



2018 Small Business Award Guidelines

AWARD CATEGORIES

National Awards

Small Business Person of the Year: For developing and growing an outstanding business, creating innovative product(s), increases jobs, overcoming adversity, and making community contributions. Nominees will compete statewide to be the Montana Small Business Person of the Year and the winner will go on to national competition.

Small Business Exporter of the Year: For a business that significantly increased export sales, profits and jobs encouraged other firms to export and engaged in innovative methods of creating markets. Nominees will compete statewide to be the Montana Small Business Exporter of the Year and the winner will go on to national competition.

8(a) Graduate of the Year Award: This award goes to a formerly certified 8(a) Business Development Program participant that has graduated from the 8(a) Program for at least one year as of April 1, 2017. The firm does not have to currently be a small business. For specific eligibility requirements, please contact Kelly Dixon at kelly.dixon@sba.gov. Nominees will compete statewide to be the Montana 8(a) Graduate of the Year and the winner will go on to national competition.

Montana Awards **The winners of the state awards do not go on to national competition*

Woman-Owned Small Business: A business that is at least 51% women-owned with a successful track record and a commitment to strengthen woman-owned businesses within the community. Montana-state award only.

Veteran-Owned Small Business: A business that is at least 51% veteran-owned with a successful track record and a commitment to strengthen veteran-owned businesses within the community. Montana-state award only.

Millennial Entrepreneur: A business that is at least 51% owned by an individual(s) that is under the age of 35, has a successful track record and fulfills a commitment to strengthen businesses within the community. Montana-state award only.

Small Business Champion: Those who promote small business, including volunteering time and services to small business interests and groups, advocating the cause of small business in the legislative process. Champions need not be small business owners. Montana-state award only.

Nomination Package Requirements

A complete nomination package needs the following:

1. SBA Form 3300 Award Nominee Background Form (for ALL categories)
2. SBA Form 3301 (only for Small Business Person)
3. SBA Form 3302 (only for Small Business Exporter)
4. SBA Form 3309 (only for 8(a) Graduate of the Year)
5. Montana Award Form (for all other categories)

Nominations are due **no later than January 9th**; you **MUST** mail or hand-deliver them to the following address, **email nominations cannot be accepted.**

**U.S. Small Business Administration
Montana District Office
10 West 15th Street, Suite 1100
Helena, MT 59626**

All information submitted is confidential and is only viewed by select SBA personnel and the judging panel. If you have any questions regarding the judging process please call Sharon at 406.441.1088 or via e-mail at Sharon.franjevic@sba.gov.

NOMINATION CRITERIA

*Any individual, or team of individuals, who own and operate a small business that is defined as "small" under the applicable SBA size standards and has been in business more than **three years** may be nominated. 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.***

National Awards Criteria

Small Business Person(s) Evaluation/Selection Criteria:

- Staying Power - a substantiated history as an established business
- Growth in Number of Employees - a benchmark to judge the impact of the business on the job market
- Increase in Sales, Net Profit, and Net Worth for the three prior calendar years - an indication of continued growth
- Response to Adversity - examples of problems faced in the nominee's business and the methods used to solve them
- Evidence of Contributions by Nominee to Aid Community-Oriented Projects - through the use of his/her personal time and other resources

Exporter Evaluation/Selection Criteria:

- Increased sales, profits and/or growth of employment because of exporting
- Creative overseas marketing strategies, exporting history, and current export markets
- Effective solutions to export-related problems
- Demonstrated encouragement of other small businesses to export
- Volunteer assistance to other small businesses entering the export market
- Effective use of Federal and/or State government trade promotion of financing programs

8(a) Graduate of the Year Evaluation/Selection Criteria:

1) Management:

- Overall Qualifications/Expertise of Management
- Customer Interface (Customer Engagement)
- Response to adversities, obstacles, etc. to achieve the present level of success

2) Exceptional Results/Special Achievements:

- Deliverables in line with or exceeding 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.
- Noted recruitment and employment of socially disadvantaged personnel
- Participation in community projects and charitable affairs

Montana Awards Criteria

Woman-owned Small Business Evaluation/Selection Criteria:

- Evidence of success measured by increased sales and profits
- Growth in number of employees
- Demonstrated potential necessary for continuing long-term business success and economic growth
- Voluntary efforts to strengthen woman-owned businesses within the community

Veteran-owned Small Business Evaluation/Selection Criteria:

- Evidence of success measured by increased sales and profits
- Growth in number of employees
- Demonstrated potential necessary for continuing long-term business success and economic growth
- Voluntary efforts to strengthen veteran-owned businesses within the community

Millennial Entrepreneur Evaluation/Selection Criteria:

- Evidence of success measured by increased sales and profits
- Growth in number of employees
- Developed or utilization of innovative or creative business methods
- Demonstrates entrepreneurial potential necessary for long-term business success and economic growth

Small Business Champion Criteria:

- Voluntary efforts beyond business/professional responsibilities to advance small business interests
- Demonstrated efforts to improve conditions in the small business community as a whole
- Demonstrated accomplishments in advising small business groups of opportunities within their community
- Other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's merit as an effective advocate for small business interests