



Economic
Developers
Council
of Ontario

2023 AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

APPLICATION PACKAGE



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Program Information and Deadlines

Important Dates

Call for Entries	August 31, 2023
Deadline for Submissions	October 23, 2023
Judging & Finalist Notifications	November 2023
Awards Presentation	February 8, 2024

Entry Fees (per entry)

Entrants	Fees
EDCO Members	\$80 plus HST
Non-Members	\$150 plus HST

How to prepare your entry:

1. Refer to the Award Categories and Category Descriptions and Judging Criteria on Pages 5-8. The Step-by-Step Instructions on Pages 16-18 will assist you in preparing your online submission.
2. Complete one online entry form for each entry at www.edcoawardsofexcellence.ca.
3. Submit your payment. We accept credit card, cheque, or EFT.

2023 Award Categories

1. General Awards

- a. Investment Attraction
- b. Community Economic Development
- c. Building Initiatives
- d. Planning and Strategic Development
- e. Tourist Attraction & Tourism Product Development
- f. Workforce Development & Resident Attraction
- g. Innovation in Community Resiliency
- h. Inclusive Community Based Initiatives & Programming

Awards submissions for each of the above categories are subdivided based on population size. The population groups are:

- Rural - population under 100,000
 - Urban - population over 100,000
- i. Rural Excellence
 - * Submissions for the Rural Excellence category must have a population size of under 10,000.

2. Influencer of the Year Awards

- a. Young Professional Influencer of the Year
- b. Community Leader Influencer of the Year
- c. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Influencer of the Year

3. Leadership Awards

- a. Joseph A. Montgomery Economic Development Achievement Award

Category Descriptions and Judging Criteria

1. General Awards

The General Awards will be judged on the following criteria:

- Effectiveness in meeting the objective of the initiative;
- Innovation and creativity;
- Quality and completeness of information;
- Demonstration of collaboration and partnership;
- Economic impact on a community, area or the province;
- Return on investment; and,
- Contribution to the economic development profession.

The table below provides examples of submissions for each of the categories of the General Awards:

<p>a. Investment Attraction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FDI • Company attraction • Marketing to new businesses • Ambassador programs 	<p>b. Community Economic Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurship support • BR+E • Shop local campaigns
<p>c. Building Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bricks and mortar projects 	<p>d. Planning & Strategic Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development strategic plan • Sector- or project-specific strategic plans <p><i>*The community or project will be recognized in this category; not the agency or consultant who was hired to create the plan.</i></p>
<p>e. Tourist Attraction & Tourism Product Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fam tours • Special events • Open space arts and culture 	<p>f. Workforce Development & Resident Attraction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce strategic plans • Job fairs • Career focused apps • Attainable housing strategies
<p>g. Innovation in Community Resiliency</p> <p>Programs, activities, and projects that respond to and/or support recovery from disasters (e.g. natural, economic, health-related) as well as submissions that represent innovative measures undertaken to promote long term resiliency and/or sustainability from future disasters.</p>	<p>h. Inclusive Community Based Initiatives & Programming</p> <p>This award aims to recognize a community or organization who has executed an inclusive initiative or program to include a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion lens</p>

<p>i. Rural Excellence</p> <p>This award aims to recognize a rural community that is doing extraordinary work in economic development with outstanding results</p>	

2. Influencer of the Year Awards

This category reflects the growing importance of positive influence within the economic development profession. Submissions will be accepted by, and on behalf of individuals who have made a significant impact on their peers, the industry, their community and or the overall influence of economic development.

1. Young Professional Influencer of the Year

Awarded to an individual new to the economic development profession.

2. Community Influencer of the Year

Awarded to an elected official.

3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Influencer Award

Awarded to an economic development professional who has advanced diversity, inclusion, and equity in their organization and/or community.

3. Leadership Awards

Leadership Awards are not submitted through the online entry system. Please see the nomination forms on Page 19 for specific information on submitting entries for the following award:

- Joseph A. Montgomery Economic Development Achievement Award

This award submission is made by submitting a completed award nomination application on Page 19 and a customized nomination package. The package should include documents, publications, letters of reference and other supportive materials, such as video testimonials, that outline the innovative contributions the nominee has made to EDCO and the economic development profession and evidence of their commitment to go above and beyond.

