



2025 PRSA Sunshine Radiance Awards Entry Guidelines

Instructions

All entries must be submitted through the online portal, OpenWater. Please select 'Submit Now' from the awards home page to register and begin your submission. Note: Your login information is only for the OpenWater system. It is not connected to your PRSA member login.

The entry summary must be uploaded into the submission form as a PDF. You may upload supportive materials documents, photos, and audio/video files. Examples of supporting materials are research and evaluation reports, surveys, media releases, clippings, photos, videos, and samples of tactical materials. Supplemental materials may also be linked to live content on the web. It is highly recommended that you provide multiple file extension for any video to ensure it may be viewed on various platforms. All entries or text must be submitted in English or translated to ensure accurate judging. A copy of the original, as well as the translated version is preferred.

*For nominations in the Individual award categories, please email the one-page nomination along with nominator and nominee contact information to awards@prsasunshine.com by 5 p.m. Friday, May 2nd.

Only one Radiance Award is awarded in each subcategory. Other entries in each subcategory may be eligible for an Award of Commendation. Finalists will be announced in late June. From these finalists, Radiance Award and Award of Commendation winners will be announced during an awards event on July 17, 2025 in Jacksonville.

Guidelines

- At least some part of the entry must have occurred in 2024.
- Please limit your entry title to approximately 40 characters.
- Completed programs with measured evaluations against their objectives have stronger chances of winning.
- Each entry must be submitted with a category-appropriate summary and entry fee. Judges will not move entries to better suited categories.
- You may submit your entry into more than one category provided it applies to the specific criteria stated within the respective category(ies).
- Summaries are the single most important component of the Radiance Awards entry and must be one page for tactics and two pages for campaigns. Pages must have a one-inch margin on all sides with a minimum of font size 10. Judges evaluate the program on the merit of the four criteria — research/insights and analysis, planning, implementation, and evaluation — that you share in your summary. Your entry should begin with a brief situation analysis for your program. Include measurable objectives, target audiences, budget, outcomes that meet objectives, and any other specific information that shows why this submission meets the highest standards of performance.
- Note: Upload fields are limited to 25MB per upload for the summaries and logo, and 100MB for the supporting materials uploads. Certain strict firewalls will not allow the user to see the file after it is uploaded. If you have issues, email awards@prsasunshine.com.

- All entrants confirm that their programs and entries comply with the ethical standards of the profession, as embodied in the PRSA Code of Ethics. Should your entry have an aspect of “ethics performance” that is both instructive and vital to your program, please include a short commentary in the supporting materials.
- All entries must have an overview of 50 words or less. If selected as a winner, this will be the statement highlighting your campaign or tactic.
- For nominations in the Individuals award category(ies), please email the one-page nomination and the nominee’s resume along with nominator and nominee contact information to awards@prsasunshine.com by 5 p.m. Friday, May 2nd.

Entry Fees & Deadlines:

Deadline	PRSA Member	Non-PRSA Member
Early - April 11, 2025 (at 5 p.m.)	\$75	\$105
Regular – April 25, 2025 (at 5 p.m.)	\$95	\$120
Late - May 2, 2025 (at 5 p.m.)	\$115	\$140

There is no fee to enter any of the individual award categories.

Payments

All payments are processed by credit card via PayPal through the OpenWater platform. All entry fees are non-refundable. No maximum number of entries can be submitted. No entries will be accepted after 5 p.m. Friday, May 2. No exceptions. Questions may be directed to awards@prsasunshine.com but must be submitted no later than 2 p.m. EST on the day of the late submission deadline (May 2). Read guidelines for additional information. All entries must be submitted via the OpenWater platform. Do not email your entry unless it is a nomination for the individual awards.

The Radiance Awards recognize outstanding strategic public relations programs by Florida practitioners and organizations. Both the campaigns and tactics divisions must demonstrate a commitment to the four-stage model of research, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Tactics submitted as part of full campaigns must include their own RPIE to be successful.

