



# 2026 Philly Awards Categories and Criteria

Entry Deadline: September 3



## ENTRY & PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

- [Entry fees must be paid via credit card prior to submitting your entry form.](#) Register and Pay for submissions [here](#).
- [Nonprofit Connect will not offer refunds](#) to organizations once the entry fees are paid, regardless of whether or not the entry form is submitted.
- You may register and pay for multiple entries in one transaction, but a separate entry form is required for each submission. (You will use the same URL per payment transaction.) URL provided in confirmation email after payment is submitted.
- Entry forms and supporting materials must be submitted electronically; paper submissions will not be accepted.



## ENTRY FEES & DEADLINES

- This year's entry fees are on a sliding scale, based on membership status and -- for nonprofit organizations -- 2025 fiscal year (FY) revenue (audited or unaudited).
- The entry form must be submitted according to the associated payment deadline.  
*(if you pay the early bird rate, your entry form must also be submitted by August 20).*
- **Early Bird Deadline is August 20. Final Submission Deadline is September 3.**

### Early Bird Pricing: July 28 - August 20

Nonprofit Members 2025 FY revenue:

- |                                   |                |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| • Under \$1 million               | <b>\$25.00</b> |
| • From \$1 million to \$5 million | <b>\$50.00</b> |
| • Over \$5 million                | <b>\$75.00</b> |

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Business & Individual Members | <b>\$75.00</b> |
|-------------------------------|----------------|

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Non-Members* | <b>\$100.00</b> |
|--------------|-----------------|

### General Entry Pricing: August 20 – September 3

Nonprofit Members 2024 FY revenue:

- |                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| • Under \$1 million               | <b>\$50.00</b>  |
| • From \$1 million to \$5 million | <b>\$75.00</b>  |
| • Over \$5 million                | <b>\$100.00</b> |

|                               |                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Business & Individual Members | <b>\$100.00</b> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Non-Members* | <b>\$125.00</b> |
|--------------|-----------------|



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## AWARDS

**Gold** - Awarded to the highest scoring entry in each category, per division.

**Silver** - Awarded to the second highest scoring entry in each category, per division.

## DIVISIONS

There will be three divisions for each of the 2026 Philly Awards Categories subject to number of entries received. Placement will be determined primarily on the nonprofit organization's 2025 fiscal year revenue. Audited or unaudited revenue will be accepted.

## JUDGING

Each entry submitted will be evaluated by a panel of marketing and communications experts. Nonprofit Connect staff reserves the right to ensure each entry is submitted in the most appropriate category.

Judges will award each entry 1—5 points in the following areas and according to the following rubric:

### STRATEGY

Consider:

- Are the project's goals and objectives clearly defined?
- Is the target audience clearly identified?
- Do the project's goals and objectives align with the organization's mission?

| Score         | Description                                                                                                                          |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 – Excellent | Clear, intentional strategy with well-defined goals, audience and mission alignment.                                                 |
| 3 – Average   | Strategy is generally clear but lacks depth or specificity. Some elements are defined, but stronger alignment or planning is needed. |
| 1 – Poor      | Strategy is unclear or incomplete. Goals, target audience or mission alignment are missing or not evident.                           |



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## SOLUTION

Consider:

- Does the copy, design and creative execution clearly and effectively communicate the project's goals and objectives?
- Does the project demonstrate originality and creativity?

| Score         | Description                                                                                                                                |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 – Excellent | Copy, design and creative execution clearly communicate the project's goals and objectives while demonstrating originality and creativity. |
| 3 – Average   | Some elements support the project's goals and objective while demonstrating originality and creativity.                                    |
| 1 – Poor      | The project does not clearly communicate its goals and objectives and shows limited originality or creativity.                             |

## IMPACT

Consider:

- Did the applicant provide specific and/or measurable evidence of impact?
- Was the reported impact aligned with the original goals and objectives?
- Did the project demonstrate meaningful growth or success?

| Score         | Description                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 – Excellent | The project demonstrates clear, measurable impact that aligns with the original goals and objectives.                                       |
| 3 – Average   | The project shows some evidence of impact, but results are limited, vague or only partially aligned with the original goals and objectives. |
| 1 – Poor      | The project provides little or no evidence of impact. Results are unclear or not aligned with the original goals and objectives.            |



