

2019 THOTH AWARDS CALL FOR ENTRIES

Public Relations Society of America National Capital Chapter

EARLY BIRD FEES: Must be received by Friday, June 7th

- PRSA-NCC Members
 - \$140 for Component entries
 - \$160 for Program, IPR Award, and PR Agency and Communications Teams Award entries
 - \$95 for IPRA Members and First-time Submitters
- Non-NCC Members
 - \$190 for Component entries
 - \$210 for Program, IPR Award, and PR Agency and Communications Teams Award entries

STANDARD FEES: Must be received by Friday, July 12th

- PRSA-NCC Members
 - \$180 for Component entries
 - \$200 for Program, IPR Award, and PR Agency and Communication Team Award entries
 - \$135 for PRSA-NCC IPRA Members and First-time Submitters
- Non-NCC Members
 - \$230 for Component entries
 - \$250 for Program, IPR Award, and PR Agency and Communication Team Award entries

For companies who are entering for the first time, please reach out to Sabrina Kidwai (kidwai.sabrina@gmail.com) or Aprill Turner at aturner@cfyj.org to obtain the code before submitting your award entry.

WHAT ARE THE THOTH AWARDS?

Named for the Egyptian god of communication, the Thoth (pronounced “tot”) Awards **recognize the most outstanding, strategic public relations programs and components developed and produced in the Greater Washington, D.C. area.** Achievements are recognized in **42** categories, including:

- **14 Program categories** that celebrate the best PR campaigns
- **9 Component categories** that highlight top accomplishments in PR tactics
- The prestigious **Institute of Public Relations Research, Measurement and Evaluation Award** (*Entries in this category will be judged by the Institute for Public Relations*)
- We also have **7 Agency & Communication Team Awards**



The Public Relations Society of America's National Capital Chapter (PRSA-NCC) sponsors the local annual Thoth competition to recognize and reward outstanding achievement in public relations and to encourage continued excellence in the field. Finalists in each category will be notified by email. From these finalists, the **Thoth Award winners will be announced at the Thoth Awards Luncheon on Friday, September 27, 2019.**

The Thoth Award presents the highest achievement in a category. Only one Thoth Award is awarded in each category.

The **Best of Show Award** is presented to the best program in the competition at the end of the Thoth Gala. No separate entry is required for this, all program entries are automatically entered.

Did you enter PRSA's National Silver Anvil or Bronze Anvil Awards program?

If so, please note that the Thoth program and components category definitions and requirements closely follow the PRSA Silver and Bronze Anvil awards. By taking a little extra time to repurpose your Anvil entry for submission in the Thoth Awards competition, you'll be maximizing your chance of winning an award and gaining recognition for your organization and your outstanding work. In other words, one campaign or project can be submitted as a program AND as a component, which increases the chances of a winning entry.

PREPARING YOUR ENTRY

Please follow all instructions carefully. Failure to comply may lead to disqualification.

All materials will be uploaded and submitted online at

<https://prsancc.secure-platform.com/a/organizations/main/home>

THOTH CONTACTS:

PRSA-NCC Executive Director: Reggie Kouba at staff@prsa-ncc.org

2018 Thoth Awards Judging Co-Chair: Sabrina Kidwai, kidwai.sabrina@gmail.com and Aprill Turner at aturner@cfyj.org.

Thoth Gala Sponsorships: Brendon Miller, BMiller@wacif.org

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND RULES

1. Eligibility

Quality, creativity, and resourcefulness in public relations and communication programs are the hallmark of the Thoth Awards. The competition is open regardless of budget, to any company, association, counseling firm, government agency or other organization in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area (including Baltimore and Richmond), and entry is not limited to PRSA members. All entrants are eligible to submit as many entries in as many categories as they choose. The entries must have been at least partially produced during the period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018.

