



2016 Small Business Week Application & Guidelines

National Small Business Week has been recognizing the special impact made by outstanding entrepreneurs and small business owners since 1963. During this week, the U.S. Small Business Administration honors small business owners and entrepreneurs for their outstanding achievements through various awards.

SBA is currently seeking nominations from the public for exceptional entrepreneurs in the following categories:

- Small Business Person of the Year
- Small Business Exporter of the Year
- 8(a) Graduate of the Year
- SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year
- Family-Owned Business of the Year
- Entrepreneurial Success Award
- Financial Services Champion of the Year
- Home-Based Business Champion of the Year
- Minority Small Business Champion of the Year
- Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year
- Women in Business Champion of the Year

ELIGIBILITY AND EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AWARDS

Who is eligible to be nominated for Small Business Week awards?

To be nominated and receive one of these awards, the small business nominee must fit within the category of the award:

Small Business Person of the Year:

Any individual who owns and operates or who bears principal responsibility for operating a small business 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. A nominee for Small Business Person of the Year must own or operate a business defined as "small" for its primary industry under the applicable SBA size standards. Individuals who have received the Small Business Person Award at the State level within the past five years are not eligible. Nominees must also be residents of the United States or its territories and will be subject to background checks. Small businesses owned and operated by nominees must comply with federal civil rights laws. While receipt of SBA assistance is not required, it is preferred. Consult the SBA district office if you have questions.

Nominations must include the following form:

https://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov/sites/all/documents/SBA_3301.pdf



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

1. Staying power — a substantiated history as an established business; including:
 - Number of years in business (minimum of 3 years).
 - Sustained growth included but not limited to expansion, addition of territories, growth in square footage occupied or web traffic.
2. Growth in number of employees — a benchmark to judge the impact of the business on the job market.
 - Sustained over a minimum of three years.
 - Increase over the three years must be in excesses of growth in Gross National Product.
3. Increase in sales, net profit and net worth for calendar years 2012, 2013 and 2014.
4. Innovativeness of product or service offered — an illustration of the creativity and imagination of the nominee.
 - Specific description of uniqueness of product or service.
 - Explanation of how 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, including:
 - Specific description of financial, physical, legal or other crisis.
 - Substantiation of the threat to the continuity of the business.
 - Defined actions taken by the nominee to resolve the crisis.
6. Contributions to community-oriented projects — evidence of the use of his/her personal time and resources, including:
 - Listing of specific contributions of money, time, or resources to charitable causes.
 - Membership in councils, boards and clubs providing support and services to the community.
7. If applicable, a description of the products exported and markets served.

Small Business Exporter of the Year:

Any individual who owns and operates or who bears principal responsibility for operating a small business that is engaged in exporting 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. A nominee for Small Business Exporter of the Year must own or operate a business defined as "small" for its primary industry under the applicable SBA size standards. Individuals who have received the Small Business Person Award or Exporter Award at the State level within the past five years are not eligible. Elected officials are not eligible. Nominees must also be residents of the United States or its territories. Nominees will be subject to background checks. Small businesses owned and operated by nominees must comply with federal civil rights laws. While receipt of SBA assistance is not required, it is preferred. Consult your nearest SBA district office if you have questions.



Nominations must include the following form:

https://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov/sites/all/documents/SBA_3302.pdf

1. Increased sales, profits and/or growth of employment because of exporting.
2. Creative overseas marketing strategies.
3. Effective solutions to export-related problems.
4. Demonstrated encouragement of other small businesses to export.
5. Volunteer assistance to other small businesses entering the export market.
6. Cooperation with other businesses in the creation of export trading companies and/or introduction of unique trading relationships, products or services.

8(a) Graduate of the Year:

Individuals formerly certified in the 8(a) Business Development Program that graduated at least one year as of April 1, 2015. The firm does not have to currently be a small business. The firm must have demonstrated history of successful performance on 8(a) contracts while in the 8(a) Business development Program.

