



International Association
of Business Communicators
Houston

2018 Bronze Quill Award Guidelines

Houston is stronger than ever. Strong in community, strong in perseverance and strong in heart. As the resilience of our city and its people continues to inspire the world, we are proud to recognize the outstanding achievements of Houston's communicators.

Celebrate your strength by entering your best work in the 2018 IABC Houston Bronze Quill Awards.

Bronze Quill is the premier awards program for Houston area communicators. The works submitted represent the best Houston has to offer. Winning entries reflect the elite skill set necessary for successful campaigns.

This guide will explain all aspects of the program. If you have further questions contact us at iabchouston@gmail.com

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CRITERIA, FEES AND DEADLINES

[WHO CAN ENTER](#)

Bronze Quill is open to all communications professionals, including freelancers and those working in agencies, nonprofit organizations or corporations. You do NOT have to be an IABC

member to enter the competition or attend the awards gala, but members do receive a discount for both entry prices and event reservations.

To take advantage of the member discount, take a moment now to [join IABC](#), one of the most robust, full-service professional organizations in the world.

The entrant is the project lead who has worked on the project and is submitting for him/herself or on behalf of the project team. The entrant named must match the entrant named on the work plan and be the primary lead on the project.

WHAT CAN I ENTER?

Original material that was produced and/or measured in 2017 is eligible for entry. If you started the project in 2016, but some of its elements carried over into 2017 (e.g., measurement of its success occurred in 2017), then it is eligible.

If you entered your work in previous years and didn't win an award, you may revise and re-enter your project. Entries that have won in previous years may not be resubmitted.

Materials/projects must have the stated permission of clients and other key project participants (when applicable). In order to maintain our ethical standards, we need to ensure that the client has given you permission to enter their project into our competition. An email from the client will suffice.

Entrants may submit work in multiple categories within and across divisions, providing that the work plan fits the category description. You may submit as many entries as you wish, however separate entry fees apply for each entry.

PROPRIETARY INFORMATION WILL BE HELD AND CIRCULATED RESPONSIBLY.

HOW WILL MY ENTRY BE JUDGED?

Each entry will be reviewed by two judges, and the final scores will be averaged using a seven-point global scale of excellence.

Scoring begins at four, which represents a fully competent approach to communication planning and execution. Work is then graded up or down, depending upon the project content. Scores above 5.00 will receive an Award of Merit; above 5.25, an Award of Excellence. Excellence winners in each division will be eligible for the Best in Division Award, given to the entry with the highest score in each division and the Best of Show, honoring the submission with the highest score overall.

WHEN IS MY SUBMISSION DUE?

Early bird deadline: March 23, 2018		Regular deadline: April 6, 2018		Late deadline: April 13, 2018	
Members	\$90	Members	\$120	Members	\$150
Non-members	\$150	Non-members	\$175	Non-members	\$200
Students	\$50	Students	\$65	Students	\$75

HOW TO ENTER

You can enter the Bronze Quill in four easy steps.

1. Choose your category
2. Write your work plan
3. Prepare your work sample
4. Upload your entry and submit payment

STUDENT ENTRIES

A student or a group of students may submit entries. At the time the work was created, the student must have been attending school full time or part time, working toward a degree at a college, university, or other educational institution. Entrants who were enrolled as a student but have professional communication experience or are employed in the communication profession must submit their entry as a professional member or non-member.

Work produced for educational courses, a club or volunteer association, an internship, or commercial or noncommercial activities, is eligible for submission.

If the assignment was not fully implemented, please make note of this to the evaluators. It will not be a disadvantage to your entry, but you must show how the program would have been evaluated, had it been implemented in practice.

Professors, lecturers, or advisers may not enter on behalf of a student.

THE WORK PLAN AND WORK SAMPLE

There are two key elements to your entry: the work plan and the work sample. **The work plan** is an executive summary of your communication strategy. It can be no more than four (4) pages. Edit your plan to ensure it's clear and concise. Bullets, tables and lists might help you save space.

If you're entering the same program or elements of the program in multiple categories, be sure to tailor your work plan so it fits each category.

The work plan should provide the required information for all six (6) sections:

- The Business Need or Opportunity
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Goals and Objectives
- The Solution Overview
- Implementation and Challenges
- Measurement and Evaluation

[Click here](#) to download a work sample template.

The work sample is the supporting material that illustrates how you planned and implemented your communication program. It can include video and audio files, Word documents, PDFs, magazines, brochures, and website links. Your work sample should represent the full scope of your work—evaluators are looking for actual, real examples of the work you did. However, bear in mind that evaluators have limited time to review your submission.

