



Entry Guidelines & Categories

PRSA Central Ohio - 2021 PRism Awards

PRism Awards Ceremony: Thursday, July 22, 2021

Early Entry Deadline: April 2

Final Entry Deadline: April 16

Awards Overview

The Central Ohio Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America invites all area professionals to submit their work from 2020 for the prestigious annual PRism Awards, to be held on July 22, 2021.

Whether you represent a corporation, agency, non-profit association, college or university, or other firm or business, the PRism Awards are designed to honor exceptional public relations activities from a diverse mix of businesses, industries and backgrounds throughout central Ohio. With a winning entry, your company may enhance its professional reputation and create a competitive advantage by allowing you an opportunity to share your achievement with clients and customers.

The PRism Awards offer two tracks: **CAMPAIGNS** (previously known as “multifaceted campaigns”) and **TACTICS** (previously known as “single item entries”). All entries must be submitted digitally.

A special note for entries: COVID-19 pandemic

The 2021 PRism Awards will be one of our first occasions to gather again in-person since the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19 in 2020. Since public relations and strategic communication was so important in 2020 to inform, influence and inspire our communities during the pandemic, the PRisms will accept entries of COVID-related communication campaigns or tactics in any category. Additionally, this year only, the PRisms will recognize a “Special Project: COVID-19” category.

Awards honored for each category

- Profit - PRism Award (first place)
- Profit - Award of Excellence (runner up)
- Non-Profit - PRism Award (first place)
- Non-Profit - Award of Excellence (runner up)

Entry Guidelines

Entry deadlines

- Monday, April 2, 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) - Early Bird Deadline
- Monday, April 16, 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) - Final Deadline

Timing of work

- Fifty percent (50%) of all campaigns must have been completed between November 1, 2019 and December 31, 2020
- Tactics must have been completed between November 1, 2019 and December 31, 2020
- PRSSA student-run firm entries must have occurred during the current (2020-2021) academic year. Projects completed during summer 2020 are also eligible.

Duplicate entries

- The same entry cannot be submitted as both a campaign and a tactic. However, a single tactic that was a part of a larger over-arching campaign may be entered in the appropriate category (example, a newsletter that was a part of a larger multi-faceted internal communications campaign is eligible).
- The same entry cannot be submitted in two categories.

Upload details

- Entries will no longer be uploaded as single-page or multi-page files. A text area in the online entry system will allow you to share information about that particular area (ex. research or execution). **Each text area section has a limit of 750 words.**
- A maximum of 5 supporting files may be uploaded. The file upload size limit is 5 MB.
- If a supporting file, such as a video, exceeds the 5 MB limit, a link can be provided (YouTube, Vimeo, Google Drive, Dropbox, etc.).
- Each company is asked to submit a brief description of their entry, along with a company logo, as this information may be used during the PRISM awards ceremony.

Judging Criteria

Campaigns (previously known as “multifaceted campaigns”)

Develop a concise summary for each area below, stating research, planning, execution and evaluation. The summary will be one of the primary considerations in the judges’ review and must address the criteria outlined below. Supporting documentation may be uploaded as detailed above. **Each text area section has a limit of 750 words.**

- **Research** - Research is the systematic gathering of information to describe and understand a situation, check assumptions about publics and perceptions, and check the public relations consequences. Research is the foundation for effective strategic public relations planning. Entries will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
 - Problem or opportunity is identified
 - Primary or secondary research is undertaken to achieve desired results
 - Research and findings are valuable and relevant to the campaign
 - Research methods are appropriate for situation and/or budget
- **Planning** - Successful public relations programs require proactive, strategic planning. This planning includes measurable objectives is grounded in research and is evaluated for return on investment.

