



National Capital Chapter

2017 THOTH AWARDS CALL FOR ENTRIES

Public Relations Society of America
National Capital Chapter



EARLY BIRD FEES: Received by Friday, June 23, 2017

- PRSA-NCC Members: \$140 for component entries; \$160 for program entries
- Non-NCC Members: \$180 for component entries; \$200 for program entries

STANDARD FEES: Received Monday, July 24, 2017

- PRSA-NCC Members: \$180 for component entries; \$200 for program entries
- Non-NCC Members: \$220 for component entries; \$240 for program entries

WHAT ARE THE THOTH AWARDS?

Named for the Egyptian god of communication, the Thoth (pronounced “tot”) Awards recognize the most outstanding, strategic public relations programs and components developed and produced in the Greater Washington, D.C. area. Achievements are recognized in 34 categories, including 16 program categories that celebrate the best PR campaigns and 18 component categories that highlight top accomplishments in PR tactics.

The Public Relations Society of America’s National Capital Chapter (PRSA-NCC) sponsors the local annual Thoth competition to recognize and reward outstanding achievement in public relations and to encourage continued excellence in the field. Finalists in each category will be notified by email regarding the judging outcomes of the Thoth entries by senior practitioners. From these finalists, the Thoth Award and the Award of Excellence winners will be announced at the Thoth Award’s Gala that will take place Thursday, October 12, 2017 at The National Press Club.

If you are selected as a finalist, you will receive either the Thoth Award or an Award of Excellence.

The Thoth Awards presents the highest achievement in a category. Only one Thoth Award is awarded in each category. However, judges may award up to three Awards of Excellence in each category. Judges reserve the right to declare no winners in a category if minimum qualifications are not met. In a case where no Thoth Award is earned in a category but other entries meet the finalist qualifications, judges may grant one or more Awards of Excellence.

Entries in the Research, Measurement and Evaluation category will be judged by the Institute for Public Relations.



The Best of Show Award is presented to the best program in the competition at the end of the Thoth Gala.

Did you enter PRSA's National Silver Anvil or Bronze Anvil Awards program?

If so, please note that the Thoth program and components category definitions and requirements closely follow the PRSA Silver and Bronze Anvil awards. By taking a little extra time to repurpose your Anvil entry for submission in the Thoth Awards competition, you'll be maximizing your chance of winning an award and gaining recognition for your organization and your outstanding work. In other words, one campaign or project can be submitted as a program AND as a component, which increases the chances of a winning entry.

PREPARING YOUR ENTRY

Please follow all instructions carefully. Failure to comply may lead to disqualification.

New for 2017: We will use an online judging platform. No more binders! All materials will be uploaded and submitted online at <https://prsancc.secure-platform.com/a/>

THOTH CONTACTS

PRSA-NCC Executive Director: Sherri Core, info@prsa-ncc.org

2017 Thoth Awards Judging Chairs: Brigitte Johnson, APR, brigittejohnsonherron@yahoo.com; Jill Parker Landsman, jlandsman@nvar.com

2017 Thoth Gala Chairs: Susan Apgood, sapgood@newsgeneration.com or Danny Selnick, danny.selnick@businesswire.com

Thoth Sponsorships: Sabrina Kidwai, APR, CAE, Kidwai.sabrina@gmail.com

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND RULES

1. Eligibility

Quality, creativity and resourcefulness in public relations or communications programs are the hallmarks of the Thoth Awards. The competition is open regardless of budget, to any company, association, counseling firm, government agency or other organization in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area (including Baltimore and Richmond) and entry is not limited to PRSA members. All entrants are eligible to submit as many entries in as many categories as they choose. The entries must have been completely or partially produced during the period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016.

2. Entry Deadlines and Fees

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3 Payment Options

Payments are accepted by credit card through our online portal. Entrants can also pay by check. If paying by check, confirmation email of award entry or entries must be submitted with payment. Checks should be made payable to PRSA-NCC and mailed to:

Toth Awards
PRSA National Capital Chapter
200 Little Falls Street, Suite 205
Falls Church, VA 22046

4. Entry Requirements: Program (campaigns) – categories 1-16

All Program and Campaign Category entries must include:

- Promo: 50-word description (to be used for promotional purposes)
- Logo: at least one logo related to the program (to be used for promotional purposes)
- Overview statement/summary: A clear and concise two-page summary of the entry

Points are awarded by the judges for each of the four sections listed below.