2. Entry Deadlines and Fees

EARLY BIRD FEES: Received by Friday, June 7, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

- *PRSA-NCC Members*: \$140 for Component entries; \$160 for Program, IPR Award, and Team Award entries
- *Non-NCC members*: \$190 for Component entries; \$210 for Program, IPR Award, and Team Award entries
- *IPRA Members and First-time Submitters* for \$95

STANDARD FEES: Received by Monday, July 1, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

- *PRSA-NCC Members*: \$180 for Component entries; \$200 for Program, IPR Award, and Team Award entries
- *Non-NCC members*: \$230 for Component entries; \$250 for Program, IPR Award, and Team Award entries
- *PRSA-NCC IPRA Members and First-time Submitters*; \$135

3. Payment Options

Payments are accepted by credit card through our online portal. Entrants can also pay by check. If paying by check, confirmation email of award entry or entries must be submitted with payment. Checks should be made payable to PRSA-NCC and mailed to:

Toth Awards
PRSA National Capital
Chapter 200 Little Falls
Street, Suite 205 Falls
Church, VA 22046

4. Entry Requirements: Program Categories

All Program and Campaign Category entries must include:

- **Promo**: 50-word description (to be used for promotional purposes)
- **Logo**: At least one logo related to the program (to be used for promotional purposes)
- **Overview statement/summary**: A clear and concise two-page summary of the entry

The two-page summary must include, and points are awarded by the judges for, each of the four sections listed below.

- **Research**: Summarize research conducted or gathered for the project, and show how that research helped define your goals, objectives, strategies and target audiences.
- **Planning**: State the goals and measurable objectives of the program or project, along with the intended impact on the target audiences and, by extension, the organization.
- **Implementation**: Describe the strategies, techniques and tools used to meet the objectives. What key messages did you convey, and why? What, if any, challenges did you overcome? Include the project's timetable and budget. What extraordinary circumstances did you

overcome?

- **Evaluation:** Detail success by matching outcomes to the objectives. Discuss the impact of the program on the target audience and organization. How did you measure results? Did you meet the timetable and budget? If not, why not?

Supporting Materials: Claims made in your summary must be substantiated by supporting materials included with your entry. Separate uploads are required for all four main sections listed above. Incorporate supporting materials such as photographs, prints, slides, letters, scripts, storyboards, clippings and sample evaluation data. Advertising materials will be accepted if you can demonstrate that the advertising supplemented the public relations program and the advertising costs amounted to no more than one-third of the total program budget. Supporting materials can be provided as PDFs, media uploads, other file uploads and URLs to Vimeo and YouTube. Upload videos to YouTube or another platform and provide a link to your files.

5. Entry Requirements: Component Categories

All Component (tactics) entries must include:

- Promo: 50-word description (to be used for promotional purposes)
- Logo: At least one logo related to the program (to be used for promotional purposes)
- Overview statement/summary: A clear and concise one-page summary of the entry

The one-page summary must include, and points are awarded by the judges for, each of the four sections listed below.

- Planning/Content
- Creativity/Quality
- Technical Excellence (*with the exception of media relations categories*)
- Results

Supporting Materials: Claims made in your summary must be substantiated by supporting materials included with your entry. Supporting materials can be provided as PDFs, media uploads, other file uploads and URLs to Vimeo and YouTube. Upload videos to YouTube or another platform and provide a link to your files.

6. Submitting Your Entry

Submitting your entry is easy. Each entry, along with the summary, logo, and all supporting materials, must be submitted electronically at

<https://prsancc.secure-platform.com/a/organizations/main/home>

- Create a new account here and complete the user profile.
- Login with your email address and password.
- Go to the Entry Form found in the top navigation bar and start your entry submission.

You may save your work and return to this site as often as needed. The deadline to complete and submit all parts of the entry submission is Monday, July 1 at 5:00 p.m.; or Friday, June 7 at 5:00 p.m. for early bird discount prices. You can edit your submission at any time if it is not in your shopping

"cart." If you have already placed your submission in the cart, simply click "remove" and then you can click on "edit" to access your submission. You do not need to finish one submission before starting another one, you can have as many submissions as you want "in progress."

AWARD CATEGORIES

Program Categories

A **two-page summary** should be typed using **no smaller than 10-point typeface and one-inch margins**.

Below are questions to answer when preparing a winning entry. The number one reason entries are disqualified is that the summaries do not address all criteria listed and/or that one or more of the four sections are incomplete. Please review your entry carefully to comply with the requirements.

