



Tips for Preparing Your Image Award Entry

Deadline: Monday, March 6, 2017

For Program Details and to Submit an Entry, visit: fpraimage.org/

The annual Image Awards competition is FPRA's top program to recognize outstanding public relations in Florida and to encourage and promote PR excellence in our state. There is both a local competition conducted by individual chapters and a statewide competition.

This is your chance to highlight your best work and win valuable recognition that boosts the positive image of your organization and helps advance your career!

Entries must be for projects in which all or part took place between **January 1, 2016** and the entry deadline, **March 6, 2017**.

For your convenience, all entries are being handled electronically. To guide you through the process and help you submit an effective entry, the Space Coast Chapter has prepared the following tips on what the judges will be looking for, how to prepare, and how to enter.

Preliminary Steps:

1. Sit down in the next few weeks and write down all the possible projects that you think may be qualified to enter. After all, you don't have to enter just one!!

Go through each project to determine how strong an entry each would be and then decide on one or more that you could enter and why. Review your objectives and then see if they match your results. That's how you'll know you have a strong Image Awards project!!

2. Go to fpraimage.org/ to review the categories and judging criteria, and see samples of past winning entries. You can find the entry form by clicking on Space Coast Chapter in the right-hand column.

As you look through this information, highlight the categories in Divisions A, B, C, or D that may apply to your particular projects, the steps you need to take for the two-page summary, and submit entries and attachments. Your highlights will eliminate instructions that do not apply to your projects.

Two-Page Summary Requirements:

3. This is the primary narrative needed to explain the project, its objectives, its action plan and its evaluation. Start thinking how you developed the project, what your objectives were and what tactics you used to get it completed. Then review the results or evaluation of how well the project worked. The final step in the summary is the budget.

4. Your summary can ONLY be two pages and should be on 8 ½ by 11 paper, one-inch margins all around, double-spaced. It should be typed in a **Microsoft Word** document, **Times New Roman** font and a **minimum of 10-point type**. The topics to be discussed should be identified in the narrative: Research, Objectives, Implementation, Evaluation and Budget.

5. Research/Situation Analysis: Why did you do this project? What did you consider before establishing goals, tactics and evaluations? What occurred that helped you identify a problem, a target audience, and eventually a strategy. Research can be formal or informal. The judges need background of the problem or issue in this section. It can't just be that your boss "said to do the project!" Setting up the situation helps make the goals and objectives fall into place.

6. Objectives: What were your goals? What were your objectives? What did you hope to accomplish by doing this project? This is the section that concentrates on quantitative, not qualitative. The judges will be looking for specifics that will hopefully come about when the project is completed, such as increasing your membership by 50%, or collecting \$200,000 from a special fundraising event, or gaining \$25,000 in FREE publicity.

7. Implementation: This is the action plan. What steps will you take to accomplish these goals? Establishing a communications plan, a budget, a special event, a newsletter, and other items are all tactics to obtain the results of the project.

8. Evaluation: Did you increase attendance? Did you earn \$200,000 in donations? Did you gain free publicity? In other words, the evaluation must spell out what you accomplished. This section is directly connected to the Objectives. In the Objectives, you spell out what you wanted to accomplish. In the Evaluation, you show you accomplished it.

9. Budget: Explain the financial outlay required for development, implementation and evaluation of this program or tool. (Reporting staff time agency/corporation/non-profit/government should be expressed in a total dollar amount for the entire number of hours. Hourly rates, salaries or total number of hours are not necessary.) Explain how these expenses related to the project's success.

Entry Requirements:

10. The entry will be an electronic submission, completed online, including the application, two-page summary, 50-word summary of the entry, background on the organization and support materials outlining the project, from media coverage to letters from clients, to media photos and articles and much more. The Division and Category of each entry should be included at the top of the pages.

Payment of entry fees can be made online through PayPal services, or by check, whether it's for one entry or many entries.