- **Research:** Summarize research conducted or gathered for the project, and show how that research helped define your goals, objectives, strategies and target audiences.
- **Planning:** State the goals and measurable objectives of the program or project, along with the intended impact on the target audiences and, by extension, the organization.
- **Implementation:** Describe the strategies, techniques and tools used to meet the objectives. What key messages did you convey, and why? What, if any, challenges did you overcome? Include the project's timetable and budget. What extraordinary circumstances did you overcome?
- **Evaluation:** Detail success by matching outcomes to the objectives. Discuss the impact of the program on the target audience and organization. How did you measure results? Did you meet the timetable and budget? If not, why not?

Supporting Materials: Claims made in your summary must be substantiated by supporting materials included with your entry. Separate uploads are required for all the four main sections listed above. Incorporate supporting materials such as photographs, prints, slides, letters, scripts, storyboards, clippings and sample evaluation data. Advertising materials will be accepted if you can demonstrate that the advertising supplemented the public relations program and the advertising costs amounted to no more than one-third of the total program budget. Supporting materials can be provided as PDFs, media uploads, other file uploads, and URLs to Vimeo and YouTube. Upload videos to YouTube or another platform, and provide a link to your files.

5. Entry Requirements: Components (tactics) - categories 17-34

All Component (tactics) entries must include:

- Promo: 50-word description (to be used for promotional purposes)
- Logo: at least one logo related to the program (to be used for promotional purposes)
- Overview statement/summary: A clear and concise one-page summary of the entry

Points will be awarded by the judges for each of the four sections listed below.

- Planning/Content
- Creativity/Quality
- Technical Excellence
- Results

Supporting Materials: Claims made in your summary must be substantiated by supporting materials included with your entry. Supporting materials can be provided as PDFs, media uploads, other file uploads, and URLs to Vimeo and YouTube. Upload videos to YouTube or another platform, and provide a link to your files.

6. Submitting Your Entry

Each entry, along with the summary, logo, and all supporting materials, must be submitted electronically at <https://prsancc.secure-platform.com/a/>

- Create a new account here and complete the user profile.
- Login with your email address and password.
- Go to Entry Form found in the top navigation bar and start your entry submission.

You may save your work and return to this site as often as needed if you complete and submit all parts of the entry submission by Monday, July 24 at 5:00 p.m. (or Friday, June 23 at 5:00 p.m. for early bird discount fees). You can edit your submission at any time if it is not in your shopping "cart." If you have already placed your submission in the cart, simply click "remove" and then you can click on "edit" to access your submission. You do not need to finish one submission before starting another one. You can have as many submissions as you want "in progress."

AWARD CATEGORIES

PROGRAMS (Categories 1-16)

A two-page summary should be produced typed using no smaller than a 10-point typeface and one inch margins. **Please note:** *Criteria closely follow that used for the national PRSA Silver Anvil Awards.*

Below are questions to answer when preparing a winning entry. The number one reason entries are disqualified is that the summaries do not address all criteria listed and/or that one or more of the four sections are incomplete or lacking substance. Please review your entry carefully to comply with the requirements.

Research:

- Describe the situation on which the program is based. When addressing the actual research component, describe who specifically initiated the research.
- Was it in response to a problem or to examine a potential problem or challenge?
- Did research help to re-define the situation in any way?
- How was the research relevant to shaping the planning process?
- How did the research help define the audience(s) or the situation?
- Did you conduct an audit of the media climate?

Planning:

- How do the plans correlate to the research findings?
- Who was involved in the planning? In general terms, what was the plan? For example, what were the specific objectives of the program?
- Who were the target audiences?
- What was the overall strategy employed? What materials were used?
- What was your budget? Be specific. What other resources were used? Include staff time.