Judges Scoring Card

	Performance				
	Poor (1)	Fair (2)	Good (3)	Very Good (4)	Excellent (5)
<p>Objective What was the objective of the initiative and was it achieved?</p>	Objectives were unclear, no examples presented.	Objectives were stated, but examples could have been made clearer.	Objectives were mostly clear, with some example of them being achieved.	Objectives were clearly presented, and concrete examples were given of how they were met.	Objectives were clear, concrete examples were given and response was above and beyond requirements.
<p>Target Audience Who is being targeted to reach or assist with the initiative? How is the group being targeted? How are partners engaged in the initiative (if applicable)?</p>	Target audience, targeting information and product unclear.	Target audience was stated but targeting and product could have been made clearer.	Target audience mostly clear, with some targeting information presented.	Target audience was clearly presented, and concrete examples were given of how the audience was targeted. Place, product, or service was clear.	Target audience clear, concrete examples were given, and place, product or service was clear. Response was above and beyond requirements.
<p>Return on Investment What was the initiative's projected ROI and was it successful in achieving it?</p>	Project ROI was not clear, and no budget examples were provided.	Project ROI was below average, and few examples of budget were provided.	Project ROI was adequate. Examples of budget were included but not detailed.	Project ROI was good. Budgetary information was very clear, with numerous examples provided.	Project offered excellent ROI and response was above and beyond requirements.

<p>Uniqueness What makes the initiative unique?</p>	<p>Unique attributes were not presented.</p>	<p>Unique attributes could have been made clearer.</p>	<p>Unique attributes were mostly clear.</p>	<p>Unique attributes were clear, with several examples provided.</p>	<p>Unique attributes were presented, concrete examples were provided, and response was above and beyond requirements.</p>
<p>Inclusiveness Was the project inclusive and accessible? What makes this initiative inclusive and accessible?</p>	<p>Inclusivity and accessibility were not presented.</p>	<p>Inclusivity and accessibility were stated but clear examples were not provided.</p>	<p>Inclusivity and accessibility were adequate with some examples provided.</p>	<p>Inclusivity and accessibility were clear with several examples provided.</p>	<p>Inclusivity and accessibility were presented with concrete examples provided, response was above and beyond requirements.</p>

TOTAL: _____/25

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I submit more than one entry in a category?

A: Multiple submissions can be made for the same category. In addition, the same initiative can be entered for multiple categories if it meets the criteria. Each submission is treated separately. For each individual entry, electronic and hard copies (if available) and the submission fee (\$80 plus HST for EDCO members and \$150 plus HST for non-members) are required.

Q: How do I pay for my awards submission?

A: Payments are accepted by Visa or MasterCard through a secure on-line site and will be processed at the end of your electronic submission. Payments can also be made by cheque or EFT; select the 'Cheque' option on the submission form and follow the instructions to submit payment. Please contact Stephanie Crilly, Executive Director at edco@edco.on.ca, for more information on settling payment by EFT.

Q: How are the award recipients selected?

A: A panel of professionals from the fields of economic development, marketing, advertising, and tourism judge the entries in the Awards category. The judges use the scoring card on Page 8 to evaluate each submission. Judges have the discretion to award a gold and silver winner in each of the General Awards category. All judges will refrain from evaluating any submission that represents a conflict of interest.

Q: Can I get feedback on my entry?

A: All submissions receive constructive feedback to assist with future projects, as well as future award submissions. Feedback will be emailed to the main submission contact after all the winners have been announced.

Q: How do I submit a project with partners?

A: One of the project partners must make the submission on behalf of the group and **must** indicate all the partners involved. If the project is selected for an award, EDCO will provide one award to the submitting partner. Duplicate awards can be ordered by the award recipient or project partners for an additional cost.

Q: I am not sure on which category to enter. Will this affect my submission?

A: If, after your submission is reviewed, it is found to be in an incorrect category or better meets the criteria of a different category than initially entered, it will be moved to the appropriate one. The Awards Committee will attempt to inform any submission if a category change is necessary.

Q: Do I have to provide a hardcopy of my submission?

A: Hard copies are no longer required for submissions.

Q: What population category do I select for Regional Groups?

A: If your organization represents a few communities, submit your entry based on the combined total population of all the represented communities.



Q: Why do I need to provide budget information?

A: Budget information assists the judges in understanding the cost/value and relating the quality of the production to the budget. Please estimate the amount of staff time used in full-time equivalencies. The budgetary information also helps to provide the judges with a better understanding of the initiative's return on investment.

Q: What kind of initiatives qualify for submission?

