



CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE



IMPACT  
AWARDS

# ENTRY KIT

# 2026

For more information visit [.ORG Impact Awards](#)



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# ABOUT THE .ORG IMPACT AWARDS

For more than 40 years, the .ORG domain has powered the missions of millions of changemakers around the world. From individuals to large corporations, small community groups to multinational NGOs, .ORGs are home for those inspired to make an impact.

The .ORG Impact Awards (OIAs) recognize the outstanding organizations and individuals using a .ORG domain to make a positive impact in their communities and across the globe. This annual program celebrates the incredible contributions made across all sectors of society and uplifts the work of those leveraging the Internet for transformative change.



## WHY NOMINATE?

The .ORG Impact Awards celebrates purpose-driven achievements of members of the .ORG Community. Their great work will be reviewed by an esteemed judging panel composed of leaders in the nonprofit, Internet, marketing, and social impact sectors.

## NO ENTRY FEES

Public Interest Registry—a mission-driven organization itself—aims to empower and connect those who inspire the world, and as such, does not charge organizations to enter the .ORG Impact Awards. Rather, it awards winners with a donation and an opportunity to showcase their .ORG's good work or individual efforts.

## KEY DATES

April 15, 2026	Nominations Open
May 27, 2026	Nominations Close
August 11, 2026	Finalists Announced
October 6, 2026	Winners Announced and In-Person Celebration

## OIA BENEFITS

- Cash donations to a charitable organization of your choice (subject to rules) ranging from \$2,500 USD to \$40,000 USD to finalists and winners.
- An invitation to attend the in-person .ORG Impact Awards celebration, finalist networking and educational event in Washington, D.C.
- Complimentary travel to attend the event, including round trip transportation for two (2), and two (2) night's accommodations.
- A custom trophy for the winners.
- A certificate for all finalists.
- A dedicated logo mark for use on their .ORG's website and materials to promote their achievements.
- The opportunity to be featured in various .ORG digital platforms throughout the year, including articles, videos, social posts, and more.
- The opportunity to raise the profile of your nominated .ORG to increase donor potential, partnership development, talent acquisition, and audience reach.
- The opportunity to join and connect with a network of changemakers committed to making the world a better place.
- Additional validation for your nominated .ORG's programs that can help build, strengthen, and fund them in the future.

# CATEGORIES

The .ORG Impact Awards seek to celebrate significant achievements by members of the .ORG community. There are seven award categories subject to the nomination and judging process.



## HEALTH AND HEALING

Recognizes an organization dedicated to advancing health and well-being in their community by ensuring access to care, resources, and support.



## QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

Recognizes an organization breaking down barriers to education, fostering learning opportunities that empower individuals, and creating pathways to a brighter future for all.



## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Recognizes an organization fostering a more inclusive and equitable world by breaking down barriers, amplifying underrepresented voices, and driving meaningful change that creates opportunities for all.



## HUNGER AND POVERTY

Recognizes an organization who has made significant contributions and innovations to combat hunger, reduce poverty, and create lasting economic opportunities that uplift individuals and communities.



## COMMUNITY BUILDING

Recognizes an organization whose efforts are strengthening the fabric of their community, fostering connections, and driving meaningful change on a local, national, or global level.



## RISING STAR

Recognizes an individual under the age of 30 on December 31, 2026, who is shaping the future, demonstrating leadership, and driving impact through their passion, innovation, and commitment to positive change.



## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Recognizes an organization leading the way in protecting our planet, promoting sustainability, and inspiring communities to create a healthier, more resilient future.



## .ORG IMPACT AWARDS .ORG OF THE YEAR

This award recognizes and honors an organization for outstanding achievement as evidenced by results and/or contributions to its sector, constituents, community, or society at large. The winners in the other six categories are automatically eligible for this award. The .ORG of the Year will be selected by PIR in its sole discretion.