Implementation:

- How were the plans executed, and what were the results?
- In general terms, how did the activities flow?
- Were there any difficulties encountered? If so, how were they handled?
- Were other organizations involved?
- Were other non-traditional public relations tactics (i.e. advertising) employed? Unless you are entering

this program under “Integrated Communications,” advertising costs should not exceed one-third of the budget.

Evaluation:

- What method(s) of evaluation were used?
- How are results related to research findings?
- How are results related to strategic objectives?

COMPONENTS (Categories 17-34)

Components are judged on four key areas — planning/content, creativity/quality, technical excellence and results. Develop a concise summary, **no longer than a single page**, which must include:

- Goal
- Measurable objectives
- Strategy
- Audiences
- Messages
- Planning rationale
- Budget and results, including qualitative, quantitative, or both, evidence of how the stated measurable objectives were met, usage statistics, metrics or other means to quantify measurement results to support objectives.

Include an actual copy of the component in the manner it was used. For example, if the item is a printed piece, please include a sample of the printed material as a PDF; do not just provide an electronic copy. If you are entering the same piece in more than one category, you must submit separate entries for each category, along with an appropriate number of samples with each category entry submitted. **Please note:** *Criteria closely follow that of the national PRSA Bronze Anvil Awards.*

PROGRAM CATEGORIES

Did you enter the National PRSA Silver Anvil awards competition? Use your Silver Anvil entry as a starting point as the program criteria for the Thoth Awards closely follow the criteria for the national PRSA Silver Anvil Awards.

These categories provide an opportunity for full programs or campaigns to be recognized for excellence. On the online form, select the category that most closely fits the primary purpose of your entry. You may submit more than one entry per category or entries in several categories, but each entry must be submitted online separately.

1. Community Relations: Programs that seek to win the support or cooperation of, or that aim to improve relations with, people or organizations in communities in which the sponsoring organization has an interest, need or opportunity. “Community” in this category refers to a specific geographic location or locations. Campaigns designed to promote products or services should be entered in either category Marketing Consumer Products and Services or Marketing Business-to-Business Products and Services.

2. Reputation/Brand Management: Programs designed to enhance, promote or improve the reputation of an organization with its publics, either proactively or in response to an issue, event or market occurrence.

- 2A. Business
- 2B. Government
- 2C. Associations/Nonprofit Organizations

3. Events and Observances (seven or fewer days): Programs or events scheduled for one to seven consecutive days (not including planning and preparation). Events may be commemorations, observances, openings, celebrations or other special activities and must occur within a time span of one week.

4. Events and Observances (more than seven days): Programs, events, or activities that take place for longer than a one-week period, such as a yearlong anniversary (commemorations, observances, celebrations, etc.).

5. Public Service: Programs that advance public understanding of a societal issue, problem or concern. Similar programs conducted principally to enhance an organization's standing or to otherwise serve its interests directly should fall in Category 2: Reputation/Brand Management.

6. Public Affairs: Programs specifically designed to influence public policy and/or affect legislation, regulations, political activities or candidacies—at the local, state or federal government levels—so that the entity funding the program benefits.

- 6A. Business
- 6B. Government
- 6C. Associations/Nonprofit Organizations

7. Marketing Consumer Products and Services: Programs designed to introduce new or promote existing products and/or services to a consumer audience.

8. Marketing Business-to-Business Products and Services: Programs designed to introduce new or promote existing products or services to a business audience.

9. Global Communications: Any type of program (institutional, marketing, events, etc.) sponsored by a U.S. agency, a U.S. organization, or a global organization with a U.S. presence. The program demonstrates effective global communications implemented in two or more countries (e.g., one could be in the U.S. but the program must include one other country).

10. Crisis Communications: Program undertaken to deal with an event or issues that has had or may have an extraordinary impact.

11. Issues Management: Programs undertaken to deal with issues that could extraordinarily affect ongoing business or organization strategy.

12. Internal Communications: Includes programs targeted specifically to special publics directly affiliated with an organization (i.e., employees, members, affiliated dealers or franchisees).