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## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

*All entry forms and supporting materials must be submitted electronically via the online entry form. Nonprofit Connect will not accept any submissions delivered in person, by mail, or via email.*

- Please keep all URLs publicly accessible until at least December 1, 2026.
- If you need a platform **to create document URLs**, [GoogleDrive](#) and [DropBox](#) both offer free options. Please ensure the permissions are set to “public viewing.”
- Please include URLs to **your final design/video files**, at minimum.
- If you'd like to **demonstrate the layout of any physical pieces**, we encourage you to include photos or videos as well. [See example here](#). Scoring will be based on the content of your piece rather than the production quality of these attachments.
- **A maximum of 5 URLs are permitted per entry and at least 1 is required.** If you need to include multiple items of a similar format, such as photos, news articles, or social media posts we encourage [saving the items together as one PDF](#) under a single URL. [See example here](#).
- If you are submitting an entry in the video category, please only provide one file or URL Link.
- Question responses are limited to 500 characters. See Sample Question Document.



## NOTIFICATION

Winners will be notified in early October. All awards will be announced in-person at the reception in early November.



## CRITERIA

- Entries must have been produced and/or published between January 1, 2025 and June 15, 2026. Events must have been held by June 30, 2026.
- Entries that have previously won a Philly Award may not be resubmitted.
- There is no limit to the number of entries an organization can submit in total, but **only one submission is allowed per category**.
- An organization and a creative agency may not separately submit the same marketing piece.
- All entries must have been created by or for a nonprofit organization that serves, or is located in, the greater Kansas City area.
- Entrants failing to follow directions, complete the entry form in its entirety, or submit all entry items electronically will have their submissions disqualified. Entry fees cannot be refunded.



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## ANNUAL REPORT

A comprehensive report on your organization's impact, either published electronically or in print form.

## FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

Any type of fundraising request or request for individuals to support your organization. *Please submit at least three pieces associated with the same project*, such as printed mailings, emails, and donor thank-you's.

## IDENTITY CAMPAIGN

Elements produced to identify and communicate an organization's brand attributes such as logo, colors, mission statement or tagline. Brand standards manual preferred, otherwise *please include three separate examples of brand identity*.

## INFORMATIONAL COLLATERAL

Printed or digital communications piece designed to educate, persuade or inspire action, including brochures, one-pagers, case statements, impact summaries, program guides or donor materials.

## NEWSLETTER or MAGAZINE

An organization's printed or digital newsletter / magazine that is regularly published and distributed to interested parties.

## MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Multi-piece marketing campaign. *Must show use of at least three mediums*, possibly including the following: print, website, email, video, social media.



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-  **SHORT VIDEO (up to 60 seconds)**  
Any video (including Tik Tok Style Content, Reels, Shorts, etc.) up to 60 seconds in length produced for your organization. Must be submitted as a URL.
-  **MEDIUM VIDEO (61 seconds to 5 minutes)**  
Any video between 61 seconds and 5 minutes produced for your organization. (see criteria for *Short Video*)
-  **LONG VIDEO (more than 5 minutes)**  
Any video longer than five minutes produced for your organization. (see criteria for *Short Video*)
-  **SOCIAL MEDIA BRAND PRESENCE**  
An organization's social media content over the course of twelve months. *Examples from at least two different social media channels are preferred.* Please provide social media URLs and dates to be considered on the entry form.
-  **SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN**  
Multi-piece social media campaign promoting a specific story, event or call to action. *Must include content from at least two different social media channels.* Please provide screenshots of specific posts when possible.
-  **SPECIAL EVENT CAMPAIGN**  
Special event materials and communication. *Please include at least three separate special event materials* which can include a save the date card, invitation, program, thank you, and publicity materials.
-  **WEBSITE**  
All websites must have been created or reconstructed between January 1, 2025 and June 15, 2026. *\*The website must represent the organization as a whole. Websites specifically for events must be submitted under the SPECIAL EVENT CAMPAIGN category.*