

2019

THE COUNCIL OF
RURAL ELECTRIC
COMMUNICATORS
AND NRECA
ANNOUNCE



Deadline to enter: December 7, 2018
Go to cooperative.com/spotlight
For more information

DEADLINE EXTENDED TO 12/7/18

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ABOUT SPOTLIGHT ON EXCELLENCE

The Spotlight on Excellence Awards Program recognizes a body of outstanding work produced by electric co-op communication and marketing professionals across Co-op Nation. The categories reflect the wide scope and valuable contributions of co-op communicators today. Winners of the Spotlight on Excellence Awards represent leading practices across all communication platforms and position them as the best in the field. Their superior accomplishments have lasting impact, demonstrate a high level of professionalism and deliver exceptional results.

Oversight of the Spotlight on Excellence program is through the Council of Rural Electric Communicators (CREC), which seeks to advance the recognition, education, and professionalism of electric cooperative communicators and their affiliated organizations. The Spotlight on Excellence awards program was created in 1987.



IMPORTANT NOTES ON 2019 CYCLE

There are no changes to categories in the 2019 cycle, but we will again require **Gold winners in several categories to submit hard copy samples of their entry (see box)**. Samples will be due to the Spotlight Administrator no later than Friday, April 12, 2019, and will not be returned after the conference. These samples of leading practices will be displayed in the Spotlight Café area at CONNECT. Digital versions of all winning entries will be posted on cooperative.com and may be viewed at the Spotlight Café as well.

Categories Requiring Hard Copy Samples From GOLD Winners

- External News Publication
- Special Publication
- Annual Report to Members
- Wild Card
- Graphic Design
- Event
- Total Communication Program

ALL Spotlight entries are submitted online. The links to the appropriate entry forms will be available once payment is made at cooperative.com/spotlight (see "Deadline").

In addition, entrants in the Best Special Publication-large and Best Annual Report to Members categories are required to send a hard copy of their entry to the Spotlight on Excellence Administrator as well as posting a PDF copy online with their entry form. This change is in response to comments from past entrants and judges that having a hard copy in hand to judge aids in the overall scoring effort. The judges will receive these hard copies and use them—along with the online entry information—to complete their scoring and comments. **ONLY these two categories have this requirement.** Additional

information about this change is highlighted in the descriptions of both categories.

To help prepare your 2019 Spotlight entry, you can view past winning entries in the Spotlight section of cooperative.com.

FEES, DEADLINES, COMMENTS and CRITICAL INFORMATION

Fees

The entry fee is \$95 for all categories, except the Best Total Communication Program and Best Event. Those two categories have entry fees of \$150. Fees must be paid prior to receiving access to the Entry Form.

ALL payments and entry submissions must be submitted using the online form at <https://cooperative.com/spotlight> by Friday, Dec. 7, 2018. NO paper entries will be accepted.

Once your fee is paid, you will be issued a confirmation page that will link you to the Entry Form on Cooperative.com. You will be able to redirect to the entry forms as many times as necessary. Please follow the instructions for timely payment. Entries for which payment is not received will be disqualified.

Judges' Comments

For an additional fee of \$5 per entry, you can receive general comments from the judges on your entry, regardless of whether it receives an award. These comments will not be in-depth commentaries, but will point out positive aspects on your entry and, where appropriate, suggestions that could have made it stronger. If you wish to receive judges' comments, you must check the box on the entry form at the time of entry. No comments will be available after judging without completing this step at the time of entry.

“The communications team had to balance a variety of competing interests in this campaign. These included perceptions of cost savings, commitment to the environment... The team wisely used tools that allowed them to spell out the details of the program, and social media helped create awareness and drive members to the information. What's noteworthy is how the communicators used research and sales information to assess their plans and make changes to the promotion on an ongoing basis. This is something you should be so proud of. What an accomplishment. From the research to the execution your team did a great job. Congratulations on a job well done.”

Changes and Cancellations

Entries, cancellations and changes will be accepted until Friday, December 7, 2018.

Cancellations for entries are fully refundable; the fee for judges' comments is non-refundable. Cancellations to the entire entry and additional entries can be made online via Cooperative.com > Member Center > My Registrations. Any other changes must be submitted in writing to Accounts Receivable at accountsreceivable@nreca.coop or faxed to 703.907.5951.

Entry Questions

Questions regarding entry guidelines or specifics should be directed to Carol Crabtree, Spotlight on Excellence Administrator, at spotlightonexcellence@nreca.coop.