Research:

- Describe the situation on which the program is based. When addressing the actual research component, describe who specifically initiated the research.
- Was it in response to a problem or to examine a potential problem or challenge?
- Did research help to re-define the situation in any way?
- How was the research relevant to shaping the planning process?
- How did the research help define the audience(s) or the situation?
- Did you conduct an audit of the media climate?

Planning:

- How do the plans correlate to the research findings?
- Who was involved in the planning? In general terms, what was the plan? For example, what were the specific objectives of the program?
- Who were the target audiences?
- What was the overall strategy employed? What materials were used?
- What was your budget? Be specific. What other resources were used? Include staff time.

Implementation:

- How were the plans executed, and what were the results?
- In general terms, how did the activities flow?
- Did you encounter any difficulties or challenges? If so, how were they handled?
- Were other organizations involved?
- Were other non-traditional public relations tactics (i.e. advertising) employed? Unless you are entering this program under "Integrated Communications," advertising costs should not exceed one-third of the budget.

Evaluation:

- What methods of evaluation were used?
- How are results related to research findings?
- How are results related to strategic objectives?

You will have the opportunity to upload supporting material for your entry. Please label each separate upload as a Table of Contents, for example: "1_Brochure PDF," "2_Press Releases," "3_Newspaper Coverage."

COMPONENTS

Develop a concise summary, **no longer than a single page with no smaller than 10-point typeface and one- inch margins**. Components are judged on four key areas — planning/content, creativity/quality, technical excellence and results, which must include:

- Goal
- Measurable objectives
- Strategy
- Audiences
- Messages
- Planning rationale
- Budget and results, including qualitative, quantitative, or both, evidence of how the stated measurable objectives were met, usage statistics, metrics or other means to quantify measurement results to support objectives.

Include a copy of the component in the manner it was used. For example, if the item is a printed piece, please include a sample of the printed material as a PDF. If you are entering the same piece in more than one category, you must submit separate entries for each category, along with an appropriate number of samples with each category entry submitted.

You will have the opportunity to upload supporting material for your entry. Please label each separate upload almost as a Table of Contents, for example: "1_Brochure PDF," "2_Press Releases," "3_Newspaper Coverage."

Please note: Criteria closely follow that of the national PRSA Bronze Anvil Awards.

PROGRAM CATEGORIES

These categories provide an opportunity for full programs or campaigns to be recognized for excellence. On the online form, select the category that most closely fits the primary purpose of your entry. You may submit more than one entry per category or entries in several categories, but each entry must be submitted online separately.

Did you enter the National PRSA Silver Anvil awards competition? Use your Silver Anvil entry as a starting point as the program criteria for the Thoth Awards closely follow the criteria for the national PRSA Silver Anvil Awards.

Community Relations: Programs that seek to win the support or cooperation of, or that aim to improve relations with, people or organizations in communities in which the sponsoring organization has an interest, need or opportunity. “Community” in this category refers to a specific geographic location or locations.

Reputation/Brand Management: Programs designed to enhance, promote or improve the reputation of an organization with its publics, either proactively or in response to an issue, event or market occurrence.

Events and Observances (seven or fewer days): Programs or events scheduled for one to seven consecutive days (not including planning and preparation). Events may be commemorations, observances, openings, celebrations or other special activities and must occur within a time span of one week.

Events and Observances (more than seven days): Programs, events or activities that take place for longer than a one-week period, such as a yearlong anniversary (commemorations, observances, celebrations, etc.).

Public Service: Programs that advance public understanding of a societal issue, problem or concern. Similar programs conducted principally to enhance an organization’s standing or to otherwise serve its interests directly should fall in Reputation/Brand Management.

Public Affairs: Programs specifically designed to influence public policy and/or affect legislation, regulations, political activities or candidacies—at the local, state or federal government levels—so that the entity funding the program benefits.

Global Communications: Any type of program (institutional, marketing, events, etc.) sponsored by a U.S. agency, a U.S. organization, or a global organization with a U.S. presence. The program demonstrates effective global communications implemented in two or more countries (e.g., one could be in the U.S., but the program must include one other country).