- 12A. For organizations with fewer than 10,000 employees or members
- 12B. For organizations with 10,000 or more employees or members

13. Multicultural Public Relations: Any type of program (i.e., institutional, marketing, or community relations) specifically targeted to a cultural group.

14. Integrated Communications: A program that employs the creative and effective integration and leadership of public relations strategies and tactics with other promotional marketing communications. It should demonstrate the integration of strategies, plus the budget and measurement of return on investment of the communications to any stakeholder group including employees, consumers, the media, investors and shareholders.

14A. Consumer Products or Services

14B. Business- to-Business

14C. Government

14D. Associations/Nonprofit Organizations

15. Pro Bono Public Relations: A public relations program created on behalf of or by a non-profit (501(c)(3) organization [proof of nonprofit status required]. This program must be created, developed and executed by an individual practitioner or an agency without financial compensation to that individual or agency.

16. Independent Public Relations Practitioners and Small Independent Firms' Media Relations Programs and/or Campaigns: Any media relations campaign created and executed by public relations practitioners or counselors in the Washington, D.C. Metro area who own or operate a sole independent PR business or consulting firm or a PR firm having three or fewer employees, not counting the owner.

COMPONENT CATEGORIES

Did you enter the National PRSA Bronze Anvil awards competition? Use your Bronze Anvil entry as a starting point as the components criteria for the Thoth Awards closely follow the criteria for the national PRSA Bronze Anvil Awards.

These categories provide an opportunity for individual elements of larger programs to be recognized for excellence. Entries are judged on four key areas —planning/content, creativity/quality, technical excellence, and results. When completing the online form, designate on the official entry form the category that most closely fits the primary purpose of your entry. You may submit more than one entry per category or entries in several categories, but each entry must be submitted separately on the online platform.

Your one-page summary for each entry must include:

- Goal
- Audiences
- Measurable objectives
- Strategy
- Messages
- Planning rationale
- Budget and results, including qualitative, quantitative, or both, evidence of how the stated measurable objectives were met, usage statistics, metrics or other means to quantify measurement results to support objectives.

17. Integrated Media Relations: Tactics, programs and events driven entirely by media relations that generate news coverage across full spectrum of online, broadcast, print and social media outlets. Submit any supporting materials, such as press releases, media advisories, satellite media tour materials, pitch letters, relevant tweets or posts, requests for coverage, outgoing messages to bloggers, etc., along with evidence of the resulting media coverage.

For online coverage, provide URL for actual sites that still are live and relevant to the project. For television and radio broadcast coverage, submit/upload all materials.

For print articles, blog posts or other online coverage, upload screen captures or PDFs.

17A. Campaigns on Budget under \$25,000

17B. Campaigns on Budget of \$25,000 and up

18. Media Relations: Proactive outreach campaigns designed to target and leverage a specific type of media community on behalf of a product, service or organization. Submit any supporting materials, such as press releases, media advisories, satellite media tour materials, pitch letters, relevant tweets or posts, requests for coverage, outgoing messages to bloggers, etc., along with evidence of the resulting media coverage.

For online coverage, provide URL for actual sites that still are live and relevant to the project. For TV and Radio broadcast coverage, upload materials. For print articles, blog posts or other online coverage, provide upload screen captures or PDFs.

18A. Television Campaign

18B. Radio Campaign

18C. Print Campaign

18D. Blogger Campaign

19. Social Media: This category includes the use of: web widgets, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube campaigns, and other forms of social media, which are used as part of public relations programs. Submit any supporting materials, such as URL address of sites involved, screen captures, outgoing messages, news releases, audio or video files, etc., along with evidence of the results. Upload screen captures, audio and video materials or put in URLs which link to audio or video materials

19A. News Release/Announcement – Activities where social media was leveraged to share news or information directly with your audience

19B. Video – A successful initiative driven through videos on YouTube, Vine or Instagram that built awareness with internal or external audiences

19C. Advocacy – Share how social media spread information related to an issue or cause

19D. Events – For events primarily promoted through social media outlets

20. Podcast/Webcast: A copy of the actual podcast and/or webcast entry should be uploaded online, along with the actual site URL, or other audio or video program must be uploaded as part of the entry.