Campaigns

- **C01: Community Relations** - Includes programs seeking to win the support or cooperation of, or that aim to improve relations with, people or organizations in communities that the organization has an interest, need or opportunity. Communities can be internal, external or both.
- **C02: Crisis Communications** - Includes programs undertaken to deal with an unplanned event that required an immediate response.
- **C03: Events and Observances**
 - **C03A: Special Events – Less Than Seven Days** - Events taking place less than seven days (not including planning and preparation). Activities may be commemorations, observances, openings, celebrations or other special activities.
 - **C03B: Special Events – Seven or More Days** - Events taking place for seven or more days (not including planning and preparation). Activities may be commemorations, observances, openings, celebrations or other special activities.
- **C04: External Communications** - Includes programs that communicate organizational goals or programs to an external audience.
- **C05: Global Communications** - Includes any type of program, such as Reputation/Brand Management, Marketing or Events and Observances, that demonstrates effective global communications implemented in more than one country.

- **C06: Integrated Communications** - Includes programs that employ creative and effective integration of public relations strategies and tactics with other promotional marketing communications such as advertising and interactive.
- **C07: Internal Communications** - Includes programs that communicate to specific publics within an organization or directly allied with an organization, for example, employees or members and affiliated franchisees. Includes programs directed to shareowners, other investors and the investment community.
- **C09: Issues Management** - Includes programs undertaken to deal with issues that could extraordinarily affect ongoing business strategy.
- **C10: Marketing**
 - **C10A: Business To Business** - Includes programs designed to introduce new products/services, or promote existing products/services to a B2B audience.
 - **C10B: Consumer Products** - Manufactured products targeting new or existing consumers.
 - **C10C: Consumer Services** - Services targeting new or existing consumers.
- **C11: Multicultural & Diversity** – For any type of program, such as institutional, marketing and community relations, specifically targeted to a cultural or minority group.
- **C12: Public Affairs** - Programs specifically designed to influence public policy and/or affect legislation, regulations, political activities or candidacies at any government levels so that the entity funding the program benefits.
- **C13: Public Service** - Programs that advance public understanding of societal issues, problems or concerns.
- **C14: Reputation/Brand Management** - Programs designed to enhance, promote or improve the reputation of an organization with its publics or key elements of its publics, either proactively or in response to an issue, event or market occurrence.
- **C15: Social Media** – For programs leveraging various social media platforms to reach a target audience. You must use at least two different social media tools in order to be considered a campaign.

Tactics

- **T01: Annual Reports** - Publications that report on an organization's annual performance. Upload a sample of one copy of the publication, along with a one-page summary.
- **T02: Blogs** - Web-based journals, or blogs, that communicated 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 entry.
- **T03: Collaterals (Brochures, Direct Mail, Posters)** – Pamphlets, booklets, or other small publications designed to inform a target audience about an organization, product, service, or issue. Submit one copy of the publication, along with the one-page summary. For digital brochures, submit the summary with a link to the digital brochure. This can include any printed promotional mail, or designed and printed materials that highlight an event or purpose.
- **T04: Executive Communications** - Positioning of an executive at any level across earned, owned, and share platforms. The one-page summary should include information about the executive and stated objectives, quantification of results as well as copies of significant placements, social media, posts or memos.
- **T05: Influencer Marketing/Promotion** - Influencer marketing focuses on an individual the audience sees as a trusted source of information, and which can be differentiated far better than through advertising or content marketing. How did you ensure maximization of your ROI with these highly targeted consumers?
- **T06: Logo** – Use of logo as part of a public relations program.
- **T07: Magazines - Digital** – Digital document for an internal or external audience. Publications designed to provide in-depth information about an organization or topic on a

regular basis. Magazines typically differentiate from newsletters by the number of pages and length of articles. Must exceed four pages. Upload samples of three consecutive issues along with the one-page summary.