## **FINALISTS**

Finalists will be named in the seven award categories subject to the nomination and judging process.

## **AWARDS CELEBRATION**

Each finalist will be invited to an in-person event on October 6, 2026 in Washington, DC to honor the amazing work of the .ORG community and to announce the winners of each category and the .ORG of the Year. They will receive complimentary travel to attend the event, including round trip transportation for two (2), and two (2) nights' accommodations.

## **AWARDS**

The winners in each category of the .ORG Impact Awards will have the opportunity to direct a monetary donation to the charitable organization of their choice, as follows:

.ORG IMPACT AWARDS  
.ORG of the Year  
**\$40,000 USD**

All winners  
**\$10,000 USD**

All non-winning  
finalists  
**\$2,500 USD**

**In addition to a donation, winners will also receive:**

- Free advertising and promotion during this time and future marketing efforts with continued consent.
- A custom category trophy.

## **ENTRY CRITERIA**

- All organizations nominated to any category must have an active website hosted on the .ORG domain. The website must resolve to a valid second-level .ORG domain at the time of submission and must continue to resolve to that .ORG domain through the date of the .ORG Impact Awards event.
- The URL of the website must resolve to a .ORG domain name. This does NOT include country domain names such as example.org.br or example.org.au.
- All individual nominees must have an established role at an organization with a website on the .ORG domain.
- The nominee must be the registrant, or affiliated with the registrant, of a second level .ORG domain name.
- Activities highlighted in the submission must have occurred between April 15, 2025 and April 14, 2026. If the activity began before April 15, 2025 or extends beyond April 14, 2026, the entry is still eligible so long as meaningful activity occurred between the two dates.

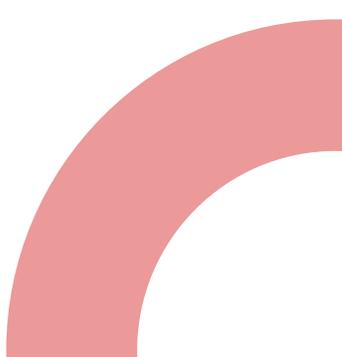
# ENTRY CRITERIA

(continued...)

- Organizations and individuals may submit to more than one award category, but each submission must be original (i.e., an entry for one award may not be resubmitted verbatim to another award).
- The nominator must be at least 18 years old and have permission to nominate the individual or organization that uses or has a connection to the .ORG domain.
- A nominee may be less than 18 years of age. However, if a nominee less than 18 years of age qualifies as a finalist, they will be required to complete a consent form signed by their parent or legal guardian.
- Individuals or entities who reside in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, or Crimea may not nominate or be identified as a "Nominee."
- Submissions may not be submitted through automated scripts, bots, macros, or other automated entry mechanisms. All entries must be submitted by an individual nominator through the official online platform.
- Employees of PIR and any of its parent and affiliate companies as well as the immediate family (spouse, parents, siblings, and children) and household members of each such employee are not eligible to nominate individuals or organizations or be considered as a Nominee for any award.

# ENTRY JUDGING

After the end of the Program Period, finalists, and winners of the .ORG Impact Awards are selected based on the merit of their entries. This is not a sweepstakes, contest, or "game of chance."

- Each entry will be vetted by the .ORG Impact Awards organizers to ensure it meets all eligibility requirements and adheres to the official rules.
  - The .ORG Impact Awards organizers may move an entry to another category if it is deemed to be unsuitable for the category selected, but appropriate for another.
  - All judges will sign a confidentiality agreement that prohibits them from disclosing information from entry submissions.
  - Judges will be instructed to recuse themselves from judging entries where they might have a conflict of interest. (e.g., if they are a member of a submitting organization).
  - All submissions will be evaluated in English. If a submission is not submitted in English, Google Translate may be used during the judging process.
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## HOW ENTRIES ARE EVALUATED

Each eligible submission is scored across five weighted categories (20 points each, 100 total possible points):

### **CREATIVITY / QUALITY (20 points)**

Does the entry showcase innovative thinking, creative strategies, or unique approaches to solving the identified challenge?