A well-organized work sample that demonstrates the very best of your efforts will score higher than an overwhelming number of items that evaluators can't easily sort through. Organize and condense your work sample to showcase a representative overview of your project. Pick examples (clips, photos, etc.) that best support your work plan and represent your strategy. Be creative in demonstrating how the elements of your work sample are aligned with the business needs and audience preferences.

Please also keep in mind that large files are difficult to upload and download, so please condense the file size as much as possible. For large video files, you may wish to provide a link to where the video

file may be posted online (e.g., YouTube or Vimeo) rather than the file itself. However you present your work sample, please ensure it is readable!

SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY

1. Complete your entry form online by going to [omniCONTESTS](#)
For the best possible experience, we recommend you assemble all aspects of your entry as outlined below before visiting the online form and starting the entry process. However, you do NOT have to complete the entire process in one visit. You can submit one entry and return to the site later to submit additional entries and/or submit payment within the deadline time period.
2. If you have not already done so, create a profile for the awards site by clicking on the Register button at the top right of the page. If you already registered, click the Login button.
3. Once signed in, click the Add Entry tab in the top menu bar. Complete the information on the Entry tab and click Save when done. Required information is marked by a red asterisk (*).
4. Click on the Work Plan and Samples tab. Upload your work plan document and work sample files where indicated.

Remember to include the following at the top of your work plan.

- Entry title
- Entrant's name and organization
- Division and category

You can submit up to five work sample files. Your work samples can be in the following formats:

- Documents: pdf
- Images: jpg, gif, png
- Videos: m4v, mp4, mov, wmv-- [HandBrake](#) can be used to convert most video formats to the preferred MP4 format.
- Audio: mp3

There is a 200 MB size limit for each file. If you have more than five samples, please combine them into fewer PDF files. If your work sample content is found online, including video files posted online, add a section in the work plan for the URL to any online content which cannot be provided in PDF format. You may also provide screen shots of the website within a PDF document.

Remember: For any hyperlink you may submit, that URL must be functioning in order for our judges to review your sample. Your work sample does not have to include every piece, so pick elements that best demonstrate the quality of your project.

5. You can pay for your entry by clicking on the View/Pay Entries tab in the top menu bar when signed in to [omniCONTESTS](#). Click the checkbox next to the entries you wish to pay for, then click the Pay Online button above and to the right of your list of entries. . Once your payment has been processed you will receive an email confirming all of your entries.

That's it, you're done!

THE AWARDS GALA

The 2018 Bronze Quill Awards Gala will be held June 14, 2018, at the Junior League of Houston. Tickets can be purchased [online](#). Winners will be notified in advance but will not know whether they are receiving an Award of Excellence or an Award of Merit until their name is called at the gala. Winners will also have the opportunity to showcase their work at the showcase reception prior to cocktail hour at the gala. This is a great way to bring exposure to yourself and your company.

CATEGORIES

DIVISION 1: COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

The Communication Management division covers projects, programs and campaigns that are guided by a communication strategy. Entries to this division can be submitted by any type of organization, from governments to retail companies to services such as utilities and healthcare. Entrants must demonstrate how their project applied a full range of planning and management skills, including research, analysis, strategy, tactical implementation and evaluation.

Entries may include a wide range of communication materials. (Note: A single tactical execution element that formed part of a communication program may also be entered in the Communication Skills division.)

Category 1: INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- ❖ Programs or strategies targeted at employee or member audiences
- ❖ Includes programs that create awareness and influence opinion or behavioral change, including those focused on ethics, morale, internal culture or change management
- ❖ May involve improving employee understanding and alignment with business direction, improving face-to-face communication, preparing employees for change, integration of organizational cultures caused by an acquisition or downsizing, an internal brand ambassador program or a program to inspire pride in the organization

Category 2: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

- ❖ Local, regional, national or international programs or strategies that profile the role of strategic communication as a driver in improving employee engagement
- ❖ Entries must focus on the communication elements of these programs, which could include contribution to program development and promotion through various communication vehicles and channels
- ❖ May include employee recognition and employee volunteer programs, including programs that benefit charitable or philanthropic causes, or that recognize employees' organizational contributions or achievements in the organization

Category 3: HUMAN RESOURCES AND BENEFITS COMMUNICATION

- ❖ Programs or strategies targeted at internal audiences that relate to communication of health and welfare, savings and pension, stocks and compensation, or recruitment and retention initiatives

