

PRSA Chicago Awards Program 2026 Call for Entries

PRSA Chicago recognizes excellence in the public relations profession through two distinct award programs: the **Leadership & Impact Awards** and the **Skyline Awards**.

The **Leadership & Impact Awards** recognize individuals and organizations whose leadership, service and contributions have made a meaningful difference in the Chicago area's public relations and communications community.

The **Skyline Awards** honor outstanding programs and tactical projects demonstrating strategic excellence and measurable results.

While both programs celebrate excellence, they have separate eligibility requirements, submission processes and judging criteria. Please review the guidelines for each award carefully before submitting.

Questions can be submitted to the Awards Committee: support@prsachicago.com.

LEADERSHIP & IMPACT AWARDS

Submit a nomination to recognize a leader, rising star or organization whose work has made a meaningful difference in Chicagoland's public relations community. Open to all public relations and communications professionals and organizations, including those working in agencies, corporations, nonprofits, trade associations and academic institutions.

There is no fee to submit a nomination for the Leadership & Impact Awards.

LEADERSHIP & IMPACT AWARD CATEGORIES

Professional of the Year

Honors one exceptional professional whose career achievements have advanced the profession and elevated the practice of public relations and communications. This award recognizes sustained leadership, professional excellence and meaningful contributions to the industry.

Young Professional of the Year

Celebrates a rising star in the public relations profession with six or fewer years of experience. This award recognizes emerging leadership, notable accomplishments and a demonstrated commitment to the future of the profession.

DEI Champion of the Year

Recognizes an outstanding individual who serves as a role model and advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion. This award honors those who demonstrate a sustained commitment to advancing DEI through their leadership, actions and influence.

Chicago Community Service Award **New for 2026**

Recognizes an organization or communications team that demonstrates an exceptional commitment to community service through pro bono work, sustained nonprofit support or corporate social responsibility efforts. This award honors purpose-driven leadership and meaningful contributions that positively impact the Chicago area community. It recognizes sustained service and overall community impact rather than a single campaign submission.

Leadership & Impact Award Requirements and Submission Guidelines:

Eligibility

Leadership & Impact Awards are open to all public relations and communications professionals and organizations serving the Chicago area, including those working in agencies, corporations, nonprofits, trade associations and academic institutions.

- Nominees do not need to be PRSA members.
- Self-nominations are permitted unless otherwise specified.
- Nominees must be based in or have made a significant impact in the Chicago area.

Nomination Deadline

All nominations must be submitted by **11:59 p.m. CT on Friday, May 22, 2026**. Late submissions will not be accepted. There is no fee to submit a nomination.

Submission Process

Nominations must be submitted through the official Leadership & Impact Awards form. You may access each nomination form here:

- [Professional of the Year](#)
- [Young Professional of the Year](#)
- [DEI Champion of the Year](#)
- [Chicago Community Service Award](#)

Upon submission:

- The nominator will receive an automated confirmation email.
- The nomination will be forwarded to the judging committee.
- The Awards Committee will notify nominators of the results in July 2026.

Nomination Requirements

Each nomination must include:

1. Nominee Information
2. Nominator Information
3. Nomination Letter (750-1,000 words)
4. Supporting Materials: Supporting materials are not required but are strongly encouraged to reinforce the nomination and provide evidence of the nominee's leadership, impact and achievements. Supporting materials may include letters of recommendation, metrics demonstrating impact, media coverage, speaking engagements or examples of work. Judges evaluate nominations based solely on the information provided; including supporting materials can help strengthen and differentiate your submission.

Judging

All eligible nominations will be evaluated by a panel of experienced public relations professionals from another PRSA chapter to ensure an independent and impartial review process. Judges will score entries using structured criteria aligned with each award's purpose.

Entries will be evaluated on: leadership and influence; professional excellence and achievement; impact on the profession and/or community; commitment and service; and quality of nomination. Criteria are tailored by category, with additional emphasis on career achievement, emerging leadership, DEI impact or community service, as applicable.

Judges will evaluate nominations based solely on the information provided; nominators are encouraged to include specific examples and measurable results. Judges will recuse themselves in the event of a conflict of interest. All decisions are final.