11. The two-page summary follows the initial part of the entry form.

12. An organizational summary should immediately follow the two-page summary, providing the judges with an idea about the company background and PR staff. Remember, this is another way of introducing the judges to your project, how many people worked on it and what type of projects your business or agency handles.

13. Support materials are important. Everything from media releases, newspaper clippings, photos, brochures, and other printed materials used in the project, should be included on 8 ½ x 11 format photocopied or photographed for the judges to review.

14. Any audio or video should be submitted in one of the file formats given on the entry form, or it can be submitted as a URL Link if the file is already available online.

15. Another 50-word summary of the entry must be the last page of the “Support” PDF. If you win an award, this is what the announcers will read to introduce your entry at the Local Image or Golden Image awards program. It’s your “sales pitch” of the project to show how beneficial it was to your business or client.

16. Each entrant is asked to include a JPEG format photo of the entry. The photo should be representative of the project, such as people at a special event, the front page of a newsletter, or the home page of a website. The JPEG is used in a PowerPoint presentation at the Awards program.

What the Judges Look For:

17. The judges have the right to disqualify an entry. You don't want that to happen, so make sure you follow all the rules regarding the set up of the entry, from font and type size to page layout. Using the Research, Objectives, Implementation, Evaluation and Budget headings in your two-page summary is necessary. Follow the rules for the Budget process. Margin formats are also required.

Judges are instructed to look for the headings listed above in the summary, and sometimes will even measure the margins around the summary pages to make sure they are one inch around, as instructed.

18. Judges have the discretion to move your entry to another category. That will NOT disqualify your entry. Try to stay away from the OTHER category, if possible. The association has worked to include all types of projects in the stated categories.

19. Judges for Image Awards are selected from another Florida chapter. Most likely, those judges will not be familiar with your area or business. While you don't want to waste space in the two-page summary to explain the demographics or location of your project, it often helps to say things like ... on Florida's East Coast or an underserved community ... in order to give the judges a quick reference. Some of this may be handled in the one-page Organizational Summary to help orient the judges.

20. In reviewing the two-page summary, judges can give up to 70% for the two-page summary and another 30% for the support materials. Three judges are expected to review each entry and then the 4 scores are totaled and divided by 3. A review of all scores at the end of the judging determines the necessary points to win an Image Award, Award of Distinction and Judges Award.

21. You may also want to consider NOT entering the entire project. In other words, sometimes it's better to enter a segment of a project in Division B or Division C rather than having to meet the requirements of Division A, Public Relations campaigns. If this is your first entry, that may be a good course to take.

Your evaluation points may relate more to the results of a brochure or an audio program than to the overall public relations project, which uses several pr tactics. It's often easier to demonstrate the value of one segment of the project than the entire project.

22. Get a copy of the judging form and review the questions that are asked. This will help you know just how to write your two-page summary. In their review, the judges determine if the results of the project fulfills the objectives you

initially set out to accomplish. In other words, if you wanted to increase attendance by 100%, did you achieve that or more? The form also determines the quality and effectiveness of the support materials.

General Information:

23. If you are entering the same project in two different categories, such as Division A for Public Affairs and Division C for website, you cannot use the same two-page summary for both projects. The summary for Division A must look at the objectives and the results for the entire project, while Division C must provide the objectives and results of what needed to be accomplished by the website itself. One of these entries may be disqualified if the judges determine the same summary was used.

24. The final step comes after you win an award. YOU have the joy of writing a media release about the success of your project and its recognition in the Image Awards program. You deserve the recognition, as does your business or client!

25. If you have a winning entry or more at the local level, please consider submitting one or all of those entries in the Golden Image entries. Review the comments from the judges and update any recommendations they provide in comments on the judging sheets, making sure you follow all of the rules and regulations of the Golden Image Awards program.

Questions?

Contact Space Coast Chapter Image Chair, **Linda Herridge**, linda.m.herridge@nasa.gov.

Special Thanks to the Treasure Coast Chapter for its assistance in preparing these tips.