

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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NRECA Spotlight on Excellence Awards 2024-2025



## Frequently Asked Questions

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Can entry materials be from work implemented at any time?

Can I view previous winning entries?

Where can I find a description of each category?

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If I submit more than one entry, do I have to re-enter all my basic personal and co-op info?

***Please note many questions may be answered by reviewing the full [Call for Entries](#).***

## Can entry materials be from work implemented at any time?

No, work submitted for consideration must have been implemented between November 22, 2023, through December 1, 2024.

The only exceptions include the following:

- Entries in Best Strategic Communications Campaign, Best External Event or Best Internal Engagement that are planned/developed in one year and implemented or evaluated in another year.
- In that case, the program or event may be entered once—either in the annual award cycle that coincides with the planning phase, or the annual award cycle coinciding with the implementation and evaluation phase.

## Can I view previous winning entries?

Yes. You may reference previous winners via the [Spotlight Winners Database](#). You can filter winning entries by year and categories.

## Where can I find a description of each category?

You can locate a full description of each award category in the Call for Entries document under 'Helpful Resources' on the [Spotlight webpage](#). This is where you will also be able to locate what materials are required for each entry category.

If you still have questions about specific category requirements, email the Awards Administrator at [spotlightonexcellence@nreca.coop](mailto:spotlightonexcellence@nreca.coop).

***Please note many questions may be answered by reviewing the full [Call for Entries](#).***

## **I am not sure what category best fits my submission. What should I do?**

If you are unsure about your entry's eligibility after reviewing category descriptions in the [Call for Entries](#), please contact the Spotlight on Excellence Administrator at [spotlightonexcellence@nreca.coop](mailto:spotlightonexcellence@nreca.coop) for clarification.

## **Can I submit an entry in more than one category?**

Organizations can submit more than one entry per category and can submit entries in multiple categories.

However, organizations MAY NOT submit the same publication more than once in the Best Internal or Best External News Publication or Impact Report. Duplicates will be disqualified. You must submit a separate payment for each submission.

## **I made an Award Force account last year. Do I need a new one?**

You do not need a new Award Force account if you created one previously. Simply log in with your previous credentials on [Award Force](#).

## **Can I submit materials prepared by freelancers?**

An employee of the cooperative must submit all entries. Agencies, freelancers, or consultants are not permitted to pay for, draft or enter submissions. Communication work done in conjunction with an agency, freelancer, or consultant is acceptable but must meet specific requirements.

***Please note many questions may be answered by reviewing the full [Call for Entries](#).***

- The cooperative must have regular, ongoing, and strategic involvement in the creative, execution and review process of a project.
- The entry is submitted by someone employed at the cooperative.
- An explanation is given that clearly indicates what tasks or role the cooperative completed and what tasks or role the agency, freelancer or consultant completed specific to each entry.

Failure to meet these requirements may result in point deduction or disqualification.

## **I already submitted my entry. Can I make changes to it?**

Entries, both in-progress or already submitted, can be revised, withdrawn, and re-submitted up until the deadline on Thursday, December 5, 2024. Changes will not be accepted after 11:59PM PT on Thursday, December 5, 2024.

## **When will winners be notified?**

Winners will be notified by email the week Feb. 25, 2025. If you are unsure of your entry status or have not received an email notification, you may contact the Spotlight administrator at [spotlightonexcellence@nreca.coop](mailto:spotlightonexcellence@nreca.coop).

## **Will every entry receive feedback from judges?**

All entrants will receive judging feedback for each submission.

These comments will not be in-depth commentaries however, feedback will include:

- Strengths of your current entry.
- Where applicable, recommendations for ways the entry could be made stronger.

***Please note many questions may be answered by reviewing the full [Call for Entries](#).***

## When will I receive judging feedback on my entries?

Soon after the Connect conference in May, individual scores and judges' comments will be available via the Award Force platform for all entrants to view for two weeks.

Entrants will be notified by email when scores and judges' comments are available for download in Award Force.

## Do I need to be present at Connect to accept the physical award?

No, you do not need to be present to accept the award. You can have it mailed to you if you prefer.

