods and people and shape how communities grow

Volunteers: Showcase how county residents give back to communities and neighbors

HOW TO **APPLY**

STEP TWO: SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY INFORMATION

Contact Information

The individual listed as the contact in the application should be the primary point of contact for this program. All correspondence and logistical communications about the program will be directed to the person listed on the application. Applications for the 2021 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 your county is 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.

****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 programmatic questions.**


Program Information

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.





Please submit the abstract that was drafted as part of the nomination summary (200 words or less).

Terms and Conditions

All applicants must agree to the terms and conditions listed on the application page in order to continue with the application process. By agreeing to these terms, the county certifies that this program is operated as described in the submitted award application.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- **SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE:**
March 31, 2021 at
11:59 p.m. EDT
- **NOTIFICATIONS OF
ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS:**
Week of April 26, 2021

PAYMENT OPTIONS

The fee for each application submitted before March 8, 2021 is \$75. The fee for each application will increase to \$100 from March 9, 2021-March 31, 2021. 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







QUESTIONS?
 Contact **AWARDS@NACo.ORG**

fb.com/NACoDC | twitter.com/NACoTWEETS
 youtube.com/NACoVIDEO | www.NACo.org/linkedin



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