SKYLINE AWARDS

PRSA Chicago's Skyline Awards program is an annual competition that recognizes programs, projects and organizations demonstrating excellence in the public relations profession. The awards competition is open to communications practitioners based in the Chicago area. A significant portion of the work in all entries must have been implemented between January 1 and December 31, 2025, to be eligible.

All entries must be uploaded via our online platform, OpenWater. The URL for entry submissions is <https://prsachicago.secure-platform.com/a/solicitations/17/home>.

The Skyline Awards program is generally modeled after the PRSA Anvil Awards Program. Simply put, practitioners entering programs and projects for Silver or Bronze Anvil consideration may also submit copies of the same materials to the relevant PRSA Chicago Skyline Awards categories.

Entry Instructions

- There are separate instructions for the program, tactical project and organizational categories.
- Entries that exceed specified size, length or format parameters will not be considered.
- Information requested on the official entry form must be submitted with each entry.
- All digital materials submitted become the property of PRSA Chicago.

Entry Eligibility

- Each category is open to public relations and communications practitioners based in the Chicago area.
- PRSA membership is not required to submit an entry.
- A significant portion of the work must have been conducted between January 1 and December 31, 2025.
- The same work may be submitted in multiple categories; however, a separate entry form, fee and supporting materials are required for each submission.

Entry Fees and Information

- Each entry submitted for judging requires a separate entry fee.
- Only PRSA Chicago members *in good standing* qualify for the member rate. The member's name must appear on entries submitted at the member rate. To receive the

member rate, the PRSA Chicago member must have contributed substantially to the program or project.

- Fees will not be refunded for entries that qualify for the member rate but were entered at the non-member rate.

Entry Deadlines

- Payment, entries and all supplemental materials must be received by 11:59 PM on the day of the deadline.
- Early bird deadline is **Friday, April 24; 11:59 PM CT**
 - Early deadline fees: \$175 for PRSA Chicago members, \$225 for non-members.
- The regular deadline is **Friday, May 15; 11:59 PM CT**
 - Regular deadline fees: \$200 for PRSA Chicago members, \$275 for non-members.
- The final deadline is **Friday, May 22; 11:59 PM CT**
 - Final deadline fees: \$250 for PRSA Chicago members, \$325 for non-members.

Judging

All Skyline Award entries are evaluated by an independent panel of experienced public relations professionals from another PRSA chapter to ensure an impartial and objective review process. Judges score entries using structured criteria aligned with PRSA Anvil Awards standards. All judging decisions are final, and judges will recuse themselves in the event of a conflict of interest.

Only entries submitted through OpenWater, the official Skyline Awards entry platform, will be accepted. Additional information about entry preparation is available in the **Requirements** and **Submission Guidelines and Tips** sections below.

Entrants may submit multiple entries; however, each category requires a separate entry form and entry fee. PRSA Chicago reserves the right to use entries, in whole or in part, at the Skyline Awards event, for promotional purposes, or as educational examples.

Entrants are responsible for securing client and/or employer approval prior to submission. By submitting an entry, permission is assumed. PRSA Chicago will not issue refunds or mediate disputes related to unauthorized submissions.

Award Notification

Finalists will be notified by email prior to the awards ceremony registration deadline. All finalists will have won either a Skyline Award or an Award of Excellence, but the actual results will not be announced until the awards ceremony.

Submission and Payment

All entries must be submitted and paid for by 11:59 PM CT on the deadline day. An email confirmation of payment will be sent to the provided email address.

In this document, you will find:

- Entry definitions
- Program award categories
- Tactical project award categories
- Organizational award categories
- Requirements for all entries

- Submission Guidelines and Tips for all entries
- Quick guide to entries

DEFINITIONS

Use the following definitions to determine the most appropriate category and subcategory based on your program's objectives and target audiences.

Business — Products and Services: These subcategories include all for-profit entities. A company that derives 50% or more of its sales from manufacturing products should enter under "Products." A company that derives 50% or more of its revenue from providing services (such as banks, utilities, retailers or transportation companies) should enter under "Services."

Government: Includes all government bureaus, agencies, institutions or departments at the local, state and federal levels — including the armed forces, regulatory bodies, courts, public schools and state universities.