Who is eligible for the National 8(a) Graduate of the Year Award?

- 1) Nominees must be residents of the United States or its territories and will be subject to background checks.
- 2) Firm must have a demonstrated history of successful performance on 8(a) contracts while in the 8(a) Business Development Program.
- 3) Companies and/or their principal owner(s) must not appear on the suspended or debarred list as published at www.sam.gov.
- 4) Firm must still be primarily owned, managed, and controlled by the person(s) whom 8(a) eligibility was based at the time of participation.
- 5) The firm must show reduced reliance on 8(a) contracts; the most recent fiscal year-end financial statement must reflect non 8(a) sales of 50% or more of total sales.
- 6) Businesses owned and operated by nominees must comply with federal civil rights laws.
- 7) If nominee or nominee's firm has an SBA loan, payment record must be satisfactory and the loan must be current and in good standing.
- 8) Firm must be in satisfactory financial condition (i.e. financial capability: sufficient capitalization, financial performance, bonding capacity, manageable debts). Applicants are ineligible if it is found that the firm, or any of its principals, has failed to pay Federal financial obligations.
- 9) For government contracts, the nominee must have performed satisfactorily on all contracts, and have had no terminations for default.
- 10) Before SBA publicly announces any awards, nominee must be cleared by the SBA's Office of Inspector General and EEO/CR offices.
- 11) The nominee must be a formerly certified 8(a) Business Development Program participant that graduated from the 8(a) Program for at least one year as of April 1, 2015.
- 12) The firm does not have to be a small business.

Nominations must include the following form:

https://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov/sites/all/documents/SBA_3309.pdf



1. Management –Overall qualifications/expertise, familiarity with Government Regulations, Technical Capabilities, Customer Support and response to adversities, obstacles, etc., to achieve present level of success.
2. Exceptional Results/Special Achievements-Deliverables in line with or exceeds contract requirements, Exceptional past performance record and description of exceptional results and/or delivery performance that makes this company a valued product/service provider, awards and recognition.
3. Cost Performance-Financial stability and Credit worthiness, value engineering change proposals (performance adjustments), increase in sales, net profit and net worth, growth in full-time employees.
4. Innovation-specific description of innovation or unique/superior product or service, explanation of how the product or service fills a niche or technical need not being adequately addressed by the competition.
5. Economic engagement of the disadvantaged community-use of minority firms as suppliers, subcontractors, etc., and noted recruitment and employment of socially disadvantaged personnel. Participation in community projects and charitable affairs.

SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year:

To be considered a young entrepreneur, the individual must serve as a majority owner and operate or bear principal responsibility for operating a small business with a three-year track record, and who will not have reached the age of 30 by June 1, 2016.

1. Evidence of success as measured by sales and profits.
2. Increased employment opportunities created by the nominee's business.
3. Development and/or utilization of innovative or creative business methods.
4. Demonstrated entrepreneurial potential necessary for long-term business success and economic growth.

Family-Owned Business of the Year:

This award honors a family-owned and operated business which has been passed on from one generation to another. The owner must also serve as a majority owner and operator or bear principal responsibility for operating a small business with at least a 15-year track record.

1. Evidence of success as measured by sales and profits.
2. Increased employment opportunities for family members and non-family members for the nominee's business.
3. Demonstrated potential necessary for long-term business success and economic growth.
4. Voluntary efforts to strengthen family-owned businesses within the community.



Entrepreneurial Success Award:

An individual who owns and operates a business initially defined as “small” under the applicable SBA size standards, and subsequently developed into a large business and must have received SBA assistance to help the business grow.