A: The awards are open to all individuals, organizations, partnerships, and jurisdictions undertaking municipal or regional economic development activities within the Province of Ontario. Consultants may submit an entry provided they have permission from the client/municipality for which the work was undertaken. Entries must have been produced or implemented between October 2022 and October 2023 for the 2023 Awards of Excellence program.

Q: Will I be contacted if my entry is selected for an award?

A: Finalists will be notified in December and further details will be released about this year's Awards Ceremony.



Information Required for General Award Submissions

The following information is required to complete the online submission for the General Awards categories.

- Name of Company/Organization/Municipality
- Total Budget for initiative (including estimated staff hours if completed in-house, in full-time equivalency)
- Award Category:
 1. Investment Attraction
 2. Community Economic Development
 3. Building Initiatives
 4. Planning & Strategic Development
 5. Tourist Attraction & Tourism Product Development
 6. Workforce Development & Resident Attraction
 7. Innovation in Community Resiliency
 8. Inclusive Community Based Initiatives & Programming
 9. Rural Excellence
- Title of Submission
- Project Partners, if applicable
- Contact Name and Information:
 - Telephone
 - Email address
 - Address



Considerations for Answering General Awards Submission Questions

The following are the questions to answer and additional considerations for entries:

Objective of Initiative

What was the objective of the initiative and was it achieved?

Consider:

- Effectiveness in meeting objectives
- Clarity and effectiveness of the message
- Measurement – how are you measuring the success of reaching your target market or objective? Did you meet your objective? Include any relevant analytics for the project (engagement, views, attendance, etc.)
- Impact of product, program, or event on the community (e.g. jobs created, spin-offs, community produce, increase in tax base, new partnerships formed)

Target Market/Audience Analysis

Who is being targeted to reach or assist with the initiative? How is the group being targeted? How are partners engaged in the initiative (if applicable)?

Consider:

- Strategic positioning and differentiation
- Program or product content quality, relevance and organization of information or structures
- Ability of product, program, or event to reach targeted audience and affect intended outcomes
- Partner engagement strategy

Return on Investment

What was the initiative's ROI and was the initiative successful in achieving it? Provide examples of measurement, if possible. Were there budgetary constraints, limitations, or restrictions of the initiative?

Consider:

- Include whether this initiative was carried out in-house or through an outside agency, any financial constraints, partnerships created to implement project, etc.
- Cost effectiveness and return on investment
- Creative use of available in-house resources
- Creative leveraging of partnership funding and resources
- Impact on community or area



Uniqueness

Highlight any interesting components of the initiative. What makes the initiative unique? Could this initiative be a model of best practice for the industry?

Consider:

- Creativity in design, content, and delivery
- Unique solution to economic development challenge
- Program or product design style or originality
- Environmental considerations and/or elements
- Specific for website submissions: analysis of overall navigation/ease of use of the website; flow of information; Web 2.0/interactive qualities

Information Required for Influencer Award Submissions

The following information is required to complete the online submission for the Influencer Awards categories.

- Name of Nominee
- Contact Person (Name of Nominator)
- Contact Person Information:
 - Telephone
 - Email address
 - Address

Questions to complete online nomination (Maximum 2000 characters per response):

- Please describe some of the key accomplishments that highlight how this individual is a leader in the economic development profession.
- Please describe the impact of this individual's contributions on their peers, industry and/or their community.
- How have these achievements contributed to the advancement of economic development as a profession?
- Provide testimonials from others who have been positively influenced by this individual in their contributions. If additional space is needed, you may list the contributors in the response field or put "see attached files" and upload files or links to the testimonial documentation.



Information Required for Joseph A. Montgomery Economic Development Achievement Award

The following information is required to complete online submission:

- Name of Nominee
- Contact Person (Name of Nominator)
- Contact Person Information:
 - Telephone
 - Email address
 - Address

The nomination submission must include supporting documentation and will be judged on the following criteria:

- Role in projects and initiatives that demonstrate substantive impact on community;
- Leadership/team development: relationships with various levels of governments, community, and private sector; and team approach;
- Contribution to the economic development profession;
- Community involvement;
- Acceptable support endorsement:
 - Letters of support
 - Video testimonials (15-30 seconds in length per video)



