



nccj

The National Conference
for Community and Justice

Guidelines and Tips for Writing a Quality Citation Award Nomination

The key to a well-written nomination is providing the committee with specific information illustrating how the individual or couple's achievements have made a positive impact on creating a community where all are included and respected. The number of examples is not as important as ensuring that the nominee's (or nominees') contributions match the award criteria outlined on the nomination form, and that there are measurable results. Here are some additional tips:

- **Keep it brief.** Write short sentences that are concise and give specific detail. Avoid giving work history or job descriptions, unless it directly relates to the award criteria. Remember, you may include a resume or list community activities in your supplemental materials. The goal is quality, not quantity – explain why what they did is outstanding.
- **Not everyone knows everyone.** The committee is relying on your words to give them a positive, factual and impactful picture of your nominee's accomplishments. Giving specific examples that detail behaviors will make it obvious why someone deserves to be recognized.
- **Answer the “what” and “how.”**
 - WHAT did the nominee(s) do?
 - Projects and/or activities above and beyond job descriptions
 - Any challenges or issues encountered and overcome
 - HOW did the nominee(s) do it?
 - Initiative and/or leadership
 - Teamwork
 - Creativity and/or innovation
 - Behaviors and/or attitudes
 - WHAT were the results and/or impacts?
 - What did the nominee(s) accomplish?
 - Were there specific benefits derived from those efforts?
- **Be clear and specific.** Don't assume the Citation Award Selection committee members will understand the specific nature of a project or achievement without explanations. Be specific about what the nominee(s) did and how it ties to NCCJ's overall mission.
- **Say it like it is.** Don't worry about using “fancy” speech. Feel free to use bulleted lists when appropriate. Be sure to explain the technical details in such a way that non-experts will understand, and spell out/define any unfamiliar acronyms.
- **Use concrete examples.** Anecdotes, quotations from colleagues or community members, specific numbers or statistics, etc. help strengthen your nomination.

- **Consider a collaborative, group-written nomination.** Putting together a rich nomination requires a lot of time, so don't shoulder the entire burden all yourself. Round up a colleague and/or friend (or two) and write one together. This approach may make gathering ideas and writing the nomination easier.
- **Review your nomination.** Verify the accuracy of all information in the nomination.
- **Ask questions.** If you are unclear about the award criteria, ask NCCJ for clarification.
- **Start early.** While there may only be four questions on the application, it will take you time to gather examples from individuals that know the nominee, as well as collecting letters of recommendation.
- **Use people who really know the nominee(s).** You may submit recommendation letters to accompany the application. However, don't only use high-profile community leaders – especially if they can't specifically address why the nominee should receive the award.
- **Remember this award is not just to honor those that have contributed to the Piedmont Triad. It is meant to honor those who have made contributions to build compassionate and just communities free of bias, bigotry, and racism.**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: I submitted a nomination last year, do I need to submit another one this year?

A: No. The main nominator will be contacted by NCCJ to inform them that we are planning to carry over their nomination from the previous year and allowing them the opportunity to submit any new supplemental materials.

Q: May I email the nomination packet?

A: Yes. Please send to nccj@nccitriad.org

Q: Must all of the application attachments be submitted at the same time?

A: No. As long as you let us know what else to expect to receive (how many letters of recommendations and from whom, as well as any other supplemental pieces). Please note that it is **not** NCCJ's responsibility to follow up with any recommenders in regards to their letters.

Q: What does the communication process look like?

A: NCCJ will confirm receipt of all nominations, as well as communicate with each nominator following the Board's decision (late April, early May).

Q: Who is on the Citation Award Selection Committee?

A: The committee is comprised of previous Citation Award honorees, Dinner Chairs, and board members.

Q: May I nominate a couple?

A: Yes. However, please make sure the application references both people and their accomplishments together as well as individually.

Q: What if I have questions as I complete the application?

A: Feel free to reach out to Erika Rain Wilhite at ewilhite@nccitriad.org or 336-272-0359.