Association: Includes trade and industry groups, professional societies, chambers of commerce and similar membership-based organizations.

Nonprofit: Intended for health and human services organizations, as well as educational and cultural institutions not included in other subcategories. This category is not intended for organizations that may hold nonprofit status but operate primarily as business enterprises. Programs receiving significant funding or sponsorship from private-sector or government entities should be entered under the applicable subcategory or under "Partnerships," if appropriate.

PROGRAM AWARD CATEGORIES

In general, categories align with the PRSA Silver Anvil Strategic Campaign Awards, where a program is defined as a broad range of separate yet consistent and related elements implemented over time.

In OpenWater, select "PROGRAM AWARD CATEGORIES" in the "Category" field, then choose the appropriate category.

1. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- 1A. Associations/Nonprofit Organizations
- 1B. Government
- 1C. Business

Includes programs that aim to improve relations with, or seek to win the support or cooperation of, people or organizations in communities in which the sponsoring organization has an interest, need or opportunity. "Community" in this category refers to a specific geographic location or locations.

2. CONTENT MARKETING

- 2A. Associations/Government/Nonprofit Organizations
- 2B. Business-to-Business
- 2C. Business-to-Consumer

Includes programs that demonstrate a strategic approach to creating and distributing valuable content to attract, acquire and engage target audience(s). Include examples and metrics.

3. CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

Includes programs undertaken to deal with an unplanned event that required an immediate response.

4. EVENTS AND OBSERVANCES

4A. More Than Seven Days

4AA. Associations/Government/Nonprofit Organizations

4AB. Business Products and Services

4AC. Consumer Products and Services

4B. Seven or Fewer Days

4BA. Associations/Government/Nonprofit Organizations

4BB. Business Products and Services

4BC. Consumer Products and Services

Includes virtual or in-person programs or events, such as commemorations, observances, conferences, openings, yearlong anniversaries, celebrations or other special activities. Events that took place for longer than a one-week period should be entered in “4A. More Than Seven Days” and events occurring within a time span of one week should be entered in “4B. Seven or Fewer Days.”

5. FINANCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

Includes programs directed to shareowners, other investors and the investment community; includes communication programs related to decentralized currencies.

6. GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

Includes any type of program, such as Reputation/Brand Management, Marketing or Events and Observances, that demonstrates effective global communications implemented in more than one country.

7. INFLUENCER MARKETING **New for 2026**

7A. Macro-Influencers

7B. Micro-Influencers

Macro-influencers: Celebrities, executives, bloggers and journalists who have 10,000–1M followers. They have the highest topical relevance on the spectrum, with category-specific influence – such as lifestyle, fashion or business.

Micro-influencers: Everyday consumers or employees or industry experts who have 500–9,999 followers. They have the highest brand relevance and resonance on the spectrum of influencers, with influence driven by their personal experience and strength of relationship with their networks.

8. INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS

8A. Associations/Nonprofit Organizations

8B. Government

8C. Business-to-Business

8D. Consumer Products

8E. Consumer Services

Includes creative and effective integrated campaigns, along with other marketing or communications including paid, earned, shared and owned efforts. Demonstrate the meaningful PR/communications components and how they integrated with other disciplines.

9. ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Includes programs that deal with issues that could extraordinarily affect ongoing business strategy.

10. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

10A. Associations/Government/Nonprofit Organizations

10B. Business

Includes programs targeted specifically to special publics directly allied with an organization, such as employees, members, affiliated dealers and franchisees.

11. MARKETING

11A. Business-to-Business

11B. Consumer Products

11C. Consumer Services

Includes programs designed to introduce new products/services or promote existing products/services to a particular audience.

12. MOST EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN ON A \$5,000 TO \$10,000 BUDGET **New for 2026**

Effective campaign delivered within parameters of a limited budget. This does not include staff time and overhead.

13. MOST EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN ON A SHOESTRING BUDGET (\$5,000 OR LESS)

New for 2026

Successful campaign despite constraints of a small budget. This does not include staff time and overhead.