Crisis Communications: Program undertaken to deal with an event or issues that has had or may have an extraordinary impact, and this also includes Issues Management. Issues Management covers programs that have dealt with with issues that could extraordinarily affect ongoing business strategy.

Internal Communications: Includes programs targeted specifically to special publics directly affiliated with an organization (i.e., employees, members, affiliated dealers or franchisees).

Multicultural Public Relations: Any type of program (i.e., institutional, marketing or community relations) specifically targeted to a cultural group.

Media Relations: Proactive outreach campaigns designed to target and leverage a specific type of media community on behalf of a product, service or organization. Submit any supporting materials, such as press releases, media advisories, satellite media tour materials, pitch letters, relevant tweets or posts, requests for coverage, outgoing messages to bloggers, etc., along with evidence of the resulting media coverage.

For online coverage, provide the URL for actual sites that still are live and relevant to the project. For TV and Radio broadcast coverage, upload materials. For print articles, blog posts or other online coverage, provide upload screen captures or PDFs.

Sub categories for this category are by industry:

- Business
- Government
- Associations/Nonprofit Organizations

Integrated Communications: A program that employs the creative and effective integration and leadership of public relations strategies and tactics with other promotional marketing communications. It should demonstrate the integration of strategies, plus the budget and measurement of return on investment of the communications to any stakeholder group including employees, consumers, the media, investors and/or shareholders.

- Consumer Products or Services
- Business-to-Business
- Government
- Associations/Nonprofit Organizations

Pro Bono Public Relations: A public relations program created on behalf of or by a nonprofit (501(c)(3) organization [proof of nonprofit status required]. This program must be created, developed and executed by an individual practitioner or an agency without financial compensation to that individual or agency.

Independent Public Relations Practitioners' Media Relations Campaigns: Any media relations campaign created and executed by public relations practitioners or counselors in the Washington, D.C. Metro area who own or operate a sole independent PR business or consulting firm or a PR firm having no more than one employee, not counting the owner.

COMPONENT CATEGORIES

These categories provide an opportunity for individual elements of larger programs to be recognized for excellence. Entries are judged on four key areas —planning/content, creativity/quality, technical excellence, and results. When completing the online form, designate on the official entry form the category that most closely fits the primary purpose of your entry. You may submit more than one entry per category or entries in several categories, but each entry must be submitted separately on the online platform.

Did you enter the National PRSA Bronze Anvil awards competition? Use your Bronze Anvil entry as a starting point, as the components criteria for the Thoth Awards closely follow the criteria for the national PRSA Bronze Anvil Awards.

Your one-page summary for each entry must include:

- Goal
- Audiences
- Measurable objectives
- Strategy
- Messages
- Planning rationale
- Budget and results, including qualitative, quantitative, or both, evidence of how the stated measurable objectives were met, usage statistics, metrics or other means to quantify measurement results to support objectives.

Integrated Media Relations: Tactics, programs and events driven entirely by media relations that generate news coverage across full spectrum of online, broadcast, print and social media outlets. Submit any supporting materials, such as press releases, media advisories, satellite media tour materials, pitch letters, relevant tweets or posts, requests for coverage, outgoing messages to bloggers, etc., along with evidence of the resulting media coverage.

For online coverage, provide the URL for actual sites that are still live and relevant to the project. For television and radio broadcast coverage, submit/upload all materials. For print articles, blog posts or other online coverage, upload screen captures or PDFs.

Social Media: This category includes the use of: web widgets, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube campaigns, and other forms of social media, which are used as part of public relations programs. Submit any supporting materials, such as the URL address of sites involved, screen captures, outgoing messages, news releases, audio or video files, etc., along with evidence of the results. Upload screen captures, audio and video materials or put in URLs which link to audio or video materials. For this category, you can submit the following:

- News Release/Announcement – Activities where social media was leveraged to share news or information directly with your audience
- Video – A successful initiative driven through videos on YouTube, Vine or Instagram that built awareness with internal or external audiences
- Advocacy – Share how social media spread information related to an issue or cause 19D.
Events – For events primarily promoted through social media outlets

Podcast/Webcast: A copy of the actual podcast and/or webcast entry should be uploaded online, along with the actual site URL, or other audio or video program must be uploaded as part of the entry.

