



COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT
AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION®

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Media Planning Kit

Circle of Excellence Awards Program



June 13, 2018

Media Planning Tip Sheet for Circle of Excellence Awards Program

CASE recommends that award winners work directly with their communications offices to announce their Circle of Excellence awards to the media. We offer the following guidelines for those who may not have a dedicated communications person on staff at their institutions.

All editors and producers may not see newsworthiness in your receipt of a Circle of Excellence award, so help them. Think of your award in terms of possible angles of attraction and play up those angles to appropriately targeted editors and producers.

Ask yourself, "What, if any, news, community, features or business angles are there?" For example, a business desk editor may be interested in an angle about how a fundraising initiative appealed in some creative or unusual way to corporations for donations. A features editor may be attracted by the description of a particularly colorful or accomplished individual who marshaled an initiative or produced a publication. A community radio or television show producer may be interested in how your initiative engaged or affected your community in some other way.

Lead your news release with the angle you find and work into the lead that the initiative or publication has recently been recognized internationally. Use your award as an opportunity to attract media attention to a program, person or some other facet of your institution.

Target news desks with news angle: Look for an angle that could be of interest to the general public, not just advancement professionals. Traditionally a test for news is if something or someone changes the status quo. For example, an awarded initiative may significantly tie into a hot topic in education or politics or launch a new approach to a widespread problem.

Target community news desks with community angle: Many media outlets maintain community news desks or departments. The desks cover events and accomplishments of people in a community. Desks may assign reporters and photographers to cover events or the desks may accept copy, photo, video or audio submissions from the public. Contact your media outlets to find out who covers community news and get details about coverage criteria and submission deadlines. These sections often work far ahead of print or air time, so plan ahead; submit your material early.

Target business desks with business or professional development angle: Some media outlets cover higher education institutions and professional accomplishments through their business desks. Think of how your Circle of Excellence-awarded initiative ties into some aspect of business.

Highlight achievements through blogs, LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. Use these tools to broaden your outreach to key audiences.

Don't forget the internal communications vehicles on your campus. Use your award-winning effort to build pride in your institution and credibility for your office.

Also, some media outlets have specific sections where they run brief announcements of events or accomplishments. If people within the advancement profession are the only ones who would have an interest in your award category, submit an announcement rather than a full release to the appropriate section.

Include an after 5 p.m. contact telephone number on your news release. Please contact Pam Russell, director, editorial media, marketing and communications, at +1-202-478-5680 or at russell@case.org with any questions about this document.

Circle of Excellence Awards Fact Sheet

Purpose

The Circle of Excellence awards program recognizes outstanding work in advancement services, alumni relations, communications, fundraising and marketing at CASE member institutions worldwide. They are judged by peer professionals at schools, colleges and universities as well as by professionals from outside education.

Criteria

Winners are selected based on a number of factors, including overall quality, innovation, use of resources and the impact on the institution or its external and internal communities, such as alumni, parents, students and faculty and staff. The Circle of Excellence awards program is open to professionals working at member colleges, universities, independent schools and their affiliated nonprofits around the world.

Judging

CASE assembles expert judging panels made up of professionals in the fields of advancement services, alumni relations, communications, fundraising and marketing. One or more panels are convened for each of the nearly 100 categories, which cover areas of alumni relations programs, fundraising programs, institutional relations, new media, advancement services, institutional marketing, magazines and publications and design.

Gold, silver and bronze awards may be given in each category. Judges have the option of giving no awards, and they may also recognize exceptional entries with a grand gold award.

2018 marks the fourth year of the CASE platinum categories, a collaboration between CASE, its regional offices and its eight North American districts. CASE members enter the platinum categories through their region or district's awards program. Each region and district conducts the first round of judging and selects up to two entries per platinum category. Finalists from CASE Europe, CASE Asia-Pacific and all eight districts are then judged in an international second round to determine platinum winners.

Judging is completed in the spring with winning institutions revealed in June. An exhibition of grand gold winners is on display each July at CASE's Summit for Leaders in Advancement. Award winners are also recognized at the CASE-NAIS Independent Schools Conference in January, the CASE Europe Annual Conference in late August and at the annual CASE Asia-Pacific Conference in March.