14. MOST EFFECTIVE DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) CAMPAIGN

Efforts devoted to promoting inclusivity and/or dismantling discrimination for racial, ethnic, religious or sexual orientation and gender differences.

15. CLIMATE ACTION & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY **New for 2026**

This honors excellence in energy efficiency, natural resources, programs and campaigns that limit greenhouse gas emissions, minimize waste and contamination, protect and restore ecosystems and contribute to the adaptation to climate change.

16. CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP **New for 2026**

This celebrates campaigns and programs that ignite individuals, technology, and partnerships to create a positive impact on society at the local, national, or international level, including but not limited to areas such as poverty, hunger, housing, health and well-being, climate, equity, education, and human rights.

17. MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

For any type of program, such as institutional, marketing and community relations, specifically targeted to a cultural group.

18. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Includes programs specifically designed to influence public policy and/or affect legislation, regulations, political activities or candidacies — at the local, state or federal government levels — so that the entity funding the program benefits.

19. PUBLIC SERVICE

19A. Associations/Government/Nonprofit Organizations

19B. Business

19C. Partnerships (Funded jointly by businesses and other organizations, including nonprofit and government)

Includes programs that advance public understanding of societal issues, problems or concerns.

20. REPUTATION/BRAND MANAGEMENT

20A. Associations/Government/Nonprofit Organizations

20B. Business

Includes programs designed to enhance, promote or improve the reputation of an organization with its publics or key elements of its publics, either proactively or in response to an issue, event or market occurrence.

TACTICAL PROJECT AWARD CATEGORIES

In general, categories align with the PRSA Bronze Anvil Tactical Awards.

In OpenWater, select “TACTICAL PROJECT AWARD CATEGORIES” in the “Category” field, then choose the appropriate category.

PAID:

21. PAID PROMOTIONS **New for 2026**

Use of sponsorships, paid placements or other marketing communications tactics that complement a broader public relations strategy or approach and generate exceptional ROI. These efforts should be targeted and strategic, and ultimately demonstrate a distinct purpose that aligns with the goals of an overview campaign or specific desired outcome.

EARNED:

22. MEDIA RELATIONS

22A. Associations/Nonprofit Organizations

22B. Government

22C. Business-to-Business

22D. Consumer Products

22E. Consumer Services

Tactics, programs and events driven entirely by media relations. Submit press releases, media advisories, pitch letters, requests for coverage, etc., along with a one-page summary that includes measurable objectives and results, including media impact. Upload or provide YouTube/Vimeo links to any television or radio coverage.

SHARED:

23. SOCIAL MEDIA

23A. Single Channel Use

23B. Multichannel Use

How did you use social media to tell a story or connect with an audience? Share screenshots of links to your work and provide detailed results focusing on engagement and conversions, where applicable.

24. INFLUENCER MARKETING

Tactic that focuses on using paid spokespeople and key leaders to increase awareness and drive your brand's message to the larger market. Include details of achievements/benchmarks on how the spokesperson met/exceeded campaign goals.

25. BEST USE OF AI **New for 2026**

25A. Direct Audience Engagement

25B. Media Relations

25C. Social Media

Demonstrate how AI played a pivotal role in successfully driving or enhancing traditional tactical efforts within a campaign. Provide examples of tools used and results from their use.

OWNED:

26. DIGITAL PLATFORM

Did you launch or substantially enhance a digital platform? How was it launched and how much risk was involved in your marketing plan? What value did the end user receive and how did it specifically match goals? Include metrics and benchmarks. This entry can be completed by a vendor or the customer.

27. DATA INSIGHTS

The use of data or research in a program to inform a communications strategy and/or message development. Demonstrate how the insights were acquired and applied.

28. WEBSITES **New for 2026**

Use of a website as part of a communications or content marketing program. Include screen grabs or copies of key pages to support your one-page summary. Additionally, include the website URL for external sites and how the site met or exceeded your communications benchmarks.

29. NON-TRADITIONAL TACTICS **New for 2026**

Innovative, unconventional, creative tactics or approaches used as part of a public relations program. Documentation of how the tactic specifically contributed to the measurable results of the campaign should be included in the one-page summary. (Photographic and/or video representation of any physical objects should be uploaded to be fully considered in this category.)