Payment Questions

Questions regarding payment should be directed to the Accounts Receivable Department at 703.907.6875 or by email to accountsreceivable@nreca.coop.

Mailing Address for Hard Copies

Entrants in the Best Special Publication-large and Best Annual Report to Members categories must send one hard copy of their entry to be forwarded for judging. These samples must be received no later than Friday, December 14, 2018. All Gold winners in the seven categories outlined on page two must send hard copies of their winning entries to be displayed at CONNECT. (Further information will be sent to winners once they are announced.) Use this address for all mailings:

Carol Crabtree
Spotlight on Excellence Administrator
1021 Matterhorn Dr.
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068-1715

ENTRIES SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES

Please read all instructions carefully and provide ALL information requested in the entry forms, noting that each category has its own set of requirements for submission. Failure to provide all requested information could cause you to lose points and could be the difference between a winning entry and a near miss. In the past, a single point often separated a gold winner from a silver winner, or no award at all.

- 1** All entries must be submitted using the online form provided after payment at <https://cooperative.com/spotlight>. This form allows for uploading additional support materials, including audio and video clips, PDFs (preferred) and jpegs. A total of 100 MB per entry is available, split into four 25 MB files.
- 2** Entrants may provide a URL link to support materials, especially video or audio clips, instead of uploading the file. If a password is necessary to access the hosting site, please include it with the link. Passwords and access must stay active until March 8, 2019 to allow judges plenty of time to access the files.
- 3** You will be able to access the online entry form as often as necessary to enter all your submissions. Please note that each category has its own set of requirements for submission.
- 4** Completely fill out all information on your entry form. Failure to do so may result in a lower score or disqualification of your entry.
- 5** Organizations can submit more than one entry per category. Organizations cannot, however, submit the same publication more than once in the same category.

RETURNING! We are offering a special deal to cooperatives that haven't entered in five or more years. Try your hand by entering one project at full price, and you'll be able to enter a second one for free! Twice the chances to win at half the price.

Please see the special instructions in the payment section.

At-Large Categories

There are five At-Large categories; all entries are judged together, without separation by classification. Each is clearly marked. These categories are not affected by the size of the cooperative or its budget and therefore are judged as one group.

Disqualification

If the administrator determines an entry is submitted in the wrong category, it will be moved to the proper category without notification to the entrant. Otherwise, an entry that does not follow all rules as outlined in this announcement may be disqualified. Entrants will not be notified of disqualification, nor will entry fees or judges' comments fees be refunded. The Council of Rural Electric Communicators reserves the right to pull an award if it is revealed that an entrant was not forthright on his/her entry form.

Retention of Entries and Review by Peers

All winning entries will be displayed at the CONNECT '19 Conference. While most entries will be displayed digitally, a few categories require the winner to provide hard copies or samples. These examples will be made available for review in the Spotlight Café and may be featured on cooperative.com and in the NRECA Communication Toolkit. No entries will be returned, so entrants should retain copies that hold particular value, or come to the Spotlight Café on the last day of the conference to pick up their samples.



Submission Questions

Email any questions regarding your submission to Carol Crabtree, Spotlight on Excellence Administrator, at spotlightonexcellence@nreca.coop.

ELIGIBILITY

Only NRECA voting members—electric cooperatives, public power districts, G&T cooperatives and service members (including statewide associations) in good standing—may submit original work produced and implemented by their employees or under the direction of their employees from December 4, 2017, through December 3, 2018.

Exceptions

The only exceptions to the above timeframe are entries in Best Total Communication Program or Best Event that are planned/developed in one year and implemented/evaluated in another year. In that case, the program may be entered in one award cycle only and no later than the award cycle coinciding with implementation and evaluation of the program or event.

Collateral pieces used in entries for Best Total Communication Program or Best Event may only be submitted in one award cycle and must be submitted no later than the award cycle coinciding with implementation/evaluation of the program or event. Consultants, agencies and freelancers are not allowed to submit entries to the awards program directly, nor are they eligible for awards in any category.

All entries must have been used to promote the mission of the cooperative organization. Pieces produced for organizations other than electric cooperatives are not eligible. Service members who underwrite activities of electric co-op communication and marketing peer groups (such as the Statewide Editors Association and the Council of Rural Electric Communicators) are not eligible.