- Purpose is clearly stated
- Goal is established
- Objectives are identified and meet necessary criteria (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-specific)
- Tactics or strategies are identified
- Budget and timeline are identified
- Target audience or publics are identified
- **Implementation** - Proper execution of the plan's tactics (exact activities and methods used at the operational level) are vital to success. As such, the following will be evaluated:
 - Tactical elements of the plan, techniques, approaches and resources used are described
 - Implementation is appropriate and effective for audience
 - Any challenges encountered in achieving objectives and how they were overcome are described
 - Creativity is evidenced in implementation
 - Quality and technical excellence are shown with work that is error-free and professional
- **Evaluation** - Evaluation measures the effectiveness of the program against objectives.
 - List or describe specific methods of measurement
 - Present evidence on how each objective was met, exceeded or not met
 - Define how Report which objectives were met and how success was determined through quantifiable measurement.
 - Provides information for refining future public relations strategies
- **Diversity and Inclusion** - entry is inclusive and reaches diverse audiences; strategies and tactics reflect an understanding of the importance of incorporating a focus on diversity and inclusion in public relations and communications profession.

Tactics (previously known as "single item entries")

All entries should consist of a concise written summary for each area detailed in the judging criteria below. Supporting documentation can be uploaded as outlined in the "uploads details" section of this document. **Each text area section has a limit of 750 words.**

- **Planning/Content**
 - Purpose for the tactic is concise and clearly stated
 - Audience is identified
 - Strategy is stated or implied
- **Appropriateness for identified audience**
 - Work ties to purpose and objectives
 - Content is substantive, understandable and consistent
 - Writing and art targets the appropriate audience
- **Creativity**
 - Entry is used imaginatively to achieve program goals
 - Creativity is evident in presentation and use
- **Quality/technical excellence**
 - Production (composition, artistic design, presentation) is visually appealing
 - Copy or text is properly written, understandable, error-free and professional
- **Results/effectiveness**
 - Assessment of success and whether or not goals were met is evident
 - Information for refining future tactics is provided

- **Diversity and Inclusion** - entry is inclusive and reaches diverse audiences; strategies and tactics reflect an understanding of the importance of incorporating a focus on diversity and inclusion in public relations and communications profession.

Categories

Campaigns

- C1. **Community Relations** - programs that improve or maintain an organization's relationship or image in the communities in which it operates
- C2. **Corporate Social Responsibility** - a plan that has been integrated into the overall business model that improves the commonwealth of people and/or the environment beyond the immediate stakeholders of the organization. Examples include, but not limited to, environmental, philanthropy or ethical labor practices.
- C3. **Crisis Communications and Issues Management** -management of a situation or response undertaken to deal with an event (including natural disasters) or issue that has had or may have a negative or damaging impact on an organization or its customers/publics
- C4. **Influencer Outreach** - building and maintaining relationships with influencers by proactively reaching out to the blogger and influencer community on behalf of a product, service or organization
- C5. **Social Media**
 - a) **Social Media Campaign** - programs that use social media as a whole to engage, share, inspire and/or activate people and the community. (i.e. forums, blogs, podcasts, videos or social networking sites).
 - b) **Best Use of a Social Media Platform** - best use of a singular social media platform to interact and engage with an organization's target audience; can be any of the following social media channels: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube/Other Video-Sharing Site, Pinterest, Snapchat, TikTok or LinkedIn
- C6. **Integrated Communications** - programs that incorporate a variety of communication venues and approaches (i.e. traditional media, social media, internal communications, media relations, advertising, public relations) while maintaining a focused communication marketing strategy
- C7. **Internal Communications** - Internal programs designed and implemented to enhance an organization's relationship with its diverse employees, their families, retirees or non-employed closely related audiences
- C8. **Marketing Communications**
 - a) **Marketing Communications Consumer Products and Services** - programs designed to introduce new products or services or promote existing products or services to a consumer audience

- b) **Marketing Communications Business to Business** - programs designed to introduce new products or services or promote existing products or services to a business audience
- C9. **Public Affairs** - programs designed to affect legislation, government regulations, political activities or candidacies on a local, state or federal government level
- C10. **Special Events and observances** - A series of events designed to draw attention to a product, service or commemorative occasion, such as observances, openings, celebrations, anniversaries or other special activities
- C11. **Branding/Rebranding** - campaign designed to develop and/or promote an organization's brand or image to its target audience to build or enhance the overall reputation, integrity and/or perceived value of an organization from a holistic point of view; programs should encompass the full organization, rather than a product or service
- C12. **PRSSA Outstanding Project** - Project completed by PRSSA student chapter during the current academic year. The work should provide a clear understanding of PR tactics and the target audience, highlight a clear set of goals and measureable objectives and PR tactics that were applied to achieve them, a creative approach to the client's needs, completed by at least one PRSSA member in good standing. Project can be completed by student-run firm, but not a requirement. Limit two (2) per student chapter. The cost of entering is free for students.
- C13. **COVID-19 Campaign:** This category will honor specific strategic communication campaigns developed for or in association with the COVID-19 pandemic. All (100%) of work associated with an eligible campaign was directly related to public health or other communication issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The same entry cannot be submitted in two categories.