- **T08: Magazines - Print** – Printed document for an internal or external audience. Publications designed to provide in-depth information about an organization or topic on a regular basis. Magazines typically differentiate from newsletters by the number of pages and length of articles. Must exceed four pages. Upload samples of three consecutive issues along with the one-page summary.
- **T09: Media Relations** - Activities driven entirely by media relations. Include news releases, advisories, pitch letters, requests for coverage, and resulting media coverage. Upload or provide YouTube/Vimeo links to any television or radio coverage.
- **T10: Mobile App** – Use of mobile applications as part of a public relations program. Include copy and any images of key pages to support your one-page summary. Additionally, include brief instructions on how to download the application.
- **T11: Newsletters - Digital** – Publications designed, written, and published periodically to provide brief and timely information to target audiences while supporting an organization’s overall objectives. Digital document for an internal or external audience. Must exceed two pages. Upload samples of three consecutive issues, along with a one-page summary.
- **T12: Newsletters - Print** – Publications designed, written, and published periodically to provide brief and timely information to target audiences while supporting an organization’s overall objectives. Printed document for an internal or external audience. Must exceed two pages. Upload samples of three consecutive issues, along with a one-page summary.
- **T13: Online Newsroom** – Website or webpages designed for media. Include screen grabs or copies of key pages to support your summary. Additionally, include the website URL.
- **T14: Podcasts** – How did you tell your story – was the purpose to teach or share? Was it intended for internal or external audiences and was there engagement on multiple platforms? Provide listener feedback.
- **T15: Research/Evaluation** – Research that provides a meaningful contribution or input to a public relations program, or an evaluation documenting the value or benefit of a public relations program or tactic. Sample of the methodology and findings of any research should be uploaded, along with a one-page summary. One-page summaries for evaluations should detail how and why this method is unique and valuable.
- **T16: Single-Issue Publications, Digital (Newsletters/Booklets/Calendars)** – Single-issue, digital publications designed for a special purpose. Books and other digital publications not eligible for consideration in other categories should be entered here. Upload a sample of one copy of the publication along with the one-page summary.
- **T17: Single-Issue Publications, Print (Newsletters/Booklets/Calendars)** – Single-issue, printed publications designed for a special purpose. Books and other print publications not eligible for consideration in other categories should be entered here. Upload a sample of one copy of the publication along with the one-page summary.
- **T18: Social Media** – How did you use Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and other platforms to share your message and engage your audience? How did it enhance your overall marketing plan? Did it lead to increased activity and viral reach? Share screenshots or links to your content and provide the results.
- **T19: Videos** – Pre-produced videos distributed online, on air or both to inform target audiences of an event, product, service, issue, or organization. Entries may consist of an edited video and one of any sound bites. The one-page summary should include usage statistics or other means of quantified measurement to support stated objectives.
- **T20: Websites - External** – Use of a website as part of an external communications or content marketing program. Include screen grabs or copies of key pages to support your one-page summary. Additionally, include the website URL.

- **T21: Websites - Internal/Intranets** – Use of a website as part of an internal communications or content marketing program. Include screen grabs or copies of key pages to support your one-page summary.
- **T22: Writing**
 - **T22A: Feature Story** – More than 500 words. Feature articles, hard news, or columns that have been written by a practitioner, and submitted and published through his/her efforts. Submit text of writing, as well as documentation of publication.
 - **T22B: News Release** – 500 words or less (must include proof of production or publication)
 - **T22C: Op/Ed** – 500 words or less (must include proof of production or publication)
 - **T22D: Speeches** – Include the complete script. Published video of speech is preferred but not required.
- **T23: Local Choice**
 - **T23A: Media Kits** – News releases, photographs and other background information compiled for an organization, products.

Individual Awards*

Best of Sunshine Award

The recipient of this award is selected by the judges among the year's Radiance Award winners from the campaigns categories. The Best of Sunshine Award represents the pinnacle of excellence in public relations programming in Florida.