Blog: Web-based journals or blogs which communicate either a corporate, public service or industry position. Screen downloads of the blog being entered, as well as the actual site URL, must be submitted as part of the story.

Publications: For this category, you can submit the following:

- Single-issue publication designed for a special purpose, brochures, pamphlets, booklets or other small publications designed to inform a target audience about an organization, product, service, or issue. It can be print or electronic

- Newsletter and magazines (print or electronic) designed, written and published periodically to provide timely information to target audiences while supporting an organization’s overall objectives. Submit three consecutive issues.
- Category includes annual reports that report on an organization’s annual performance, books and other publications not eligible for consideration in other categories.

Public Service Announcements: Audio or video productions of one minute or less distributed to radio or television stations, or print ads distributed to newspapers or magazines as non-paid public service announcements. Single productions or a series addressing the same issue may be submitted as uploads or URLs. Print PSAs should be submitted as a PDF.

Application (App): Use of mobile applications as part of a public relations program. Include copy and any images of key pages to support your one-page summary. Additionally, include brief instructions on how to download the application. It should be an app for a phone/tablet application. Please include in your entry the strategy you implemented with the developer.

Please note: Entries in the following categories must be written in their entirety or substantively by the entrant and not merely “pitched.”

Websites (external, internal or extranets): Use of a website as part of a public relations program. Include screen grabs or copies of key pages to support your one-page summary. In addition, include the website address for external sites.

Internal Video: Video programs targeted toward internal audiences such as employees, members, etc. Entrants should submit links to video programs as a reasonable representation.

External Video: Video programs targeted primarily at external audiences, including b-roll packages and satellite media tours. Entrants should submit links to video programs as a reasonable representation.

Institute for Public Relations’ Research, Measurement and Evaluation Award

PRSA-NCC is pleased to be partnering again with the Institute for Public Relations to judge and present the prestigious **IPR Research Award**. The IPR Measurement Commission will judge the IPR Research Award based on the quality of program objectives and research design, how measurement and evaluation were integrated into program planning and execution, and the effectiveness of the methodology in program evaluation.

Entries must include the research methodology and key findings.

Please prepare and upload a **two-page description**, including these requirements. Typeface must be at least 10-point and margins must be at least one-inch.

Agency & Special Team Awards

PR Agency Categories

The PR Agency of the Year Award recognizes an outstanding PR firm for exceptional growth and accomplishments during 2018. Entries for PR Agency of the Year Award should be submitted in one pdf document not to exceed four (4) pages, using 10-point font and one-inch margins. If you choose to include a video, upload the video to YouTube/Vimeo and provide a link in your pdf document.

All entries in the PR Agency Award category will be judged on the following criteria:

- Evidence of financial growth
- Client list growth
- Client retention
- PR innovation

Entries should include the following:

- Agency summary
- Two client testimonials
- Key client roster for last two years
- Staffing (split executive, account and support staff)
- Financials (two years' annual income including mark-up on disbursements as a separate line item)
- Key achievements during the entry period
- An overview of the firm's practice areas, offices and capabilities
- A breakdown of how much business falls into each of the firm's practice areas
- A list of any long-term accounts
- Review of exceptional client work during the entry period, such as campaign or product launch, help with crisis, etc.
- Information about new products, partnerships and innovations within the entry period
- Details of HR programs and staff initiatives that moved forward during the entry period
- Information about agency involvement in professional organizations/associations
- Information about charitable, community and educational efforts by the firm

If the agency is a subsidiary, or has been spun off from a parent company, the entry must include details of sources of start-up finance and a full explanation of the relationship with the parent company, including ongoing financial and infrastructure support (e.g. access to training, HR, financial management, etc.).

*Note that certain information, including client wins and profitability/revenue (can include a range), can be marked confidential and will not be published. Omitting this information, however, could affect how judges score your entry.

New PR Agency of the Year

Open to any agency which has been in business for less than 24 months as of December 31, 2018. The

CEO/Managing Director of the firm is required to certify in writing the firm's current annual communications income, as well as date of incorporation (or DBA filing) and number of employees. The signed letter will be uploaded as a separate document, so it will not count in your total page count.