21. Blog: Web-based journals, or blogs, which communicate either a corporate, public service or industry position. Screen downloads of the blog being entered, as well as the actual site URL, must be submitted as part of the story.

22. Brochures. Pamphlets, booklets or other small publications designed to inform a target audience about an organization, product, service or issue. The format can be electronic or print.

23. Press Kits/Media Kits: News releases, photographs and other background information compiled for an organization, product or issue.

24A. Print – Submit one copy of the publication as a PDF

24B. Electronic – Upload or provide a URL

24. Newsletters and Magazines. Publications (either print or electronic) designed, written and published periodically to provide timely information to target audiences while supporting an organization’s overall objectives. Submit three consecutive issues.

25. Publications. Single-issue publications designed for a special purpose. The format can be electronic or print. Category includes annual reports that report on an organization’s annual performance, books and other publications not eligible for consideration in other categories.

26. Direct Mail/Direct Response: Communications that are designed to solicit a specific, immediate response by the target audience. This can be a single communication or a series. Submit one copy of the publication.

27. Public Service Announcements: Audio or video productions of one minute or less distributed to radio or television stations, or print ads distributed to newspapers or magazines as non-paid public service announcements. Single productions or a series addressing the same issue may be submitted as uploads or URLs. Print PSAs should be submitted as a PDF.

Please note: *Entries in the following categories must be written in their entirety or substantively by the entrant and not merely “pitched.”*

28. Speeches: Submit text of speech.

29. Feature Stories, Editorials, Op-Ed Columns: Submit text of feature or opinion article as well as documentation of publication and placement. The feature article should have been written by the practitioner and submitted and published through his/her efforts.

30. Paid Advertising: Paid advertising written as editorial matter to gain support for a product, issue, program or organization. Submit text of editorial matter and documentation of publication.

31. Research, Measurement and Evaluation: PRSA-NCC is partnering with the Institute for Public Relations to judge and present the IPR Research Award. The IPR Measurement Commission will judge the IPR Research Award based on the quality of program objectives and research design, how measurement and evaluation were integrated into program planning and execution, and the effectiveness of the methodology in program evaluation. Entries must include the research methodology and key findings.

32. Websites (external, internal or extranets): Use of a Website as part of a public relations program. Include screen grabs or copies of key pages to support your one-page summary. In addition, include the Website address for external sites.

33. Internal Video: Video programs targeted toward internal audiences such as employees, members, etc. Entrants should submit links to video programs as a reasonable representation.

34. External Video: Video programs targeted primarily at external audiences, including b-roll packages and satellite media tours. Entrants should submit links to video programs as a reasonable representation.

Thoth Checklist

To improve your chances, be sure to go through this checklist prior to submitting your entry.

1. Program took place in 2016

- Programs have an improved chance of winning if submitted near their completion. A key part of winning an award is showing that your outcomes meet your objectives. If your program was only partially completed during calendar year 2016 and a major portion of your results are not in by December 31, 2016, you should consider waiting until next year's competition to enter.

2. Entered the most appropriate category.

- In deciding which category is most appropriate, entrants should examine program objectives and target audiences and determine the best match of a category. Judges will not move entries into other categories. Entrants that are not submitted appropriately will be disqualified.

3. Provided adequate supporting material

- The number one reason entries are disqualified is that the summaries do not address all criteria listed and/or that one or more of the four sections are incomplete or lacking substance. Please review your entries carefully to comply with the requirements and make sure that each section is complete.

HAVE A QUESTION?

If you are having any difficulties with using the online submission software, please contact our Executive Director, Sherri Core, at info@prsa-ncc.org.

If you have a technical question about your entry and/or its substance (what category should I enter, etc.) email Thoth Awards Judging Chairs Brigitte Johnson, APR at brigittejohnsonherron@yahoo.com or Jill Parker Landsman at jlandsman@nvar.com, who will answer your questions or connect you with someone who can provide further guidance on preparing your Thoth entry.

Good luck, and thank you for participating in our 2017 Thoth Awards Program.