30. ANNUAL REPORTS **New for 2026**

Publications that report on an organization's annual performance. Upload a sample copy of the publication, along with a one-page summary.

31. BLOGS/VLOGS **New for 2026**

Web-based journals (blogs) or video-based journals (blogs) that communicated to a target audience. The one-page summary should include rationale for blogging/vlogging strategy, target audiences and statistics or other means of quantifiable measurement to support stated objectives. Screen downloads of the blog/vlog being entered, as well as the actual site URL, must be submitted as part of the story.

32. NEWSLETTERS **New for 2026**

Publications — digital or print — designed, written and published/distributed periodically to provide brief and timely information to target audiences while supporting an organization’s overall objectives. Upload samples of three consecutive issues, along with a one-page summary including goals and results.

33. SINGLE-ISSUE PUBLICATIONS **New for 2026**

Single-issue publications designed for a special purpose. Books and other publications not eligible for consideration in other categories should be entered here. Upload a sample of the publication along with the one-page summary including goals and results.

34. MAGAZINES **New for 2026**

Publications designed to provide in-depth information about an organization or topic on a regular basis (Print, digital only and both will be considered). Magazines typically differentiate from newsletters by the number of pages and length of articles. Upload samples of three consecutive issues along with a one-page summary including goals and results.

35. VIDEO

Produced videos to inform target audiences of an event, brand, product, service, issue or organization. The one-page summary should include usage statistics or other means of quantified measurement to support stated objectives.

36. BRANDED CONTENT

Use of content generation to promote a particular brand which funds the content’s production. Upload samples along with a one-page summary including goals and results.

37. PODCASTS **New for 2026**

How did you tell your story — was the purpose to teach or share? Was it intended for internal or external audiences and was there engagement on multiple platforms? Provide goals, results and listener feedback.

ORGANIZATIONAL AWARD CATEGORIES

In OpenWater, select the appropriate category listed below in the “Category” field.

38. BEST IN-HOUSE TEAM **New for 2026**

38A. Associations/Nonprofit Organizations

38B. Government

38C. Business (Budget less than \$5M)

38D. Business (Budget of \$5M or More)

A public relations/public affairs/communications team that demonstrates excellence in public relations.

39. BEST AGENCY **New for 2026**

39A. Best Boutique Agency (Revenue less than \$5M)

39B. Best Small Agency (Revenue \$5M – \$20M)

39C. Best Mid-sized Agency (Revenue \$20M – \$75M)

39D. Best Large Agency (Revenue \$75M – \$200M)

An agency team that demonstrates excellence in public relations.

40. BEST COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM OR DEPARTMENT

****No fee to enter****

Recognizes a college or university communications program that is preparing the next generation of practitioners through innovative curriculum, high academic standards and strong student mentorship, career readiness and placement outcomes.

41. BEST SOLUTION PROVIDER/VENDOR **New for 2026**

41A. Media Monitoring

41B. AI-automation Resource

41C. Media Database and Intelligence

41D. Analytics

A PR/comms solution provider/vendor that demonstrates how its tool/platform is best in class and the meaningful impacts it has delivered for its clients and the industry.

42. BEST AI INTEGRATION AND DIGITAL INNOVATIONS **New for 2026**

42A. In-house

42B. Agency

Demonstrate the exceptional creativity, effectiveness, and ingenuity in leveraging digital innovations, particularly artificial intelligence, to revolutionize your organization's PR/comms strategies and results. Provide examples of the successful implementation of AI-driven technologies that have significantly enhanced visibility, engagement, efficiencies and overall PR performance.

REQUIREMENTS AND HOW TO PREPARE YOUR SKYLINE AWARD ENTRIES

Requirements for ALL Entries:

- Entries must be uploaded to OpenWater. The URL to the online entry system is <https://prsachicago.secure-platform.com/a/solicitations/17/home>.
- A 100-word description of the entry must be entered directly into the online entry form (not uploaded as a PDF). Up to three company/agency logos, photos and/or graphics of the program or project (for use if selected as a finalist) may be uploaded.
- The one- or two-page summary should be submitted as a PDF and free of logos, drawings, or other artwork. Pages should be no larger than 8.5 x 11 inches.
- Program entries should not exceed 200 pages in the document. Tactical Project entries should have no more than 100 pages in the document. Multimedia files, including photos, videos (less than 5 minutes), or audio, should be uploaded separately.
- Supporting materials should be uploaded as a single PDF. The document should include any supporting materials referred to in the one- or two-page summary. For example, if you reference a public relations planning document, include a copy of the plan.
- Any collateral, such as press kits, direct mail pieces, etc., may only be accepted electronically. Include a screenshot, photograph or rendering within your PDF document.