Competition

In 2018, CASE received 3,204 entries for consideration in nearly 100 categories by 676 member higher education institutions, independent schools and nonprofits from around the world. Judges gave nearly 350 awards in the following categories: bronze, silver, gold and grand gold. Judges also selected the Robert Sibley Magazine of the Year recipient.

CASE Europe, CASE Asia-Pacific and district judges recognized 62 entries as Platinum finalists, with international panels selecting eight entries as Platinum Winners.

History

Made up of several of CASE's long-time recognition programs, the Circle of Excellence awards program, in its present configuration, was introduced in 1994. Each year, it has grown in prestige and is now one of CASE's most popular and respected awards programs.

About CASE

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education is one of the largest international associations of education institutions, serving more than 3,700 universities, colleges, schools and related organizations in more than 80 countries. CASE is the leading resource for professional development, information and standards in the fields of education fundraising, communications, marketing and alumni relations.

**Sample News Release
In-house Publications**

Contact:
Name
Title
Institution
Day/evening contact numbers
Email address

HEADLINE

**For Immediate Release
DATE**

Washington, D.C. — The Council for Advancement and Support of Education has named (insert name of institution, nonprofit) a (grand gold, gold, silver or bronze) award winner of its 2018 Circle of Excellence awards program. (Name of institution, nonprofit) was recognized for its (insert name of program, article, etc.).

A panel of experts selected the institution's entry in the (insert name of category) from among ____ entries (total listed on the [CASE website](#)).

In 2018, more than 675 higher education institutions, independent schools and nonprofits worldwide submitted more than 3,200 entries for consideration in nearly 100 categories. Judges gave nearly 350 awards: 104 bronze; 118 silver, 100 gold and 13 grand gold.

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(Insert your institution's boilerplate.)

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Sample News Release

News Desk

Note: Target news desk only if awarded initiative impacts general public.

Contact:
Name
Title
Institution
Day/evening contact numbers
Email address

HEADLINE

For Immediate Release

DATE

WASHINGTON, D.C.—An initiative at (your institution) that helped (insert a phrase that summarizes significance of the award to the general public) recently received international recognition.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education recently named (insert name of institution) a (grand gold, gold, bronze or silver) award winner of its 2018 Circle of Excellence awards program. (Institution name) was recognized for its (can explain initiative in more detail here).

“Quote” (if possible, include a quote from an institution official about how the initiative will impact the public.)

A panel of experts selected the institution’s entry in the (name of category) category from among ____ entries (total listed on the [CASE website](#)).

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(Insert your institution’s boilerplate.)

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Sample News Release

Business Desk

Note: Target business desk only if awarded initiative impacts business.

Contact:
Name
Title
Institution
Day/evening contact numbers
Email address

HEADLINE

For Immediate Release

DATE

WASHINGTON, D.C.—An initiative at (insert name of your institution), which (insert a phrase that summarizes the uniqueness of your approach), has received international recognition.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education recognized the (name initiative or publication) for its (insert more about uniqueness of approach).

(Name your initiative) won the (grand gold, gold, silver or bronze) award. A panel of experts selected the institution's entry in the (name of category) category from among ____ entries (total listed on the [CASE website](#)).

Sue Cunningham, president and CEO of CASE, says 2018 was another exceptional year for the awards program and commended this year's recipients for their bold, innovative work that epitomizes the profession's best practices.

"Our members once again have demonstrated their commitment to their organizations through their remarkable work," says Cunningham. "This year's award winners demonstrate creativity and strategy; I urge everyone to take a look - you will be inspired. Congratulations to all the Circle of Excellence award recipients. Your work is breathtaking."

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(Insert your institution's boilerplate.) **###**

Sample Community or Business Announcement

Contact:
Name
Title
Institution
Day/evening contact numbers
Email address

Note to Editor: Please run the following announcement in your (name the business or community section in which you want the announcement to appear) section.

For Immediate Release
DATE

The (give name of initiative or publication awarded) at (give name of your institution) recently received international recognition.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education awarded the Circle of Excellence Award in (name category) to (give name of your institution)

The initiative (give a summary of initiative/publication highlights).

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(Insert your institution's boilerplate.)

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