

Judging Criteria and Scoring

Judges will evaluate entries based on 10 criteria, as outlined below. Please note, not all criteria are applied to each award category. Award categories will be scored using a 100-point scale, with criteria weighted accordingly for relevance and importance within a specific category. All entries that score a 95 or higher will receive a Spotlight on Excellence award.

OBJECTIVE	Clearly defines the purpose of the work and how it supports the cooperative's mission or strategic priorities. Strong entries demonstrate well-articulated goals and a clear connection to organizational outcomes.
WRITING	Communicates the message in a clear, compelling and audience-appropriate way. Content is well-organized, concise and engaging, with tone, style and voice aligned to the intended audience and platform.
LAYOUT/ COMPOSITION	Organizes content and visual elements in a way that enhances readability and guides the audience through the message. Design choices effectively prioritize key information and create a cohesive, user-friendly experience
GRAPHICS/ IMAGERY	Uses visual elements, such as photography, video, illustration, color and typography to strengthen the message and engage the audience. Visuals are high-quality, purposeful and aligned with the overall communication goals.
QUALITY	Demonstrates a high level of professionalism and polish. Execution reflects strong attention to detail, consistency and production value across all elements of the work.
ORIGINALITY	Presents ideas in a creative, innovative or memorable way. The work stands out by using fresh approaches, unique perspectives or thoughtful problem-solving to engage its audience.
RELEVANCE	Addresses topics, messages or issues that are meaningful and timely for the intended audience. The content reflects a strong understanding of audience needs, interests and context.
PLANNING	Shows a thoughtful, strategic approach to achieving defined objectives. Includes evidence of audience insight, clear messaging and intentional selection of tactics and channels based on goals and available resources.
EXECUTION	Reflects how effectively the strategy was brought to life. Demonstrates coordination across tactics, efficient use of resources and the ability to adapt to challenges or constraints.
RESULTS	Demonstrates measurable outcomes and impact. Results should align with stated objectives and may include quantitative metrics (engagement, reach, participation) or qualitative outcomes (behavior change, increased awareness, strengthened relationships).

Scoring Rubric By Category

Excellence in Content and Storytelling

Objective	Writing	Layout/ Composition	Graphics/ Imagery	Quality	Originality	Relevance	Planning	Execution	Results
5	25	10	5	10	10	10	10	5	10

Excellence in Digital and Social Communications

Objective	Writing	Layout/ Composition	Graphics/ Imagery	Quality	Originality	Relevance	Planning	Execution	Results
5	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	15

Excellence in Visual and Multimedia

Objective	Writing	Layout/ Composition	Graphics/ Imagery	Quality	Originality	Relevance	Planning	Execution	Results
5	5	15	20	15	15	5	5	10	5

Wildcard

Objective	Writing	Layout/ Composition	Graphics/ Imagery	Quality	Originality	Relevance	Planning	Execution	Results
5	5	5	5	15	15	10	15	15	10

Best Strategic Communications Campaign (Chesnutt Award)

Objective	Writing	Layout/ Composition	Graphics/ Imagery	Quality	Originality	Relevance	Planning	Execution	Results
5	5	---	---	20	15	5	20	15	15