Submission Guidelines and Tips for PROGRAM Entries (Categories #1-20)

- **Two-page Summary:** The two-page summary (to be uploaded as a PDF) is the single-most important component of a Skyline Program Campaign entry. It should begin with a brief situation analysis of your program, followed by addressing each of the four entry criteria — insights and analysis, planning, execution and evaluation. The summary should include measurable objectives, target audiences, budget and any other specific information requested in the individual category.
- **Judging Criteria:** Judges will evaluate your entry on the merit of the four criteria — insights and analysis, planning, execution and evaluation — that you share in your two-page summary and supporting materials.
- **Supporting Materials:** Your entry should include relevant supporting materials referred to in the two-page summary. For example, if you refer to a public relations planning document, include a copy of the plan. Other examples of supporting material would be representative press clippings, reports, letters, pictures and samples of tactical materials.
 - Quality is more important than quantity. For example, include only emails or meeting notes if they contain relevant information that judges need to evaluate the planning and successful execution of the program; there is no need to include duplicate press clippings when a representative sample and summary of coverage will suffice.
 - Video or other multimedia files no longer than 5 minutes may be uploaded to accompany your entry.
 - Uploaded documents must be in PDF format. Pages should be no larger than 8.5 x 11 inches with a minimum of 10-point typeface and one-inch margins.

The following questions will help you prepare a strong Skyline Program Campaign entry:

Insights and Analysis

- What prompted the research — was it in response to an existing problem or to examine a potential problem?
- What type of research did you use — primary, secondary or both, to arrive at your insights/analysis? Primary research involves original research, including focus groups, interviews, data and analytics software and surveys. Secondary research involves searching existing resources for information or data related to a particular need, strategy or goal (e.g., online computer database searches, Web-based research, library searches, industry reports and internal market analyses).
- How was the research relevant to shaping the planning process?
- How did the research help define or redefine the audience(s) or the situation?

Planning

- How did the plan correlate to the research findings?
- What was the plan in general terms?
- What were the specific, measurable objectives of the plan?
- Who were the target audiences?
- What was the overall strategy used?
- What was your budget?

Execution

- How was the plan executed, and what was the outcome?
- How did the activities flow in general terms?
- What were the key tactics?
- Were there any difficulties encountered? If so, how were they handled?
- Were other organizations involved?
- Were nontraditional public relations tactics used, such as advertising? (Unless you are entering this program under “Integrated Communications,” advertising costs should not exceed one-third of the budget.)

Evaluation

- What methods of evaluation were used?
- What were your results?
- How did the results compare to the specific, measurable objectives you identified in the planning section?
- How well do the results reflect the original strategy and planning?

Submission Guidelines and Tips for TACTICAL PROJECT Entries (Categories #21-37)

- **One-page Summary:** A concise summary no longer than one page must be uploaded as a PDF. The one-page summary is the single most important component of a Tactical Project Award entry.
- **Judging Criteria:** Judges evaluate the entry on four key areas — planning/content, creativity/quality, technical excellence and results. *Media Relations entries (category #22) are not judged on technical excellence.* Within these areas, the summary should include measurable objectives, target audiences, budget and any other specific information requested in the individual category. Results — qualitative, quantitative or both — should provide evidence of how the stated measurable objectives were met, and how the entry impacted the success of a broader or ongoing program.
- **Supporting Materials:** Entrants will be asked to upload supporting documents and back-up materials as requested in each individual category (PDFs, videos, audio, video links, website URLs, etc.).
 - Video or other multimedia files no longer than 5 minutes may be uploaded to accompany your entry.
 - Uploaded documents must be in PDF format. Pages should be no larger than 8.5 x 11 inches with a minimum of 10-point typeface and one-inch margins.