### **PLANNING / IMPLEMENTATION (20 points)**

Does the entry demonstrate strong leadership, strategic planning, and effective execution?

### **ASSESSMENT / RESULTS (20 points)**

Are the results measurable and clearly tied to defined goals? Does the entry include qualitative or quantitative evidence of impact?

### **COMMUNITY IMPACT (20 points)**

Did the work create meaningful change at the local, national, or global level?

### **CONTENT / COMPELLING STORY (20 points)**

Is the story clear, structured, and persuasive? Does it connect the problem, strategy, and results effectively?

## ENTRY FORMS

All .ORG Impact Awards submissions must be completed online. Each award category will require a response to prompting questions associated with that category, so all entrants are submitting and evaluated on the same criteria. Each entry should also include a minimum of one supporting document; up to five (5) supporting materials will be accepted. The following summary responses and information will be required according to each award category:

For **Health and Healing**, **Quality Education for All**, **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**, **Environmental Stewardship**, **Hunger and Poverty** and **Community Building**:

- What challenge, opportunity, or situation was the nominee seeking to address?
- What was the nominee's approach to addressing the challenge, opportunity, or situation?
- What was the outcome of the nominee's actions to address the challenge, opportunity or situation? Include any specific results or testimonials from affected community members.
- Describe how the nominee's efforts, contributions, and leadership contributed to achieving its goals and led to the betterment of the organization and/or society at large.

For **Rising Star**:

- What challenge, opportunity, or situation was the nominee seeking to address?
- Had that challenge, opportunity, or situation not been addressed in a significant way before?
- What was the outcome of the nominee's actions to address the challenge, opportunity or situation? Include any specific results.
- What new and innovative ways or platforms did the nominee use to address the challenge and how did that inspire others to engage or take on similar challenges themselves?

# SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Supporting documentation will bring your award entry to life. Each award entry can be supported by up to five (5) supporting documents, which will be accepted in the following forms: URL, .JPEG, .MOV or PDF. The maximum file size supported is 5MB. Video content may be shared as a link to a public site (e.g., YouTube or Vimeo). One (1) supporting document is required for each Nomination, regardless of Award Category; a maximum of five (5) supporting documents can be included. Supporting documents should not include any “confidential” information (or this information should be redacted).

The number of supporting materials submitted is at the discretion of the award entrant, but please be advised that if you reference an item in your summary responses, it is wise to include it in your documentation. The judges will be looking for evidence of your hard work. Please make sure that all submissions are legible; if judges cannot read/consume provided content, it will not be used in the judging process. Examples of supporting materials could include, but are not limited to:

- Project plan(s)
- A letter to stakeholders
- A testimonial from a community member
- Marketing video and before and after photos
- Web link with project or initiative information
- Annual report or project recap report

## TIPS FOR PREPARING YOUR ENTRY

A strong submission is clear, focused, and evidence-based. Whether you are applying as an individual or on behalf of an organization, take time to plan your approach before completing the online form. If possible, involve colleagues or collaborators who can help review your responses, confirm data, or provide testimonials. Assign one person to lead the drafting process to ensure consistency and clarity. Develop your responses offline first so they can be reviewed and refined before submitting them through the online platform. Consider these four steps when developing your nomination submission:

### 1. WRITING YOUR NOMINATION SUBMISSION

Your submission tells the story that judges will use to evaluate your nominee – so make it count! Structure your story around clarity and impact:

- Use the required questions as your framework and stay focused on what happened between April 15, 2025 and April 14, 2026.
- Be clear when using technical language or acronyms. Judges come from diverse backgrounds and may not be familiar with your field.
- If a project started earlier or is still ongoing, that is acceptable—as long as there was meaningful progress within the April 15, 2025 - April 14, 2026 timeframe.
- Be sure each response connects clearly to the scoring criteria: Creativity/Quality, Planning/Implementation, Assessment/Results, Community Impact, and Content/Compelling Story.