Category 4: CHANGE COMMUNICATION

- ❖ Communication strategies that support organizational change
- ❖ May be directed at internal or external audiences, or both

Category 5: SAFETY COMMUNICATION

- ❖ Programs or strategies that focus on improving awareness, understanding and behaviors related to safety issues within an organization

Category 6: LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

- ❖ Programs or strategies that help leaders become more effective communicators, improve the quality of leadership communication within an organization, or improve leader knowledge and the ability to use communication as a business driver
- ❖ Tactics may include tool kits with speaking notes, games or other tools that help leaders communicate a specific topic, and special publications with information and support for leadership communication

Category 7: MARKETING, ADVERTISING AND BRAND COMMUNICATION

- ❖ May include various activities designed to sell products, services, destinations, organizations or ideas to external audiences, and is generally delivered through a variety of communication vehicles and channels
- ❖ Strategic advertising campaigns designed to build brand awareness, influence opinion, motivate audience behaviors, or sell products and services

Category 8: CUSTOMER RELATIONS

- ❖ Strategies or ongoing programs targeted at customer audiences that educate, inform, engage or otherwise connect the organization and its employees to the customer
- ❖ Programs may influence reputation, brand awareness and loyalty, and market position
- ❖ May include relationship management, experience standards or appreciation programs, but must be focused on communication and marketing elements

Category 9: MEDIA RELATIONS

- ❖ Strategies or ongoing programs that use the news media as the primary channel to reach target audiences and seek to influence awareness, understanding and opinion or motivate action
- ❖ Should demonstrate the quality of media coverage and its impact on the organization—quantity of media stories alone is not considered a valid measurement in this category

Category 10: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- ❖ A one-time or an ongoing program that enhances stakeholder understanding of issues affecting business operations within the community served
- ❖ Seeks to build trust and credibility with stakeholder groups generally through consultation and other communication-based activities
- ❖ Tactics and supporting strategies may include formal and informal meetings, town hall discussions, workshops, presentations, open houses, and electronic or printed material

Category 11: GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

- ❖ Short- or long-term programs that influence the opinion or actions of government bodies or agencies
- ❖ May seek to create awareness, or influence the attitudes and behaviors of decision-makers toward the organization or industry

Category 12: FINANCIAL COMMUNICATION

- ❖ Entails strategies, tactics and tools used to share financial data and recommendations with investors and other interested parties

- ❖ Includes investor relations functions that integrate finance, communication, marketing and securities laws compliance to enable effective two-way communication between a company, the financial community, and stakeholders

Category 13: ISSUES MANAGEMENT AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION

- ❖ Programs targeted at external and/or internal audiences that address trends, issues or attitudes that have a significant impact on an organization, such as labor relations, crises, mergers, acquisitions, public policy or environmental concerns
- ❖ Programs may demonstrate proactive planning and preventative action during an extraordinary event, or show the actions taken to address trends, issues and interest group attitudes that have a major impact on an organization
- ❖ Strategies for new brands and the repositioning of existing brands in relationship to internal and external audiences
- ❖ May include brand characteristics and attributes, changes to corporate identities and design solutions that address the challenges of brand communication (must be more than a logo redesign)

Category 14: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- ❖ Programs or strategies that communicate social responsibility and encourage positive actions while building awareness and reputation and positioning the organization as a good corporate citizen
- ❖ May be targeted to multiple audiences and influence share price and customer loyalty, retention and recruitment, operational efficiency and increased sales
- ❖ Generally long-term and focused on enhancing the well-being of communities and populations through causes such as the environment, energy sustainability, food safety, economic stability, employment, poverty reduction, literacy, education, health, cultural preservation, and indigenous and heritage protection

Category 15: SOCIAL MEDIA PROGRAMS

- ❖ Engages internal and external audiences in conversation through social media
- ❖ Encompasses tools and practices that allow individuals and groups to collaborate and share knowledge and experiences online
- ❖ May use conversation-enabled publishing platforms such as blogs and podcasts, social networks such as Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook, democratized content networks such as wikis and message boards, content-sharing sites such as YouTube and Flickr, and virtual networking platforms

Category 16: GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS

- ❖ Programs and strategies specific to government organizations at the municipal, state, provincial, regional, federal, national or international level
- ❖ May be targeted to one or more audiences, and include internal, external or integrated communication strategies or programs

Category 17: NONPROFIT CAMPAIGNS

- ❖ Programs recognizing the particular challenges of the nonprofit sector
- ❖ May include multiple internal or external audiences
- ❖ Promotes nonprofit organizations or causes
- ❖ May be paid projects or pro-bono projects donated to the client by an organization, agency or consultancy; entries will generally have a small budget or none at all

Category 18: COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT, STUDENT ENTRY

- ❖ Entries to any category in this division submitted by a student.