The following questions will help you prepare a strong Skyline Tactical Project entry:

Planning/Content

- Was the objective or goal of the entry thoughtfully considered, clearly stated and attainable?
- Was the audience identified?
- Was a clear strategy stated or implied?

Creativity/Quality

- Do messages tie to objectives?
- Is content substantive, understandable, consistent and appropriate for the stated audience?
- How is the entry unique?
- How is the tool used imaginatively to achieve program goals?

Technical Excellence

- Do graphic or communications elements set the entry apart?
- Is production quality superior, based on budget and scope of the project?
- Media Relations entries (category #22) are not judged on technical excellence.

Assessment/Results

- What effort was made to assess whether the objective or goal was met?
- Did the entry meet its stated intent?
- Are there other indicators of success, quantitative or qualitative, in meeting objectives?

Submission Guidelines and Tips for ORGANIZATIONAL Entries (Categories #38-42)

Best In-house Team Submission Requirements:

- **Two-page Summary:** An overview of the business/organization and a detailed description of outstanding accomplishments/strategic benchmarks within the award program timeframe. Differentiate the role of the in-house team from any externally employed resources (e.g., agencies). Submitting teams should include examples of measurable impact on their organization; how they dealt with challenges; how they developed creative or innovative programs; how they influenced behavioral or attitudinal change among their target audiences; and/or how they foster a positive working culture.
- **Case Study Upload:** Two brief case studies or examples (each 500 words or fewer). Current Silver Anvil or Skyline Award submissions can be included instead of case studies.
- **Number of employees** on the team and annual public relations budget (including staffing costs).

Best Agency Submission Requirements:

- **Two-page Summary:** An overview of the agency, its offerings, and a detailed description of outstanding accomplishments/strategic benchmarks within the award-program timeframe. Submitting agencies should include examples of measurable impact for their clients; how they dealt with challenges; how they developed creative or innovative programs; how they influenced behavioral or attitudinal change among their clients' target audiences; and/or how they foster a positive working culture.
- **Case Study Upload:** Two brief case studies or examples (each 500 words or fewer). Current Silver Anvil or Skyline Award submissions can be included instead of case studies.
- **Number of employees** at the agency and annual revenue.
- **A client list** from the past 12 months, including tenure. Uploaded as a one-page PDF.

Best College/University Communications Program or Department **No fee to enter**

- **Two-page Summary:** An overview of the education institution and a description of outstanding accomplishments within the last 12 months. Submissions should include examples of how the team is equipping students for job readiness; metrics related to

admissions, graduation trends, first-year employment data, internship placement and other related measurable results; as well as examples of academic achievements and other stand-out successes.

- **Number of faculty members** (full-time, part-time, adjunct)
- **Description** of faculty industry experience and/or professional involvement (e.g., PRSA membership, accreditation, industry leadership — encouraged but not required)
- **Description** of experiential learning opportunities available to students (e.g., student-run agencies, capstone projects, internships, client work)

Best Solution Provider/Vendor:

- **Two-page Summary:** An overview of the company and the service(s) it provides. A detailed description as to how these services are both (a) first in class, through customer service, comprehensiveness and/or other distinct qualities, and (b) tailored to support the communication industry.
- **Letters of Recommendation:** Two letters of recommendation from customers/clients in support of your company's award submission.

Best AI Integration and Digital Innovations

- **Two-page Summary:** An overview of the business/organization and a detailed description of the exceptional creativity, effectiveness, and ingenuity in leveraging digital innovations, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI), to revolutionize the organization's PR/comms strategies and results. Provide examples of the successful implementation of AI-driven technologies that have significantly enhanced visibility, engagement, efficiencies and overall PR performance.
- **Case Study Upload:** Two brief case studies or examples (each 500 words or fewer). Current Silver or Bronze Anvil or Skyline Award submissions can be included instead of case studies.

