



## How to Prepare Your Phoenix Awards Program Entries

### Requirements for Program Entries:

- **Prepare a two-page program summary.** The two-page summary is the single most important component of the Phoenix Award entry. Judges evaluate the program on the merit of the four criteria—**research, planning, execution and evaluation** — that you share in your two-page summary. Within these areas, the summary must include **measurable objectives, target audiences, budget and any other specific information requested in the individual category.** Your entry should begin with a brief situation analysis for your program.
  - The summary must be no longer than two standard letter pages (8 ½ x 11 inches), addressing each of the four criteria (research, planning, execution and evaluation). Summary pages must be written no smaller than 10-point typeface and have one-inch margins.
  - Visit <https://www.prsa.org/resource-library/silver-anvil-case-studies/> to view examples of past National PRSA Silver Anvil-winning case studies.
- **Your entry may include up to five relevant supporting materials** referred to in the two-page summary.
  - If you refer to a public relations planning document, this should be uploaded with your entry.
  - Other examples of supporting material to upload would be representative press clippings, reports, letters, pictures and samples of tactical materials. Examples of files accepted for supporting materials include: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, PDF, JPEG, .MP3 and .MOV. We aren't actually limiting any file extensions and technically have no limit on file size. If you expect files to be greater than 1 gigabyte, please contact the Phoenix Awards co-chairs.
  - Relevant links to videos or other materials can be listed in a Word document. Any uploaded videos are encouraged to be no more than five minutes in duration, unless a specific category requires a longer version.
  - If you want to include examples of promotional objects, creative direct mail pieces, etc., include a photograph or rendering of it.
  - Quality is more important than quantity. For example, only include e-mails or meeting notes if they contain relevant information that judges need to evaluate the planning and successful execution of the program, and there is no need to include duplicate press clippings when a representative sample and summary of coverage will suffice.
- **Judges have the right to deduct two points for each instance in which the above instructions are not followed (technical violation).**

## **A Note about Proprietary Information**

Judges will be asked to abide by the PRSA Code of Ethics and respect the confidentiality of any proprietary information provided. Please mark such information: "Proprietary information - must remain confidential."

## **Program Entry Checklist**

**Use the following questions to help you prepare a strong entry:**

### **1. RESEARCH**

- What prompted the research? Was it in response to an existing problem, or does it examine a potential problem?
- What type of research did you use — primary, secondary or both? Primary research involves original research, including focus groups, interviews and surveys. Secondary research involves searching existing resources for information or data related to a particular need, strategy or goal (e.g., online computer database searches, Web-based research, library searches, industry reports and internal market analyses).
- How was the research relevant to shaping the planning process?
- How did the research help define or redefine the audience(s) or the situation?

*Comment: You may be surprised to learn that we often see campaigns based on weak, little or no research. Strong research is important, and evidence of it contributes to a competitive entry.*

### **2. PLANNING**

- How did the plan correlate to the research findings?
- What was the plan in general terms?
- What were the specific, measurable objectives of the plan?
- Who were the target audiences?
- What was the overall strategy used?
- What was your budget?

*Comment: The two items on this list that often trip up submissions are measurable objectives, and budget. Quantifiable objectives are much stronger than "soft" ones. Also, some agencies and companies prefer not to submit budgets for proprietary reasons, but your entry will be much stronger if you do, and you may specify that budget information you supply remain confidential.*

### **3. EXECUTION**

- How was the plan executed, and what was the outcome?
- How did the activities flow in general terms?
- What were the key tactics?
- Were there any difficulties encountered? If so, how were they handled?
- Were other organizations involved?
- Were nontraditional public relations tactics used, such as advertising? (Unless you are entering this program under “Integrated Communications,” advertising costs should not exceed one-third of the budget.)

*Comment: What was the timeline, and did the campaign stick to it? How were challenges handled? You can supply as much information as you want to, but the nuts and bolts of the execution should be clearly and quickly discernible.*

### **4. EVALUATION**

- What methods of evaluation were used?
- What were your results?
- How did the results compare to the specific, measurable objectives you identified in the planning section?
- How well do the results reflect original strategy and planning?

*Comment: The strongest competitors offer measurable results that compare to measurable objectives; in other words, just naming a result is less effective than comparing how it stacked up against the measurable objectives you had set at the beginning of the campaign.*