DIVISION 2: COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Entries in this division recognize the importance of research and measurement as a foundation for strategic communication work and a competency that's integral to success throughout the career of a communication professional.

Category 19: COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

- ❖ Formative research conducted during the initial stages of the strategic communication planning process that benchmarks internal audience opinions or behaviors, profiles the marketplace or internal communication environment in which the organization operates, aligns best practices against organizational needs or informs strategic direction for internal communication programs
- ❖ May include audience analysis, competitive benchmarking, secondary research related to best practices, program or product test markets, and reputation or brand studies

Category 20: COMMUNICATION RESEARCH, STUDENT ENTRY

- ❖ Entries to any category in this division submitted by a student

DIVISION 3: COMMUNICATION TRAINING AND EDUCATION

This division recognizes the mentorship and education role of consultants and senior communicators in developing and delivering workshops, classes, seminars or training that educates an audience about any aspect of the communication profession. This division includes all communication disciplines and professional competencies.

Category 21: COMMUNICATION TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- ❖ Training or educational programs delivered to an internal or external audience that help to improve their communication competencies
- ❖ For internal audiences, this may include supervisor/manager/leader training in communication skills, presentation skills and employee ambassador development, in addition to media training, speaker's bureau training, and other communication disciplines
- ❖ For external audiences, this may include presentations for conferences, university classes, seminars or workshops, as well as media and executive coaching

Category 22: COMMUNICATION TRAINING AND EDUCATION, STUDENT ENTRY

- ❖ Entries to any category in this division submitted by a student

DIVISION 4: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The communication skills division includes marketing and communication elements that showcase technical skills such as editing, writing, design and multimedia production. Entries in this division are generally tactical in nature. Entrants must demonstrate strategic alignment, the creative process and measurable results.

Category 23: SPECIAL EVENTS

- ❖ Planning and execution of a special event for an internal or external audience
- ❖ For internal audiences, this may include employee appreciation events, or events that mark a significant occasion such as an anniversary, internal conference or meeting, or a celebration or special retirement

- ❖ For external audiences, this may include conferences, workshops, anniversaries, official openings, product launches, road shows and customer events

Category 24: DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

- ❖ Computer-based communication vehicles defined as the end product that are produced for internal or external audiences, and rely on a digital communication channel for delivery
- ❖ Electronic and interactive communication channels such as websites, intranets, online stores, blogs, podcasts, social networks such as LinkedIn and Facebook, democratized content networks such as wikis and message boards, micro-blogging sites such as Twitter, content-sharing sites such as YouTube and Flickr, and virtual networking platforms
- ❖ May also include electronic newsletters, electronic annual reports, special publications, CDs or DVDs, e-cards, banner ads, buttons, pop-ups and similar material
- ❖ Generally one-way communication that offers published content online

Category 25: AUDIO/VISUAL

- ❖ Communication vehicles produced using sound, images, video, film, slides, CDs or a combination of these elements
- ❖ May include video, audio, PowerPoint or other presentations, and films (does not include advertising commercials)

Category 26: PUBLICATIONS

- ❖ Publications produced for internal or external audiences in all formats, including hard copy and electronic
- ❖ May include magazines, newspapers, newsletters or tabloids, annual reports, books, special publications, brochures and other advertising material, e-newsletters, and similar material

Category 27: WRITING

- ❖ This category includes writing in both print and electronic formats.

Journalism:

- Material in which the news media is the primary communication channel
- May include, but is not limited to, editorials, interpretive/expository articles, news releases, and feature stories

Corporate Writing:

- Material written primarily for use by an organization to inform or educate employees or external stakeholders
- May include recurring features or columns, magazines, newsletters, internal or special publications, standalone features, speeches and presentations, executive correspondence, scripts for corporate use, writing for an intranet, internal publications, technical writing, and annual and special reports

Promotional Writing:

- Material written to persuade customers, consumers, employees or stakeholders to adopt a point of view or to purchase goods or services
- May include commercials, advertising, marketing or sales promotion material, advertorials and writing for the Web

Nonprofit Writing:

- Material written to promote nonprofit organizations, including IABC regional and chapter events

Writing—Special Projects:

- Books (fiction and nonfiction), educational material, scripts for theatrical use, and other writing projects not covered above

Category 28: COMMUNICATION SKILLS, STUDENT ENTRY

- ❖ Entries to any category in this division submitted by a student