1. Staying Power-substantiated history as an established business to include a minimum of three years, sustained expansion of either territories or growth in square footage occupied, and steady growth in net worth evidenced by total assets less total liabilities on calendar year end annual balance sheets for 2012, 2013 and 2014.
2. Growth in number of employees-a benchmark to judge the impact of the business on the job market sustained over a minimum of three years.
3. Increase in sales and/or unit volume: an indication of continued growth over the last three years. Consistent growth in net income as evidenced by fiscal year annual profit and loss statements for calendar years 2012, 2013 and 2014.
4. Current and past financial performance-financial reports substantiate an improved financial position of the business reflecting an upward growth and consistent increase in net worth and/or partners’ return.
5. SBA Assistance-documentation of the type(s) and amount(s) of SBA assistance received by the business and the year(s) in which it was received.

Financial Services Champion of the Year:

Individuals who assist small businesses through advocacy efforts to increase the usefulness and availability of accounting or financial services for small businesses may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be small business owners.

1. Outside of regular business duties, the amount and quality of assistance given small businesses to obtain financing.
2. Advocacy for changes in the financial services industry to assist small companies.
3. Encouragement of the flow of investment capital to small ventures.
4. Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small firms.
5. Other significant contributions through the advocacy efforts of the financial services or accounting industries to advance small business interests.

Home-Based Business Champion of the Year:

Individuals who have experienced the rewards and difficulties of owning a home-based business and have volunteered to improve the climate for these businesses may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be current small business owners.

1. Volunteer time and energy to improve the conditions for home-based businesses.
2. Engage in entrepreneurial training, policy development efforts, or financial or business planning specifically tailored for home-based businesses.
3. Demonstrated interest in home-based businesses by an owner or former owner.
4. Measurable accomplishments in advancing home-based businesses, such as adoption of public policy or expansion of a program.



Minority Small Business Champion of the Year:

Individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to support minority entrepreneurship may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be small business owners.

1. Volunteer efforts beyond business/professional responsibilities to advance minority small business interests within the community, state and/or nation.
2. Demonstrated efforts to improve conditions in the minority small business community as a whole, not solely for individual personal advancement.
3. Voluntary provision of professional services to the minority small business community in a legal, legislative, managerial or financial capacity.
4. Demonstrated accomplishments in advising minority small business groups of opportunities within the overall business community.
5. Other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's merit as an effective advocate for minority small business interests.

Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year:

Individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to advancing small business opportunities for veterans of the U.S. armed forces may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be veterans.

1. Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small businesses.
2. Evidence of increased business opportunities for veterans as a result of the nominee's actions.
3. Advisory activities to improve awareness of small business opportunities among veterans' groups.
4. Advocacy of special consideration for veteran-owned small businesses in government policymaking.
5. Demonstrated success in obtaining support within the community for the establishment of veteran-owned small businesses.
6. Other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's effective advocacy of veteran-owned small businesses.

Women in Business Champion of the Year:

Individuals who have fulfilled a commitment to the advancement of women's business ownership may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be small business owners.

1. Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small businesses.
2. Efforts to increase business and financial opportunities for women.
3. Legal, financial or managerial assistance provided to enhance women's business ownership.
4. Voluntary efforts to strengthen the role of women business owners within the community.
5. Advocacy of the women-owned business community as a whole, not solely for individual personal advancement.
6. Other accomplishments demonstrating effectiveness in improving the environment for the creation and expansion of businesses owned and operated by women.



PLEASE REVIEW THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND SUBMIT REQUESTED MATERIALS IN YOUR NOMINATION PACKET.

