

2018 Small Business Person of the Year Awards

SBA will make Small Business Person of the Year awards at the State level (from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam) and the National level to small business owners who represent the nation's strong entrepreneurial spirit and rich diversity. In those states served by more than one SBA district office, each district office will select a district level winner and the State winner will be selected at the regional level. The National Small Business Person of the Year is selected from the State level winners.

Who is eligible to be nominated for this award?

Nominees for this award must meet the following eligibility requirements. Consult your nearest SBA district office if you have questions.

1. Any legal resident of the United States or its Territories who owns and operates or who bears principal responsibility for operating a small business for a minimum of three years may be nominated. Partners who jointly own and operate a small business may be nominated as a "team," so long as the number of individuals in the team nomination does not exceed four (4).
2. Individuals who have received one type of SBA assistance such as, but not limited to an SBA loan, SCORE counseling, Small Business Development Center (SBDC) assistance, and Women's Business Center (WBC) assistance, government contracting assistance, disaster assistance, Emerging Leaders Initiative, or Boots to Business training.

Who is NOT eligible to be nominated for this award?

1. Individuals who have received the Small Business Person Award at the State level within the past three years
2. Elected officials
3. Individuals or teams who own or operate a business defined as "other than small" (ie large businesses) for its primary industry under the applicable SBA size standards
4. Individuals or firms who are currently suspended or debarred by the Federal government

Who may submit nominations for this award?

1. Individuals or organizations dedicated to the support of the small business community in the United States such as trade and professional associations and business organizations, may submit nominations for the Small Business Person of the Year award.
2. Individuals may self-nominate.

Where are the nominations to be sent?

All nominations must be hand delivered or mailed to the U.S. Small Business Administration district office in the state or territory where the nominee is located. Electronic submissions of SBA Awards Forms are not accepted.

Nominations may be submitted to the Mississippi Small Business Administration Branch Office:

**U.S. Small Business Administration
Gulfport Branch Office
Attn: Bridget Johnson Fells
2510 14th Street Suite 103
Gulfport, MS 39501
(228) 863-4449 ext. 225**

What is the deadline for nominations?

All nominations for Small Business Person of the Year submitted to the U.S. Small Business Administration district office in the state or territory where the nominee is located must be postmarked or hand delivered to the appropriate SBA Office **no later than 4:00pm CST, January 9, 2018.**

Nomination packages for the Small Business Person of the Year may be mailed or hand delivered to SBA Mississippi-Gulfport Branch Office 2510 14th Street, Suite 103, Gulfport, MS 39501 **no later than 4:00pm, Tuesday, January 9, 2018.**

What information must the nomination package contain?

Nominations must contain the information required below. Incomplete nomination packages will not be considered. All evaluation/selection criteria must be specifically addressed.

1. A completed background form (SBA Form 3300, Award Nominee Background Form) which is available at www.sba.gov/nsbw . For “team” nominations, a background form is required for each team member.
2. A completed nomination form (SBA Form 3301, Small Business Person of the Year) which is available at www.sba.gov/nsbw.
3. An original 8” x 10” or 5” x 7” photo of the nominee or a digital photo – at least 300 dpi is required; photocopies are not acceptable. For “team” nominations, a photo of each nominee or group photo is acceptable.
4. Additional supporting documentation deemed significant by the nominator, including news clips, letters of recommendation, nomination letter (if not self-nominated) and other evidence of the appropriateness of the nomination (supporting documentation must not exceed 10 pages). Videos will not be considered.
5. Nominee’s full name, title, business addresses, telephone, fax numbers, e-mail address and the award for which the nomination is being made.

6. The nominator's name, title, place of business, business address, telephone number and e-mail.
7. A one-paragraph description of the nominee's business and/or professional occupation.
8. A brief biography of the nominee, not exceeding one page.
9. A business profile, not exceeding one page.
10. Four to five additional photos from the nominee's company/organization, employees at work.

What are the evaluation/selection criteria for the Small Business Person of the Year award?

In evaluating the nomination packages, the judges will look at the following criteria:

1. Staying power — a substantiated history as an established business; including but not limited to expansion, exporting, addition of territories, or growth in square footage occupied
2. Growth in number of employees — Increases over the three years must be in excess of growth in Gross Domestic Product
3. Increase in sales, net profit, and net worth for calendar years 2014, 2015 and 2016
4. Innovativeness of product or service offered — Explanation of how the product or service fits a niche not being adequately addressed by the competition
5. Response to adversity — examples of problems faced in the nominee's business and the methods used to solve them
6. Contributions to community-oriented projects — evidence of the use of his/her personal time and resources

What are the selection procedures for this award?

Small Business Persons of the Year Award winners will be selected at the State and National levels.

1. In those states served by a single SBA district office, the district office will select the State winner.
2. In those states served by more than one SBA district office, each district office will select a district level winner and the State winner will be selected at the regional level. The regional office will select the State winner.
3. SBA districts that serve more than one state will send their top nominee for each state for a runoff decided by the SBA regional office. For example, if the SBA Richmond District Office and SBA Washington DC Metropolitan Area Office both select winners from Virginia, those awardees will compete to be the Virginia State Winner. The regional office will select the State winner.
4. The National Small Business Person of the Year will be selected by the SBA Administrator based on, but not restricted to, the recommendations of the panel of judges of federal employees.