



Overview of Excellence Awards

NASPA recognizes the contributions of members who are transforming higher education through outstanding programs, innovative services, and effective administration. All NASPA members are encouraged to enter recently developed and/or longstanding programs and initiatives for consideration for the NASPA Excellence Awards.

Programs selected for recognition in each category will receive one of three designations: Gold, Silver, or Bronze. The gold recipients from each category will be further judged for the designations of Grand Gold, Grand Silver, and Grand Bronze.

Applications generally open late August with a deadline in early/mid October, and applicants are notified of the award decision in January. Award recipients are recognized in various ways at the NASPA Annual Conference.

[Review the NASPA Excellence Awards category descriptions here.](#)



Excellence Awards Judging Criteria

Entries within each category will be reviewed by a cross-section of experienced NASPA members. Three to five judges will independently review submissions using the following criteria:

- Success in addressing student needs or responding to critical campus concerns and issues.
- Relevance to institutional mission and/or applicability to student affairs profession institutionally, regionally, or nationally.
- Impact on student learning and success demonstrated through transition, retention, or achievement outcomes.
- Involvement, inclusion, and collaboration with academic affairs and other campus departments in planning and implementation.
- Use of innovative and creative methods, practices, or activities including the use of social media and emerging learning technologies.
- Application of available or emerging theoretical models, practical research, and program assessment.

In addition, submissions will also be assessed for the quality of the program description, explanation of concepts, clarity of writing, and connection to the category in which it applies. Please [refer to the rubric](#) which will be used for assessment.

If the submission relates to a program that relies on substantive use of multimedia technology, a link to those materials should be embedded in the award submission. The materials must be accessible to committee members without the need for user identification or password.



Excellence Awards Application Requirements

To be considered for a NASPA Excellence Award, nominations must include the following:

- Correspond to one Excellence Award category
- Program title
- Executive summary (500 words or less)
- Abstract (3-5 sentence summary of the program)
- Information around Student and/or Campus Needs; Mission and/or Advancement of Student Affairs; Student Learning and/or Success; Collaboration and Sustainability (up to 500 words per section)
- Optional supporting documentation (maximum of three)

An award-winning nomination should:

- Contain adequate factual or descriptive material to enable the Selection Committee to evaluate the program
- Provide a clear description of the program
- Clearly state objectives and goals
- Strongly correspond to the category in which it is applying
- Show potential for adaptation by other institutions
- Provide strong data and research to prove the program's impact
- Use the allotted space in the nomination form to address each question
- Ensure the application is free of any typographical or grammatical errors
- Avoid repetitive answers throughout the application
- Fall under the scoring of 4 (exemplary) in [each section of the rubric](#)



Excellence Awards Application Eligibility

- Programs must have been in place for at least one year. Data to substantiate program effectiveness must be included with the submission.
- Previous winners are ineligible to apply again in that same category. If a program won any award level in previous years in one category, the program must apply in a different category to be considered.
- Previous Grand winners are ineligible to win a Grand Award again. If a program that won a Grand Award in the past applies and wins in a new category than previous years, the program will not be considered for a Grand Award again.
- A NASPA membership is not required to apply. However, if the program wins and participates in a session at the NASPA Annual Conference, the primary representative for the program must have an active NASPA membership.



Excellence Awards Recognition

| NASPA Excellence Awards Recognitions | Grand | Category Gold | Category Silver | Category Bronze |
|---|-------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Considered for the Grand Gold, Grand Silver, and Grand Bronze awards designating the top three programs or initiatives. | | ☑ | | |
| Receive a NASPA Excellence Awards certificate via mail. | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ |
| Receive a NASPA Excellence Awards plaque presented at the NASPA Annual Awards Celebration. | ☑ | | | |
| Receive letters of commendation sent by NASPA to the institution's president and chief student affairs officer. | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ |
| Showcased in a collection of award recipients on the NASPA Excellence Awards website. | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ |
| Prominently displayed in the NASPA Annual Conference program book. | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ |
| Included in an ebook featuring the award-winning programs for that year, which will be distributed to every NASPA member institution. | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ |
| Invited to participate in an educational session about the program at the NASPA Annual Conference. | ☑ | | | |
| Invited to participate in a poster session recognizing award recipients during the NASPA Annual Conference (<i>limited spots</i>). | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ |
| Invited to present the program in a virtual learning session. | ☑ | ☑ | | |
| Recognized during the NASPA Annual Awards Celebration at the NASPA Annual Conference. | ☑ | | | |
| Complimentary registration to the NASPA Annual Conference for the primary individual representing the program. | ☑ | | | |
| Receives a digital award-winner badge to include on the program's website | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ | ☑ |

Questions/Assistance

For questions about the Excellence Awards, please email

excellenceawards@naspa.org