STEP 1: WHO IS THE NOMINATOR?:

A. NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Full Name: _____
Title: _____
Company Name: _____
Work Address: _____

Home Address: _____

Phone: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____
Website: _____
SBA Assistance (if any): _____

B. NOMINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Full Name: _____
Title: _____
Company Name: _____
Work Address: _____

Phone: _____
Email: _____

STEP 2: SELECT CATEGORY & REVIEW CRITERIA:

C. SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AWARD (Check ONLY one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Small Business Person of the Year (National)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Small Business Exporter of the Year (National)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ 8(a) Graduate of the Year (National)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year (Regional)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Family-Owned Business of the Year (Regional)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Entrepreneurial Success Award (Regional)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Financial Services Champion of the Year (Regional)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Home-Based Business Champion of the Year (Regional)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Minority Small Business Champion of the Year (Regional)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year (Regional)
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Women in Business Champion of the Year (Regional)



STEP3: GET NOMINEE TO FILL OUT THIS FORM:

D. AWARD NOMINATION FORM-BACKGROUND (SBA Form 3300)

Link: https://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov/sites/all/documents/SBA_3300.pdf

STEP 4: INFORMATION NEEDED FOR NOMINATION PACKET:

E. NOMINATION LETTER

Note: Not to exceed four pages. Can be included here or attached separately

Nomination Letter to include a concise statement of the qualities and performance that merit the award.

Description of business (services and/or products):

Reason for nomination? If jobs were created, loans obtained and/or sales increased, please provide quantified numbers if possible.

(Review criteria and address each item if possible.)

F. BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THE NOMINEE

Note: Not to exceed one page. (Team nominations require biography for each individual.)

G. BUSINESS PROFILE

Note: Not to exceed one page.

Please include answers to these questions:

When did the business start (month/year)?

Any challenges that the business/business owner overcame?

What are the future plans for the business?



H. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Note: Although financials are not required, please complete the summary below in the packet.

Financial Summary:

Year	2012	2013	2014
Number of Employees:			
Total Sales:			
Net Profit (Before Tax):			
Total Assets:			
Total Liabilities:			
Net Worth:			

Based on the financial chart provided above, please explain in more detail the businesses' year to year changes in financial health (e.g. sales, net profit, net worth) and number of employees.

I. PHOTO OF THE NOMINEE

Note: Original 8"x10" or 5"x7" photo or digital photo at least 300 dpi. Photocopies are not acceptable.

J. PHOTOS OF THE NOMINEE'S COMPANY AND EMPLOYEES AT WORK

Note: Original 8"x10" or 5"x7" photos or digital photos at least 300 dpi. Photocopies are not acceptable.

K. OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Note: Supporting documentation must not exceed 10 pages. Videos will not be considered.

Any other supporting documentation deemed significant by the nominator, including news clips, letters of recommendation and other evidence of the appropriateness of the nomination.

Has your business been published in any publications? If yes, what publication and when?

Do you have a copy? If available, please provide a copy via email (if possible).



N. SELECTION PROCEDURES FOR AWARDS

Small Business Persons of the Year Award winners will be selected at the district, state and national levels. 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. Additional awards may also be given at the district level. Winners at each level will be selected by a panel of judges that may be comprised of both SBA employees and non-Federal employees. Winners at each level will be considered for awards at the next highest level. The National Small Business Person of the Year will be selected by the SBA Administrator based on the recommendations of the Agency's National Small Business Week panel of judges. The winner will be announced during National Small Business Week. Non-federal employees serving as judges must sign a conflict of interest/non-disclosure certification.

KEY DEADLINES

- Nomination packets to be turned in by January 11, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. (CT).

WHERE TO SEND NOMINATIONS

Nominations must be submitted to the U.S. Small Business Administration district office in the state or territory where the nominee is located – for Lower Rio Grande Valley District Office please send to:

U. S. Small Business Administration
Lower Rio Grande Valley District Office
Attn: Veronica Z. Ortega
2422 E. Tyler Avenue, Suite E.
Harlingen, TX 78550
Phone: 956-427-8533 ext. 233
Email: veronica.ortega@sba.gov

The Agency reserves the right, in its sole reasonable discretion, to remove a nominee from the selection process.

You can use the online portal to submit your nomination for the following awards:

- Small Business Person of the Year
- Small Business Exporter of the Year
- 8(a) Graduate of the Year Award

To use the Small Business Week Nomination Portal, you will need to register for an account.
<https://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov/user>