Geri Evans Award for Distinguished Service

This award is named in honor of Geri Evans, APR, Fellow PRSA, one of the public relations profession's most respected practitioners. Her dedication and service to the Sunshine District and our profession as a whole have been instrumental in the advancement of the Society. This award is intended to honor a PRSA Sunshine District member who has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the District and has expressed significant contributions to advancing PRSA and its members.

The award was launched in 2017 with Geri accepting the inaugural award. Charles "Chuck" Suits, APR, Fellow PRSA, received the honor in 2018; Denyse Mesnik, APR, received the honor in 2019; J.W. Arnold, APR, Fellow PRSA received the honor in 2021; Jamie Floer, APR, CPRC, Fellow PRSA received the honor in 2022; Connie Crowther received the honor in 2023; and Angela Walters Eveillard, MBA, APR received the honor in 2024.

Trailblazer Professional of the Year Award

This award honors a PRSA Sunshine District member who, in the previous year, has demonstrated outstanding achievement in the practice and implementation of public relations principles. Recipients of this prestigious award also advocate for the profession and exemplify the Society's values. Self-nominations will be accepted. No campaigning please. If a chapter feels strongly about a nominee, please compile one nomination and co-sign. Please confirm in advance that your nominee is a member of both PRSA National and the Sunshine District.

**There is no fee to enter any of the individual award categories. The Best of Sunshine Award is selected from among the year's Radiance Award winners and does not require a nomination. For nominations in the Individual award categories of Distinguished Service and Trailblazer, please email the one-page nomination and the nominee's resume along with nominator and nominee contact information to awards@prsasunshine.com.*

There is no fee to enter any of the individual award categories.

Judging Criteria

Each entry is judged on a 100-point scale and evaluated based on the summary and supporting materials. The following criteria outline the pertinent information that should be referenced in your campaigns or tactics entries. While your tactics summary is generally shorter and less reliant on research and evaluation, you still must conduct both to ensure your tactic is successful and your entry shines.

For the Judging Criteria for Campaigns, the following scale is used:

Research: 20 points

Research is the systematic gathering of information to describe and understand a situation, check assumptions about publics and perceptions, and check the public relations consequences. Research is the foundation for effective strategic public relations planning.

Research can be identified as:

- primary or secondary
- formal or informal
- qualitative or quantitative

Primary Research: Investigation or data collected you do yourself or you hire someone to do for you. Secondary Research: Using research findings of others or collecting information secondhand. Research methodologies include:

- Focus Groups
- Surveys (phone, mail, online, email)
- Interviews (phone, intercept, in-depth)
- Tracking (calls, purchases, hits, actions, placements, etc.)
- Media analysis
- Content analysis
- Observations, visits, field reports
- Complaint reviews

Planning: 30 points

Successful public relations programs require proactive, strategic planning. This planning includes measurable objectives, is grounded in research, and is evaluated for return on investment.

The Four-Step-Process...public relations planning addresses these four topics:

1. Research
2. Planning
3. Implementation
4. Evaluation

Definitions:

- Audience identification: Differentiates among publics, markets, audiences, and stakeholders.
- Goals: Statement that spells out the overall outcomes of a program...often related to one aspect of the mission or purpose. Example: To increase public use of mass transit.
- Objectives: The measurable result that must be achieved with each public to reach the program goal. Objectives should be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-specific) and may establish milestones toward a goal. Example: To increase ridership of public transportation in the Los Angeles metropolitan area by 8 percent

among workers earning less than \$25,000 per year within the first six months of the communication program.

- Strategies: The overall concept, approach or general plan for a program designed to achieve objectives. Example: Use communication vehicles that can be understood by a public with limited education to demonstrate that riding public transportation to work is an attractive alternative to driving.

Implementation: 30 points

Implementation: Executing the plan and communicating.

Campaigns: The exact activities and methods used at the operational level to implement a strategy and reach an objective. Example: Conduct a “Why I’d rather be riding” essay contest. Detail the specific ways you used your resources to carry out your strategy and work toward objectives.