CLASSIFICATIONS

CO-OP CLASSIFICATIONS

For the purpose of judging, cooperatives are divided into five classifications, based on the number of meters served, and whether a cooperative is a distribution co-op or another type as follows:

- Distribution Cooperative: 1-20,000 meters
- Distribution Cooperative: 20,001-50,000 meters
- Distribution Cooperative: 50,001-90,000 meters
- Distribution Cooperative: more than 90,000 meters
- Statewide Association, G&T or Service Member

AWARDS

AWARD INFORMATION, NOTIFICATION and AWARD PRESENTATION

Award Information

Awards will include individual winner's names for Best News Story, Best Feature Story, Best Column and Best Photo. All other categories will feature the name of the winning organization only. All winners have the option to purchase additional awards after the awards presentation at CONNECT '19 for those who assisted them with the winning entry. Names may be added at that time.

Notification

Winners will be notified via email by March 22, 2019, with a list of all winning entries. At this time, winners in categories requiring a hard copy sample will be notified of the deadline for receipt and any other pertinent details by the Spotlight on Excellence Administrator.

Award Presentation

The Council of Rural Electric Communicators will recognize the winners during the CONNECT '19 Conference, May 7-9, 2019, in Houston, Texas. Award recipients will be invited to a special celebratory event at CONNECT '19. Details will be provided after notification of winners.

If those winners who are unable to attend the conference let the administrator know in advance, awards will be mailed to them free of charge. Otherwise, non-attending winners will be billed for the shipping of their awards.



JUDGING and CRITERIA

Judges

Faculty from accredited schools of journalism as well as practicing communications, marketing and graphic design professionals will judge all entries.

Scoring

Judges take into account the completeness of the entry forms and whether entrants followed all instructions. The effectiveness of entries in achieving the stated goal will be heavily weighted in the scoring. Evaluations will be based on absolute scores rather than a comparison of entries. Entries scoring between 90-100 points qualify for the Gold Award. Entries scoring between 80-89 points qualify for the Silver Award. Judges will not give an award in a classification/category if no entries meet these scores.

The judges will award the Edgar F. Chesnutt Award to the cooperative whose entry receives the highest score of all entries in the Best Total Communication Program category, regardless of classification size. The judges will not provide feedback on entries unless entrants check the box on the entry form and pay the additional fee at the time of entry.

TIPS SUCCESSFUL SUBMISSION TIPS

Taking certain steps while filling out the entry form online may help you catch the eye of the judge and keep you from losing points. All of these are part of the judging criteria used to assign scores to the entries. Losing one point because of neglecting these can make the difference between winning an award and not winning.

- Fill out the form completely (budget amount, target audience, objectives, contact information, etc.). **Every field** needs to have information included.
- The overall approach to the project should show imagination and originality. The project should have impact; the message should be effectively communicated in the chosen medium.
- The entry needs a clear communication goal. Proof of meeting that goal needs to be included.
- Show that you had careful planning. Organize the content.
- Make sure ALL links work. Test them out before submitting them.
- Test all audio and video files to make sure they can be opened before you upload them. Have several people on different operating systems try them out, if possible. Don't make the judge work to see your project.
- Submit the support materials for entries in these formats only: PDF, Word, jpeg, .wav, .mov, .wmv, or .mp4, whichever is the most appropriate for the material.



CATEGORIES

AWARD CATEGORIES

Writing Entries

1. Best News Story (*at-large category*)

External, internal or industry announcement. Differs from a feature story in that its focus is on news, rather than narrative. Only individual news stories should be submitted, so if the story is part of a series, please submit only one story per entry. Syndicated, borrowed or reprinted material is not eligible, nor are pieces written by freelancers, consultants or agencies.

What to submit: The news release/story in the publication where it appeared in PDF format.

2. Best Feature Story (*at-large category*)

In-depth, interpretive coverage of a subject, or an entertaining, colorful single story of a subject that informs the reader. Differs from a news story in that its focus is on narrative, rather than on news. Only individual feature stories should be submitted, so if the story is part of a series, please submit only one story per entry. Syndicated, borrowed or reprinted material is not eligible, nor are pieces written by freelancers, consultants or agencies.

What to submit: The story in the publication where it appeared in PDF format.

3. Best Column (*at-large category*)

Manager's columns, informational columns such as energy advisor updates, external or internal editorials, etc., can be submitted in this category. Only one column should be entered per entry. Syndicated, borrowed or reprinted material is not eligible, nor are pieces written by freelancers, consultants or agencies.