#### Avoid these common mistakes:

- Don't copy the same text across multiple categories. Each submission must be original to that award category—even if the nominee is the same.
- Be sure the domain listed resolved to a .ORG website—domains like .org.br, .org.au, and similar are not eligible. Only domains managed by Public Interest Registry qualify for entry.

#### Self-nomination is encouraged

- Many applicants submit on behalf of their own organization or project—this is completely acceptable and often expected.

#### Still not sure what to title your entry?

- Use your organization's name, or a project/initiative name that best represents the work you are highlighting.

The following questions are provided as thought starters to help you approach preparation of strong nomination responses, but please remember to address the actual questions in the online form (also above) when submitting your nomination.

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

- What was the plan or goals in general terms? Was it in response to an existing problem, or does it examine a potential problem?
- Was research used to examine or define a situation—primary, secondary, or both? Primary research involves original research, including focus groups, interviews and surveys. Secondary research involves searching existing resources for information.

## STRATEGIC APPROACH

- If conducted, how did the research shape the planning process?
- What were the specific goals of the plan?
- Were there measurable objectives of the plan?
- What was the budget? If there was low or no budget available, how was this challenge overcome?

## 2. PULLING TOGETHER YOUR BACKUP MATERIALS

Supporting materials bring your story to life. You must include at least one (1) supporting document, and you may add up to five (5). These could be:

- Backup Materials
- Project recaps
- Testimonial videos
- Before-and-after photos
- Links to relevant campaign pages or project sites

## 3. REVIEW YOUR NOMINATION SUBMISSION

- Double-check the entry questions and rules—especially eligibility (remember: your .ORG domain must resolve to a valid website).
- Proofread and simplify: Have someone outside your organization read your entry for clarity.
- Let it sit for a day, then come back to it. Fresh eyes will help you spot anything you might have missed.

## 4. SUBMITTING YOUR NOMINATION SUBMISSION

- Once you have polished your responses and gathered your supporting materials, it's time to submit your entry through our online platform.
- You can edit your submission up until the final deadline. You will have the chance to make changes if needed before hitting "submit".

## PROGRAMMATIC EXECUTION

- What was the timeline and how did activities flow?
- What were the key tactics or activities, and who were the target audiences?
- Were there any difficulties encountered? If so, how were they handled?

## RESULTS

- What happened? What were your nominee's results?
- How did you evaluate the results? What methods did you use?
- How did the results compare to the specific goals or measurable objectives outlined in your nominee's strategic approach?
- How well do the results reflect original strategy and planning?
- Who benefited from the results?

**Important:** The supporting materials themselves do NOT need to be limited to the April 15, 2025 - April 14, 2026 timeframe. But the content of your written responses must focus on that period.

**Pro-tip:** If you reference something in your written entry, include it in your supporting documents!

## GET STARTED

To get started, visit the [.ORG Impact Awards website](#) and click through to the “Apply Now” button. This will take you to the submissions portal, which is powered by Awardforce. You will need to create a free profile—this will allow you to start, save, and manage one or multiple submissions. If you have applied in a previous year, you will be prompted to login with your existing account. If needed, you can easily reset your password using the “Forgot Password” link on the login page.

The application portal is also available [here](#).

**Good Luck!**



### **PROGRAM CONTACT AND ADDITIONAL RULES, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS**

Public Interest Registry—the people behind .ORG—is the proud sponsor of the .ORG Impact Awards. For questions about the program or if you experience technical difficulties during the submission process, please email [information@orgimpactawards.org](mailto:information@orgimpactawards.org).

For official program rules, terms, and conditions, and judging criteria please visit the .ORG Impact Awards website:

<https://www.orgimpactawards.org>.