## What type of recognition will Spotlight winners receive?

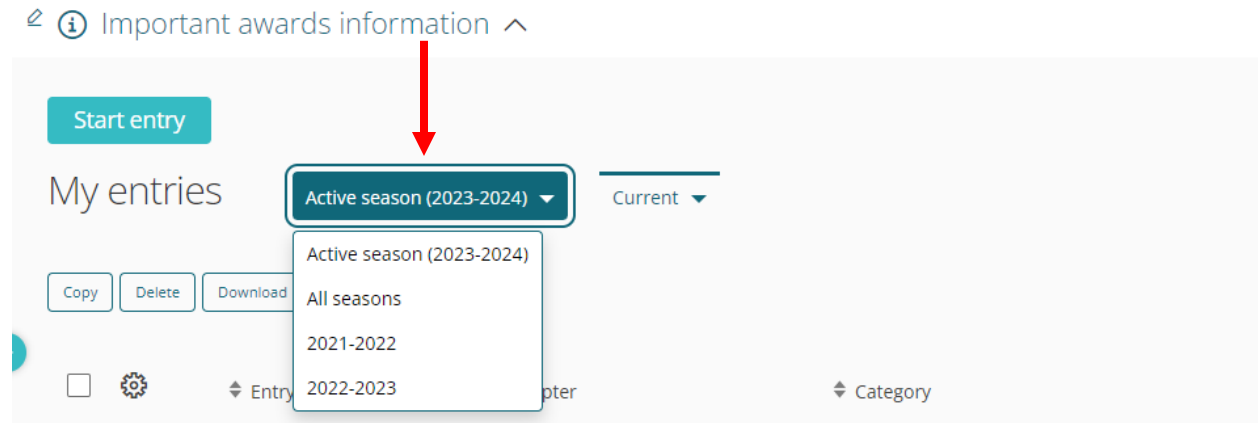
At the Connect Conference, NRECA and the CREC will host a Spotlight on Excellence reception recognizing award winners. All winners and their teams are invited and will be recognized. The Best Strategic Communications Campaign/Chesnutt Award winner's team will be recognized from the main stage.

## Is my entry from last year still in Award Force?

Previously submitted entries may still be accessed in Award Force. Simply select the season you would like to view on the main entry page in Award Force (*see below*).

However, you may only view or download previous entries. They MAY NOT be edited or 'carried over' for new submissions.

***Please note many questions may be answered by reviewing the full [Call for Entries](#).***



## How long will I be able to access my entry from this cycle after the call for entries is closed?

Entries may still be accessed in Award Force indefinitely after the call for entries period has closed. If you would like to ensure you have access to final submission materials beyond the award season, it is recommended that entrants download the final entry submission as a PDF for their records. This may be done directly from the main entry page in Award Force by clicking the PDF icon next to the entry status.

## Who judges Spotlight?

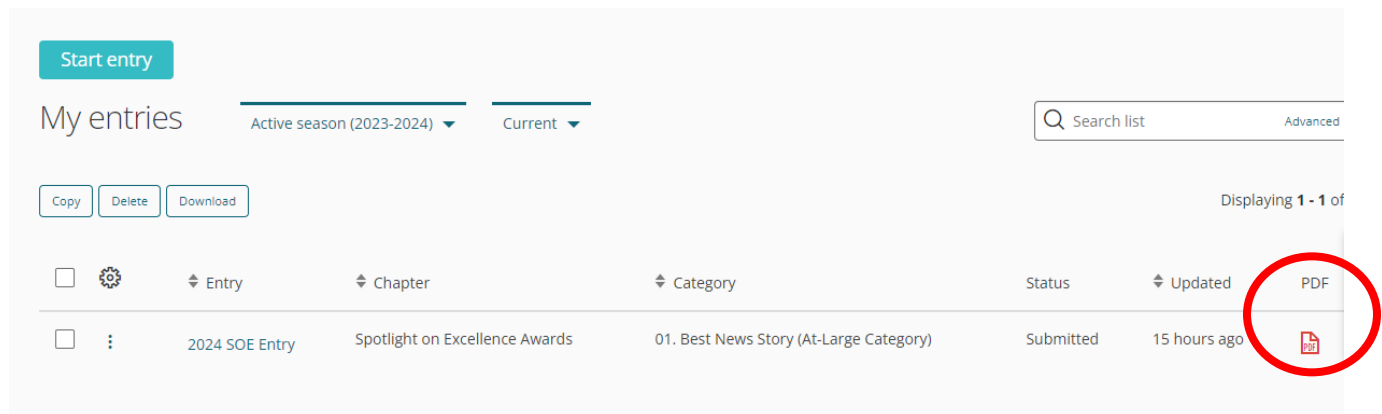
Judges for Spotlight are individuals who are nominated by colleagues and appointed based on substantial background and expertise that aligns to specific award categories. Judges may come from a variety of industry sectors, though many may currently hold positions in academia, consulting, or may be retired professionals.

Judges may not have current co-op clients to ensure equitable and impartial judging for all entrants.


***Please note many questions may be answered by reviewing the full [Call for Entries](#).***

## Can I share access to my entry with another employee from my co-op while it's still in progress?

While you cannot share access in the Award Force platform to collaborate with other team members, you are able to download a PDF of current progress at any point to share current progress with any collaborators. Simply click on the PDF icon for the entry you would like to share (*see below*).