What to submit: The story in the publication where it appeared in PDF format.



4. Best External News Publication (*hard copy sample from Gold winner required*)

A newspaper or publication produced regularly for members or related audiences. Use this category to submit any external news publication including newspapers, magazines, newsletters and newsletters incorporated as part of another publication. Syndicated, borrowed or reprinted material is not eligible, nor are pieces written by freelancers, consultants or agencies.

What to submit: Either a URL leading to PDFs of the three best issues Dec. 2017-Nov. 2018 (If semi-annual, submit two),

or upload the PDFs. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB and may be split into four 25MB files.

5. Best Internal News Publication

Includes internal newsletters aimed at directors, employees or related audiences. Use this category to submit any internal newsletter, newspaper, magazine or newsletter incorporated as part of another publication. Syndicated, borrowed or reprinted material is not eligible, nor are pieces written by freelancers, consultants or agencies.

What to submit: Either a URL leading to PDFs of the three best issues Dec. 2017-Nov. 2018 (If semi-annual, submit two), or upload the PDFs. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB and may be split into four 25MB files. E-newsletters should be submitted in Category 8.

6A. Best Special Publication-Small (*hard copy sample from Gold winner required*)

Best Special Publication–Small: 1-8 pages (single sheet entries, bill inserts, small brochures, folders, etc.). Infrequent print materials for internal and/or external audiences such as brochures, statement stuffers, quarterly reports, handbooks, and mail pieces.

What to submit for Best Special Publication-Small: Either a URL leading to PDFs of a sample or samples according to how often it was produced during the year, or upload the PDFs. PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files.

6B. Best Special Publication-Large (*hard copy sample from Gold winner required*)

Best Special Publication–Large: More than eight pages (larger brochures, books, etc.). Infrequent print materials for internal and/or external audiences such as brochures, statement stuffers, quarterly reports, handbooks, mail pieces, and employee and promotional “annual reports.” Special editions of newsletters should be submitted in Category 4 or 5. Calendars do better if entered in Category 12.

What to submit for Best Special Publication-Large: PLEASE NOTE that this category now requires both an online entry AND a hard copy sample to be mailed. Online, provide either a URL leading to PDFs of a sample, or upload the PDFs. PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files. ALSO send one sample of the publication to the Spotlight on Excellence Administrator at the address provided on page four.



7. Best Annual Report to Members (*hard copy sample from Gold winner required*)

Targeted to the cooperative’s membership, the annual report should effectively communicate the organization’s mission, personality, and required financial information.

What to submit: PLEASE NOTE that this category now requires both an online entry AND a hard copy sample to be mailed. Online, provide either a URL leading to PDFs of a sample, or upload the PDFs. PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files. ALSO send one sample of the publication to the Spotlight on Excellence Administrator at the address provided on page four.

Digital Entries

8. Most Innovative Use of Digital Communication

Digital communication used in creative, innovative ways. Includes podcasts, webinars, videos two minutes or less and produced exclusively for online use, etc. Entries can include one or more directly-related components for interaction, education, information, advertisement, promotion, or e-commerce.

What to submit: URL and the password, if necessary. Email pieces, PowerPoint-style presentations and electronic annual reports should be submitted in PDF format. Campaigns should be submitted under Category 16. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files.

9. Best Use of Social Media (*at-large category*)

Facebook, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, or any combination of social media platforms that were successful for your cooperative.

What to submit: PDFs or Jpegs containing the elements you used in your campaign or program. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files.

10. Best Digital Storytelling

Emphasis on how well the message is conveyed, or story told; linkage to intended goals for video/distribution strategy as it relates to target audience(s). Tightly-edited, well-paced programs running longer than two minutes.

What to submit: Either a URL for the program and script, or an uploaded file and a script in a PDF or Word format, along with any special instructions for viewing. Videos with unscripted interviews may submit storyboards in place of a script. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files.

Artistic/Design/Other Entries

11. Best Photo (*at-large category*)

The black and white or color photograph must have been taken by a system employee and used by the organization for publication, display or presentation. Photos by freelancers or agencies, or photos taken for an organizational contest are not allowed.

What to submit: A hi-res jpeg of the photo and a PDF or screen shot for proof of publication. A URL leading to the photo and proof of publication is also acceptable. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files.

12. Best Wild Card (*hard copy sample from Gold winner required*)

Any communication or marketing effort that does not fit another category, such as speeches, calendars, displays, specialty items, posters, tent cards, coffee cups, etc.