Quick Guide to Skyline Award Entries

	Program Categories (#1–20)	Tactical Project Categories (#21–37)	Organizational Categories (#38–42)
Judging criteria	<p>Judging is based on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insights and Analysis 2. Planning 3. Execution 4. Evaluation <p>Skyline Awards recognize complete programs that demonstrate strong insights, planning, execution and measurable results across all four criteria.</p>	<p>Judging is based on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning/content 2. Creativity/quality 3. Technical excellence 4. Results <p><i>Media Relations entries (category #22) are not judged on technical excellence.</i></p> <p>Summaries should include measurable objectives, target audiences, budget and any required category-specific information. Results (qualitative and/or quantitative) must demonstrate how objectives were achieved and how the tactic contributed to a broader program or campaign.</p>	<p>Judging is based on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overall excellence and performance 2. Measurable impact and results 3. Innovation and strategic contributions 4. Organizational effectiveness and leadership <p>These categories recognize teams, agencies, programs and solution providers that demonstrate sustained excellence in public relations, including measurable impact, innovation, leadership and contributions to workplace culture.</p>
Summary page	<p>A concise summary (maximum two pages) must accompany each entry and address all four judging criteria.</p> <p>Each criterion should be supported with additional detail in the full entry. The summary must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be typed in at least 10-point font with one-inch margins 	<p>A concise one-page summary is required for each entry and should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objectives ● Target audiences ● Budget ● Results <p>The summary must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be typed in at least 10-point font with one-inch margins 	<p>A concise summary (maximum two pages) must accompany each entry and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overview of the organization, team or program ● Key accomplishments within the award timeframe ● Measurable impact and results ● Examples of innovation, leadership and/or strategic contributions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exclude logos, graphics or other artwork ● Not include hyperlinks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not include hyperlinks 	The summary must be typed in at least 10-point font with one-inch margins.
Supporting materials	<p>Submit supporting materials as part of a single PDF document. Include only materials referenced in the summary (e.g., plans, reports, representative coverage).</p> <p>Collateral such as press kits or direct mail must be included as screenshots, photographs or renderings within the PDF.</p>	<p>Include only materials requested for the specific category.</p> <p>Quality is more important than quantity. Provide only materials that help judges evaluate planning, execution and results. Avoid duplicate or unnecessary content.</p>	<p>Include only materials requested for the specific category.</p> <p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Case studies ● Client lists or organizational data ● Letters of recommendation (for vendors) ● Examples of work or outcomes <p>Quality is more important than quantity. Include only materials that demonstrate measurable impact, innovation and excellence.</p>
Online entry requirements	<p>Entries must be submitted through OpenWater.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enter a 100-word summary directly into the online form (do not upload as a PDF) ● Upload up to three logos, photos or graphics (for finalist use) ● Submit the full entry as a single PDF (maximum 200 pages) ● The two-page summary must be included in the 	<p>Entries must be submitted through OpenWater.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enter a 100-word summary directly into the online form (do not upload as a PDF) ● Upload up to three logos, photos or graphics (for finalist use) ● Submit the full entry as a single PDF (maximum 100 pages) ● Include the one-page summary within the PDF 	<p>Entries must be submitted through OpenWater.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enter a 100-word summary directly into the online form (do not upload as a PDF) ● Upload up to three logos, photos or graphics (for finalist use) ● Submit the full entry as a single PDF ● Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cover page ○ Two-page summary

	<p>PDF and follow formatting guidelines</p> <p>Multimedia files (video under five minutes, audio, images) should be uploaded separately.</p>	<p>Multimedia files (video under five minutes, audio, images) may be uploaded separately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supporting materials (as required by category) <p>Multimedia files (video under five minutes, audio, images) may be uploaded separately.</p>
Additional materials	<p>Optional multimedia (video, audio or images) may be submitted to support your entry.</p>	<p>Additional materials may be required by category. Please review individual category requirements.</p>	<p>Additional materials may be required by category. Please review individual category requirements.</p>
Additional notes	<p>Include only relevant materials. Quality is more important than quantity.</p>	<p>Collateral (e.g., press kits, direct mail) should be included as screenshots, photographs or renderings within the PDF.</p>	<p>Entries should clearly demonstrate sustained impact, innovation and leadership over time and differentiate the role of the organization, team or agency. Submissions should reflect overall excellence rather than a single campaign.</p>