Small PR Agency of the Year

Open to any agency with verified annual revenue less than \$350,000 in 2018. The CEO/Managing Director of the firm is required to certify in writing that the firm has a current annual PR income (consisting of fees plus mark-up for disbursements as a separate line item) of less than \$350,000, as well as date of incorporation (or DBA filing) and number of employees. The signed letter will be uploaded as a separate document, so it will not count in your total page count.

Mid-Size PR Agency of the Year

Open to any agency with verified annual revenue between \$350,000 and \$999,999 in 2018. The CEO/Managing Director of the firm is required to certify in writing that the firm has a current annual PR income (consisting of fees plus mark-up for disbursements as a separate line item) between \$350,000 and \$999,999, as well as date of incorporation and number of employees. The signed letter will be uploaded as a separate document, so it will not count in your total page count.

Large PR Agency of the Year

Open to any agency with verified annual revenue more than \$1 million in 2017. The CEO/Managing Director of the firm is required to certify in writing that the firm has a current annual PR income (consisting of fees plus mark-up for disbursements as a separate line item) of more than \$1 million, as well as date of incorporation and number of employees. The signed letter will be uploaded as a separate document, so it will not count in your total page count.

Note: Judges also have the option to select an overall PR Agency of the Year award from the agency submissions received. This accolade is determined by comparing the best of the four agency categories.

Communication Team Categories

The Communication Team of the Year Award recognizes an outstanding communication team for exceptional professional accomplishments during 2018. Individuals may nominate their own team or the team may be nominated by others. Entries for the Communication Team Awards should be submitted in one pdf document not to exceed four (4) pages in length and should not use less than a 10 point font size and one-inch margins. If you choose to include a video, upload the video to YouTube/Vimeo and provide a link in your pdf document.

Entry submissions should include:

- Number of staff employed in PR function
- Annual communications budget for 2017 (broken down into areas of communication activity directly under the team's control)
- Outline of goals for the organization as a whole and the role of the communication team in fulfilling those goals
- Outline of PR-related issues and objectives during the entry period
- Achievements during the entry period
- Use of internal/external resources, including agencies and other companies
- Where appropriate, details of work with other departments within the organization

The judges will look for evidence of success in executing PR campaigns or programs during 2017 as part of an overall communications strategy. They will also look for cost-effective use of both in-house and external resources.

Government Communication Team of the Year

Open to any in-house communication department within local government, government agencies, health authorities, trade unions and trade bodies. Where relevant, details should be included of success in meeting government regulations or standards.

Nonprofit Communication Team of the Year

Open to any in-house communication department within a charity, nonprofit or not-for-profit organizations. Where relevant, details should be included of success in meeting the organization's goals of engagement, volunteerism and fundraising.

Corporate Communication Team of the Year

Open to any in-house private sector PR department.

Thoth Checklist

To improve your chances, be sure to go through this checklist prior to submitting your entry.

Program took place in 2018

Programs have an improved chance of winning if submitted near their completion. A key part of winning an award is showing that your outcomes meet your objectives. If your program was only partially completed during calendar year 2018 and a major portion of your results are not in by December 31, 2018, you should consider waiting until next year's competition to enter.

Entered the most appropriate category

When deciding which category is most appropriate, entrants should examine program objectives and target audiences and determine the best match of a category. Judges will not move entries into other categories. Entrants that are not submitted appropriately will be disqualified.

Followed the prompts and provided adequate supporting material

The number one reason entries are disqualified is that the summaries do not address all criteria listed and/or that one or more of the four sections are incomplete or lacking substance. Please review your entries carefully to comply with the requirements and make sure that each section is complete.

HAVE A QUESTION?

If you are having any difficulties with using the online submission software, **please contact our Executive**

Director, Reggie Kouba at reggie@rmkproductions.com.

If you have a technical question about your entry and/or its substance (what category should I enter, etc.) email Thoth Awards Judging co-chairs, Aprill Turner at aturner@cfj.org and Sabrina Kidwai at Kidwai.sabrina@gmail.com.

Good luck and thank you for participating in the 2019 Thoth Awards Program.