What to submit: Either a URL that leads to photos or scans of samples in a PDF format, or the PDFs themselves. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files.

13. Best Graphic Design (*hard copy sample from Gold winner required*)

Entries can include any printed materials (newsletters, brochures, forms, ads, calendars, etc.), logos and illustrations, charts, graphs, and visual presentations. Signage and car wrap designs can also be entered here. The focus should be on illustrative work rather than overall design.

What to submit: Either a URL leading to photos or scans of samples as used with the targeted audience or PDFs of the illustration, including its final usage as photos or scans. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files.

14. Best Individual Ad

A single advertising piece (print, video, audio or billboard) used to promote an idea, service or product to a targeted audience through paid media. Brochures should be submitted in Category 6. HTML pieces should be submitted in Category 8. Judges will look for excellent writing, graphics, design, production, quality and creativity.

What to submit: Print-style ads should be submitted in PDF format; audio/visual style ads should be referenced by a link to their online site if possible. If not, upload an mpeg4 file. All entries, regardless of medium, must be accompanied by proof of publication in PDF format. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files. If you want to send a series of ads, each individual ad must be entered separately.

15. Best Event (*hard copy example from Gold winner required*)

Highlights an event to celebrate a co-op milestone or to inform an internal or external audience. Examples include a grand opening, special celebrations, kids' programs, or a meeting or conference. Annual meetings can be submitted in this category.

What to submit: Key materials used for the event, including key promotional materials. Include a brief summary that states the purpose of the event, how the program was implemented, and results and how they were measured, including number of attendees. The summary is limited to 500 words. Submit photographs of components, such as displays, as well as up to five photos of the event itself either by URL leading to the complete entry, or in PDF format. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files.

Featured Entry

16. Best Total Communication Program and Edgar F. Chesnutt Award (*hard copy sample from Gold winner required*)

Either a short-term campaign or long-term program designed to inform, educate and/or persuade, or designed to promote or seek to obtain an action or consent on a thought, concept or idea through specific objectives, budget and results. Entries should be program-specific, rather than a department's work plan.

What to submit: All materials used in the campaign or program. Include specific budgets, target audience information and any restrictions. You will need to summarize the program describing your Research, Action, Communication, and Evaluation steps. Be as specific as possible within the word limits of the entry form online. Either provide a URL leading to the complete entry package, or upload photos and support materials in PDF format. Uploaded PDFs must be no larger than 100 MB, split into four 25MB files.



Special Offer

If your cooperative has not entered Spotlight in five or more years, you can submit ONE entry at full price, then submit a SECOND ENTRY for FREE! This year could be your year.

See the special instructions on the payment page.

2019 SPOTLIGHT on **FAQs** EXCELLENCE AWARDS FAQs

1. What is this year's deadline?

All entries must be paid for and entered into NRECA's online system no later than the extended deadline of midnight, December 7, 2018 EST.

2. What timeframe does this year's Spotlight on Excellence awards program cover?

Please consult the Call for Entries for specific requirements within categories, but in general, a project must have been produced and implemented by cooperative employees, or under their direction, from December 4, 2017, through December 3, 2018. The exception is the Best Total Communication Program, which has more specific timelines based on conception and implementation. Entries must be submitted no later than the award cycle coinciding with implementation/evaluation of the program or event. Please consult the Eligibility section in the Call for Entries for complete details.

3. What changes have been made to the Spotlight on Excellence awards program this year?

- Entrants in two categories—Best Special Publication-large and Best Annual Report to Members—are required to send a hard copy of their entry to the Spotlight on Excellence Administrator as well as posting a PDF copy online with their entry form. This change is in response to comments from past entrants and judges that having a hard copy in hand to judge aids in the overall scoring effort. The judges will receive these hard copies and use them—along with the online entry information—to complete their scoring and comments. ONLY these two categories have this requirement. The hard copies from winners must be received by the Spotlight Administrator by April 3, 2019.
- The communications team of the JC Brown CEO Communication Leadership Award will be included in all Spotlight on Excellence events at CONNECT '19 as a way to highlight this part of the Spotlight on Excellence program.
- This year, the CREC is introducing the LaBerge Award for Excellence in Strategic Communication to recognize an electric cooperative communicator with demonstrated excellence, influence, and impact in co-op communications, both as a practitioner and contributor across Co-op Nation. The Call for Entries will be released in January and the award will be presented at CONNECT '19 in May. Watch for more information later in the year.