The screenshot shows the 'My entries' page in the Award Force platform. At the top, there is a 'Start entry' button. Below it, the page is titled 'My entries' with filters for 'Active season (2023-2024)' and 'Current'. There is a search bar and a 'Displaying 1 - 1 of' indicator. Below the search bar are buttons for 'Copy', 'Delete', and 'Download'. The main content is a table with the following columns: Entry, Chapter, Category, Status, Updated, and PDF. The first entry is '2024 SOE Entry' under the chapter 'Spotlight on Excellence Awards' and category '01. Best News Story (At-Large Category)'. The status is 'Submitted' and it was updated '15 hours ago'. The PDF icon for this entry is circled in red.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Entry	Chapter	Category	Status	Updated	PDF
<input type="checkbox"/>	2024 SOE Entry	Spotlight on Excellence Awards	01. Best News Story (At-Large Category)	Submitted	15 hours ago	

## If I submit more than one entry, do I have to re-enter all my basic personal and co-op info?

If you are submitting multiple entries, you can save yourself some time by copying your entry form. Please be aware that the copy function will carry over ALL information from the original entry, so you will want to ensure that all entry information is updated accordingly to reflect your current entry.

1. Visit the "My Entries" tab, check the box next to the entry you'd like to copy, and click the "Copy" button (*see below*).

***Please note many questions may be answered by reviewing the full [Call for Entries](#).***



2. Once your entry is successfully copied, you can edit the new entry with the correct category selection.
3. Review each section of the copied application to ensure that every field is updated to reflect information for the new entry.




Start entry

My entries Active season (2023-2024) Current

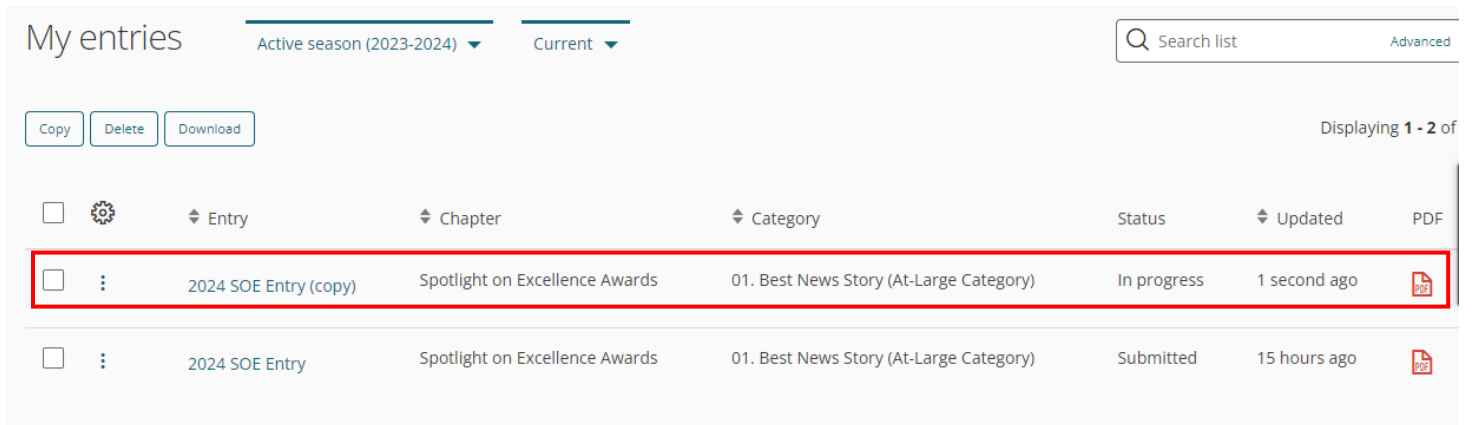
Search list Advanced

Displaying 1 - 1 of

Copy Delete Download

<input type="checkbox"/>	⚙️	Entry	Chapter	Category	Status	Updated	PDF
<input type="checkbox"/>	⋮	2024 SOE Entry	Spotlight on Excellence Awards	01. Best News Story (At-Large Category)	Submitted	15 hours ago	

Be sure to select the entry you intend to copy. Once you copy the entry, Award Force will populate a second entry with the same entry title with '(copy)' affixed at the end.





My entries Active season (2023-2024) Current

Search list Advanced

Displaying 1 - 2 of

Copy Delete Download

<input type="checkbox"/>	⚙️	Entry	Chapter	Category	Status	Updated	PDF
<input type="checkbox"/>	⋮	2024 SOE Entry (copy)	Spotlight on Excellence Awards	01. Best News Story (At-Large Category)	In progress	1 second ago	
<input type="checkbox"/>	⋮	2024 SOE Entry	Spotlight on Excellence Awards	01. Best News Story (At-Large Category)	Submitted	15 hours ago	

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