

Tips for a successful submission!



Picking a Category

It's important to choose the appropriate category for your submission. A communications project or program can only be entered in a maximum of two categories. However additional submissions and fees are applicable to every category you enter.

In selecting your category, examine your communications plan. Who was the audience? What were the objectives? What were your tactics? The answers to these questions should help guide you in selecting the right category fit, after you've carefully read the category descriptions. Judges will not move entries into another category.

Submission Form

Your three-page executive summary needs to follow the R-A-C-E formula (Research, Analysis, Communications, and Evaluation) and identify what kinds of primary and secondary research you undertook and what your analysis told you about the communications program's goals and objectives. Next consider your communications plan and the tactics you used and how they tied back to the goals and objectives. Lastly, determine what measurement tool(s) you used and what your evaluation told you about meeting those goals. You will be expected to cover each of these areas, including the budget used for staff time, third party services like printing, consulting fees, etc.

Budget

You must include budgetary information in your submission as it is an integral part of the communications program. If you are not able to provide exact figures (e.g. for confidentiality reasons) we suggest that you speak in broader terms on how the budget was applied to the program. You can provide percentages or fractions. If you need help deciding what to include, take a look at previous winning submissions to see how they prepared their budgets.

Please include not only all out of pocket expenses (e.g. third party charges for printing, advertising, consulting fees, venue rental, etc) but also for your hidden costs (e.g. staff time). If you secured sponsorships or partnerships (including in-kind), identify the value of their contributions. Ideally, your budget should be identified in your three-page summary with a breakdown or detail provided in an appendix.

Judges want to know that practitioners are aware of the true costs of their programs and are not comparing budget amounts of submissions. Your submission will be judged without a budget but it will lose marks for not providing this important element. Not only does a budget demonstrate your ability to forecast and work within a set limit, it provides the judges with information on how you used the resources that were made available to you. This is where a creative and resourceful practitioner on a limited budget demonstrates 'value added' skills.

Results

The success of the program is evaluated by measuring the outcomes against the original stated objectives. Any qualitative and/or quantitative research done to evaluate your program or project should be described in your Evaluation section. The use of CPRS' Media Relations Rating Points (MRP)[®] system for the evaluation of media relations activities is encouraged. However, programs that do not use the MRP[®] system should include an evaluation in addition to total stories generated, such as story tone and/or delivery of key messages and/or evaluation against program objectives, etc.

Note: The onus is to ensure all elements of any entry meet any standards set out in the CPRS Code of Professional Standards.

All submissions and supporting documents become the property of CPRS Hamilton and will not be returned.