4. I have entered before, but I haven't won. Why should I enter again?

The Spotlight on Excellence program recognizes quality work regardless of the size of the co-op. One purpose for the program is to showcase best practices in a variety of media used by cooperatives. While you may not have won in years past, it is possible that your current work will score favorably against the work of your peers. Depending on how long it has been since you entered, there have been changes to the program in the alignment of the size of cooperatives, new categories and updated requirements that may give you just the opportunity you need to showcase your outstanding work. We also now offer judges' comments for a fee that may help you once you do enter.

5. How does the online entry and payment system work?

- Go to cooperative.com/spotlight to make your payment for every entry you plan to submit. Please note that any changes in payments must be done manually, so it is best to make sure you have everything organized before making your payment. Once payment is made, you will receive a confirmation of your payment with a link to the online entry form. The form allows you to choose

your classification and category, and will provide the appropriate fields for your entry. It also allows you to upload photos, videos, audio or other support materials up to a total of 100 MB. Please combine all support materials into a single PDF for the judges to view if it is less than 25 MB.

- If your work exceeds the 100 MB limit for uploads, you can submit a URL that leads to the entry PDFs, online site or magazine instead. You should provide a link to any A/V files rather than uploading the entire file. You will receive a confirmation email for each entry that includes a complete copy of your entry form. This serves as a receipt for those who want a hard copy record of their entries.

6. How do I know what classification my cooperative is?

For the purpose of judging, cooperatives are divided into five classifications, based on the number of members served, and whether a cooperative is a distribution co-op or another type as follows:

- Distribution Cooperative: 1-20,000 members
- Distribution Cooperative: 20,001-50,000 members
- Distribution Cooperative: 50,001-90,000 members
- Distribution Cooperative: more than 90,000 members
- Statewide Association, G&T or Service Member

7. What is an “At-large” category and why are some categories At-large and others not?

In the 2014-2015 cycle, the Council made this change in order to streamline the program. In looking at the categories, there were several that were not size-dependent. These are: Best News Story, Best Feature Story, Best Column, Best Photo and Best Use of Social Media. Good writing is good writing, regardless of whether you come from a co-op of 1,000 members or 100,000 members. The same is true of a good photograph, or clever usage of social media. The size of your system and budget do not affect the quality of the product.

8. In past years, why have there been categories with no winners?

- Awards are made based on an absolute scoring system where scores of 90-100 are eligible for a Gold award, and scores of 80-89 are eligible for a Silver award. In any category, if in the opinion of the judges, no entry tallies a score greater than 90, no Gold award is given in that classification/category. If none are awarded a score of 80-89, then no Silver is awarded, either.
- The number of entries received in each classification affects the outcome. Some categories receive many entries; others get fewer than twenty. It is possible to have a classification in a category where no co-op submits an entry, and therefore there will be no award given.

9. Where can I find examples of past winning entries?

The award winners from the past three years are available to view at cooperative.com>spotlight>past winners. You will be able to view the entry itself and the entry form submitted with it.

10. Who judges the entries?

The judges are a mix of faculty from accredited schools of journalism and practicing communications, marketing and graphic design professionals. They represent a varied geographic area and multiple areas of expertise, although all have at least twenty years experience in their various fields.

11. Why am I asked to submit hard copies for some categories?

Showcasing best practices in the excellent work awarded in the Spotlight on Excellence programs is one of the reasons the Council and NRECA host the program. To further that mission, we display the Gold-winning entries using an online repository available year-round at cooperative.com>spotlight>past winners. We also share the winners with attendees at each year's CONNECT conference. We have been asked by past attendees to provide more hard copy samples of these winning entries to augment the online presence at CONNECT '18. Therefore, we are asking winners in select categories to send us their hard copy samples to display in the Spotlight Café in Houston this year. Instructions will be sent to winners in these categories after they are notified of their award.

12. Who do I contact with questions or comments?

- For questions regarding entries, eligibility, individual categories, etc., contact Carol Crabtree, the Spotlight on Excellence administrator, at spotlightonexcellence@nreca.coop.
- For questions regarding payments, contact the Accounts Receivable Department at 703.907.6875 or by email at accountsreceivable@nreca.org.
- For general comments or feedback about the Spotlight on Excellence program contact Anne Prince at anne.prince@nreca.