Step-by-Step Entry Instructions to Complete an Online Submission

1. Review Pages 13-14 to ensure you have all the information you need to complete your submission.
2. Visit the awards website at www.edcoawardsofexcellence.ca.
3. Click on "Submit Entry" in the top navigation bar and select one of the two main categories that best represents the submission.
4. Click on the "Continue" button at the bottom of the screen.
5. Find and choose the appropriate population category for the award sub-category that best represents the initiative.
6. Click on the "Continue" button at the bottom of the screen.
7. Complete the online form as follows:
 - a. If you are previously submitted an award, you can choose to load existing data to pre-fill the information on the form. Otherwise, proceed to enter the information in each field.
 - b. Enter the name of the Company/Organization/Municipality as it should appear on the award if the submission is selected as a recipient. If the project has multiple partners, list them under Project Partners.
 - c. Is the Company/Organization/Municipality an EDCO Member? If you or one of your partners is an EDCO Member in good standing, choose "Yes". If not, choose "No" from the drop-down menu.
 - d. Enter the population of the region the project represents.
 - e. Fill in all contact information. The person listed will be contacted to gather any additional information that may be needed and will be informed if the submission is selected as a finalist for an award.
 - f. Enter a title for the submission as it should appear on the award if the submission is selected as a recipient.
 - g. Click the "Continue" button at the bottom of the page.
8. Attach files:
 - a. Choose a promotional image that EDCO can use for marketing purposes if the submission is selected to receive an award. Select the "Browse" button. This will open your computer's file browser.
 - b. Choose the file(s) associated with the submission. JPEG or PNG files are acceptable. The maximum file size is 2MB.
 - c. Click the open button on your browser to return to the online entry form.
 - d. Click "Upload File".



- e. If you incorrectly upload a file, it can be deleted from the list after the upload is complete.
 - f. Upload any additional files or images relevant to the submission under "Attach Files".
9. Links
- a. If a link can be found online for the submission, such as a website or an online resource, please use the links section as an alternative or supplement to the "Upload File".
 - b. Enter a document Title for the link submission.
 - c. Open the link in a separate window.
 - d. Copy the entire URL and paste it into the URL line on the online entry form.
 - e. Click "Add New Link".
10. Questions/Answers
- a. This section is where the judges will learn about the objectives, targets, cost effectiveness and the creative process involved in your submission. Review Pages 6-8 for judging criteria per category.
 - b. Please answer each question in a complete and concise manner paying specific attention to include the information that is requested in each question. It is important to include results or outcomes in this section.
 - c. Bulleted answers are acceptable.
 - d. This is the opportunity to effectively demonstrate why your entry is exemplary and representative of outstanding work in economic development.
 - e. There is a 2,000-character maximum for each of the questions. Once you are satisfied with the entry, choose "Continue" at the bottom of the page.
11. Review Entry
- a. Take a moment to review your entire entry to ensure accuracy and that all questions have been answered effectively.
 - b. If you wish to modify your entry, choose the "Back" button to return to the page you wish to change.
 - c. Print the page by choosing the "Print Page" button on the bottom of the page.
 - d. Click the "Save and Proceed to Checkout" button to proceed to the Secure Checkout.



12. Secure Checkout

- a. If you are submitting multiple entries, choose the "Add Another Entry" button at the top of the page to return to the first submission page.
- b. If you have completed all the entries you wish to submit, confirm your submission details under "Checkout Summary".
- c. If all the details are correct, choose your payment method.
- d. If you are paying online, choose the "Pay Online with VISA/MasterCard" button, enter all of your payment information and choose "Submit".
- e. If you choose to pay by cheque or EFT, please fill out all the details in the "Payment by Cheque" section. Please note that your entry will be considered complete only once the payment is received. To complete the payment screen, click "Pay by Cheque."
- f. Please include printouts of your entry summary in the envelope with your cheque or EFT payment form.
- g. Your online submission is now complete. You may Log Out and close the browser to log out.

If at any point in your online submission, you have questions or concerns, please contact info@edcoawardsofexcellence.ca or click the "Contact Us" tab in the main navigation.



Photo/Image/Video Release Form

I grant to the Economic Developers Council of Ontario Inc. (EDCO), its representatives and employees, the right to use photographs, images and video footage provided as part of the application to the 2023 Awards of Excellence for recognition and promotional purposes, in print and/or electronically.

I maintain that individuals featured in the photos/images/videos acknowledge and authorize the use for the purposes outlined in this release.

I maintain that I have consent for use of any information provided under copyright or trademark.

I agree that the Economic Developers Council of Ontario Inc. (EDCO) may use the photographs, images or video footage for any lawful purpose, with or without my name, including for example, such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising and Web content.

I, the undersigned, have read and understand the above:

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____