Evaluation: 20 points

Evaluation: Measure effectiveness of the program against objectives.

Evaluation...

1. verifies that public relations efforts were effective (because they met objectives)
2. demonstrates return on public relations investment
3. provides information for refining future public relations strategies

Examples of measurement methods include:

- Employee surveys
- Phone interviews
- Surveys (phone, online, mail, intercept)
- Content analysis
- Media analysis
- Tracking (calls, purchases, etc.)
- Focus groups

For the Judging Criteria for Tactics, the following scale is used:

Research: 14 points

Research is the systematic gathering of information to describe and understand a situation, check assumptions about publics and perceptions, and check the public relations consequences. Research is the foundation for effective strategic public relations planning.

Research can be identified as:

- primary or secondary
- formal or informal
- qualitative or quantitative

Primary Research: Investigation or data collected you do yourself or you hire someone to do for you. Secondary Research: Using research findings of others or collecting information secondhand. Research methodologies include:

- Focus Groups
- Surveys (phone, mail, online, email)
- Interviews (phone, intercept, in-depth)
- Tracking (calls, purchases, hits, actions, placements, etc.)
- Media analysis
- Content analysis

- Observations, visits, field reports
- Complaint reviews

A budget may include “staff time, volunteer energy and out-of-pocket costs (expenses for transportation, images, materials and fabrication).”

Planning: 30 points

Successful public relations tactics require strategic planning. This planning includes measurable objectives grounded in research and evaluated for return on investment.

Definitions:

- Audience identification: Differentiates among publics, markets, audiences and stakeholders
- Goals: Statement that spells out the overall outcomes of a program...often related to one aspect of the mission or purpose. Example: To increase public use of mass transit.
- Objectives: The measurable result that must be achieved with each public to reach the program goal. Objectives should be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-specific) and may establish milestones toward a goal. Example: To increase ridership of public transportation in the Los Angeles metropolitan area by 8 percent among workers earning less than \$25,000 per year within the first six months of the communication program.
- Strategies: The overall concept, approach or general plan for a program designed to achieve objectives. Example: Use communication vehicles that can be understood by a public with limited education to demonstrate that riding public transportation to work is an attractive alternative to driving.

Implementation: 30 points

Implementation: Executing the plan and communicating

Tactics: The exact activities and methods used at the operational level to implement a strategy and reach an objective. Example: Conduct a “Why I’d rather be riding” essay contest. Tactics are specific ways you will use your resources to carry out your strategy and work toward objectives.

A budget may include staff time, volunteer energy and out-of-pocket costs (expenses for transportation, images, materials, and fabrication).

Creativity: 15 points

Tactics are afforded points for how creative the piece was developed and used.

Technical Quality is demonstrated in the developer’s artistic ability to design or write a tactic that is visually appealing. Content is based on how well the tactic’s writing and art targets its specified audience. Writing ensures the copy or text is properly written, understandable and consistent with writing standards.

Creative Appeal addresses the tactic’s overall uniqueness in its category. Did the entry go above expectations and was extraordinarily creative in its presentation and use?

Evaluation: 11 points

Evaluation: Measure effectiveness of the program against objectives.

Evaluation...

1. verifies that public relations efforts were effective (because they met objectives)
2. demonstrates return on public relations investment
3. provides information for refining future public relations strategies

Examples of measurement methods include:

- Employee surveys
- Phone interviews
- Surveys (phone, online, mail, intercept)
- Content analysis
- Media analysis
- Tracking (calls, purchases, etc.)
- Focus groups
- Digital/website analytics (website click-throughs, social engagement, time spent on site, etc.)

Judges are sourced annually from a chapter outside the Sunshine District. Judges receive instructions that detail the same scoring rubric as detailed above. **Please remember that only complete entries that demonstrate a commitment to the four-stage model of research, planning, implementation, and evaluation (RPIE) will receive awards.** Best of luck to everyone who enters!