Tactics

- T14. **Media Kits/Online Newsrooms** - packaged information (electronic or print) such as press releases, fact sheets, photos and other collateral to promote a company, organization, event, product, service, etc.
- T15. **Publications**
 - a. **Single-issue publications** - guide/book, magazine, direct mail, brochure
 - b. **Series publications** - newsletters, magazines, direct mail, brochures
 - c. **Annual reports** - interactive or printed versions of annual reports that report an organization's annual performance.
 - d. **Enewsletter** - Communication pieces that are designed to solicit a specific, immediate response by the target audience. This can be a single communication or a series.
- T16. **Speeches** - Submit text of speech. Summary should include information on audience, purpose of speech and any documented results.

T17. **Presentation / Webinar** - Best use of public presentation, webcast or webinar to engage, educate and influence an audience. Submit deck or content of presentation.

T18. **Media Relations**

- a. **Media Relations - Consumer Products and Services** - tactics, programs and events driven entirely by media relations for a consumer product or service, which demonstrate a full understanding of including diverse media as part of the overall strategy
- b. **Media Relations - Business to Business** - tactics, programs and events driven entirely by media relations for business to business

T19. **Feature Placements**

- a. **Feature Placements - Print** - entries accepted for feature placements achieved in print outlets, such as magazine or newspaper; submit text of feature article or feature story as well as documentation of publication and placement
- b. **Feature Placements - Broadcast** - entries accepted for feature placements achieved in broadcast television or radio or print; submit video of broadcast feature story as well as documentation of publication and placement
- c. **Feature Placements - Digital** - entries accepted for feature placements achieved in media outlets that only have a digital-only element, such as digital-only news publications (such as BuzzFeed, Huffington Post, Business Insider, WebMD, etc.) or large blogs not run by a solo influencer; submit text of feature article or video of broadcast feature story as well as documentation of publication and placement

T20. **Op-Ed Columns and Byline Articles** - opinion article written as an editorial, guest column or letter to the editor. Submit text of article and documentation of publication. The article should have been written by the practitioner and submitted and published through his/her efforts.

T21. **Blog Posts** – Submit text of article and documentation of publication. The article should have been written by the practitioner and submitted and published through his/her efforts.

T22. **Websites** - A website designed to communicate with internal or external audiences. Submit website addresses and other links and/or screenshots of site.

T23. **Video News Release** - Pre-produced videos distributed to television stations or other media outlets to inform target audiences about an event, product, service or organization

T24. **Best Use of Video** - How did you use video to help tell a story and reach your target audience? Video should demonstrate how it increased engagement and list what site was used - internal or external.

T25. **Virtual experience** - Best use of augmented reality, virtual reality or virtual tours or experiences

T26. **Podcast** - Best use of audio such as podcasts.

- T27. **Use of Data / Analytics** - How did the use of data or analytics uncover hidden patterns, correlations or other insights to help make quicker and more efficient business decisions to gain a competitive edge?
- T28. **Mobile Application** - Use of mobile applications as part of a public relations program. Include copy and any images of key pages to support your entry. Additionally, include brief instructions on how to download the application.
- T29. **Diversity and Inclusion** - any initiative that supports one or more goals to recognize, empower, engage, promote or create awareness in the areas of diversity, equity or inclusion
- T30. **Creative Tactics** - Unconventional, creative tactic or approach used as part of a public relations program
- T31. **Special Event and observance** – One event designed to draw attention to a product, service or commemorative occasion, such as observances, openings, celebrations, anniversaries or other special activities
- T32. **COVID-19 Tactic:** Unconventional, creative tactic or approach used as part of a campaign regarding COVID-19