



Application Guidelines for 2024-2025 Awards

Sponsored By:
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Clean Air Excellence Awards Program is sponsored by EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. The Program was suggested by the Clean Air Act Advisory Committee (CAAAC), a senior-level federal advisory committee that provides advice to EPA on air issues. The Awards Program periodically recognizes individuals who have served as pioneers in their fields as well as organizations that have contributed to cleaner air.

Clean Air Excellence Awards

- Entry Guidelines -

Eligibility

The Clean Air Excellence Awards Program is open to both public and private entities. Entries are limited to efforts related to air quality in the United States.

Entry Deadline

All entries must be sent electronically or postmarked by **October 22, 2024**. Submit your applications today!

Entry Requirements

All applicants must submit **one (1) original entry form and supporting documentation electronically or in hard copy** to the address noted below. Supporting documentation may include photographs, videotapes, written materials (e.g., an evaluation of the outcomes of the initiative; product literature; development plans; press releases; copy of the state, local, or tribal policy) and any other information that may assist program judges in making award decisions. **In an effort to reduce resources, EPA strongly encourages applicants to submit their entry form and supporting documents electronically in Word or PDF format (emailed directly or printed and mailed)** If filing electronically is not feasible, applicants may submit their entry form and supporting documents in hard copy.

Email entry form and supporting documents to:
[OAR Clean Air Excellence Awards@epa.gov](mailto:OAR_Clean_Air_Excellence_Awards@epa.gov)

- OR -

Mail entry form and supporting documents to:
Clean Air Excellence Awards Program
ATTN: Catrice Jefferson, Ruth Morgan, and
Marie Catanese
U.S. EPA, Office of Air and Radiation
Mail Code 6103A, Room 5442-Q (WJC-North)
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Please submit each entry under only one award category. Note that you may submit any number of different projects as separate entries. If you would like your project considered for the Gregg Cooke Visionary Program Award (which recognizes projects that blend aspects of two or more award categories), please mark that box under Section I of the Entry Form.

Please note that the number of awards given in any one year will depend on the applications received. In a single year, some award categories may have multiple award winners, while other categories may have no winners. If your entry does not win an award in a given year, you may choose to reapply with the same or different project in future years. If your entry does win an award, you may reapply with different projects in future years. However, please note that the same applicant will not be given an award more than two times in three years.

Clean Air Excellence Award Categories

There are five general categories for which you may enter a program, project, or technology:

Clean Air Technology, This category applies to technological developments (including products or processes) that reduce criteria pollutants, hazardous air pollutants, and/or greenhouse gases from either stationary, mobile, or area sources.

Community Action, This category applies to community partnership efforts that directly or indirectly (i.e., by encouraging actions) reduce emissions of criteria pollutants, hazardous air pollutants, and/or greenhouse gases.

Education/Outreach, This category applies to efforts to educate and/or disseminate information to the intended targeted audience(s) about air quality and related issues.

State/Tribal/Local Air Quality Policy Innovations, This category applies to regulatory or policy initiatives and programs implemented across all levels (e.g., state, tribal, local, government, industry, non-profit) related to criteria pollutants, hazardous air pollutants, and/or greenhouse gases.

Transportation Efficiency Innovations, This category applies to programs and projects that make transportation systems more efficient and reduce criteria pollutants, hazardous air pollutants, and/or greenhouse gases in the process.

In addition to the five award categories described above, the Clean Air Excellence Awards Program includes two special award categories.

Thomas W. Zosel Outstanding Individual Achievement Award, honoring a former member of EPA's Clean Air Act Advisory Committee (CAAAC) and environmental leader at 3M. This category recognizes up to one individual for outstanding achievement, demonstrated leadership, and a lasting commitment to promoting clean air and helping to achieve better air quality. The candidate should be an innovative leader in his or her field and demonstrate a lifetime of achievement in promoting clean air. *Candidates for this award must be nominated by a third party.*

Gregg Cooke Visionary Program Award, honoring a former EPA Regional Administrator. This award recognizes the air quality project or program that most successfully blends aspects from two or more of the existing awards categories (i.e., Clean Air Technology, Community Action, Education/Outreach, State/Tribal/Local Air Quality Policy Innovations, and Transportation Efficiency Innovations).

Judging and Award Criteria

Award recipients are chosen through a multi-step judging process. EPA staff conducts an initial technical screening of all applications. Selected entries are then reviewed by a Clean Air Act Advisory Committee (CAAAC) task force, which provides advice to EPA on the candidates' programs. The full CAAAC and EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance then provide additional comments on entries. EPA's Assistant Administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation makes the final award determinations.

Please note the 500-word limit for the entry form summary of the project and submit supporting documents as appropriate. Entries will be judged based on both general criteria and criteria specific to each award category. The following general criteria will be used in assessing each entry:

- The entry directly or indirectly (i.e., by encouraging actions) reduces emissions of criteria pollutants, hazardous air pollutants, and/or greenhouse gases.
- The entry is innovative and unique.
- The entry provides a model for others to follow (i.e., it is replicable).
- The entry's positive outcomes are continuing/sustainable.

Although not required to win an award, the following general criteria will also be considered in the judging process:

- The entry has positive effects on environmental media other than air.
- The entry demonstrates effective collaboration and partnerships.
- The individual or organization submitting the entry has effectively measured/evaluated the outcomes of the project, program, or technology.
- The entry addresses environmental inequities.

The evaluation criteria specific to each of the five award categories and two special award categories are presented below.

Clean Air Technology

- The technology is commercially viable and can be widely applied.
- The technology is cost-effective relative to other air pollution control technologies that already exist.
- The technology is developed to the prototype stage or beyond.

Community Action

- The project includes a diverse group of stakeholders, including community representation, that participate in the planning and implementation to bring about air quality improvements, particularly in communities with environmental justice concerns.
- The project clearly identifies all contributing parties, their roles, and level of effort provided to the project mission.
- The project leverages resources and provides for long term sustainability.
- The project displays a concise plan and measures to evaluate progress to bring about solutions with air quality priorities.
- The project demonstrates how it has significantly improved air quality in the community.

Education/Outreach

- The program educates target audience about the adverse effects of air pollution, increases awareness about the importance of clean air, and improves access to information (e.g., websites, listservs, social media, electronic bulletin boards, postcards, advertisements, etc.)
- The program successfully reaches the intended/targeted audience(s) and demonstrates actions taken to heighten awareness about clean air and quality of life.
- The program is completed or substantially underway (i.e., active).
- The program includes partnership(s) with groups that represent vulnerable populations or communities with environmental justice concerns, which may include local schools, community organizations, and senior centers. These partners are involved in the education/outreach of information about clean air issues.
- The program clearly identifies all partners, how they support the project, and outputs/outcomes in relation to their goals and objectives.

State/Tribal/Local Air Quality Policy Innovations

- The regulation or policy encourages actions that go beyond compliance with applicable laws and regulations, or
- The regulation or policy provides flexibility to the regulated community, or
- The development process for the regulation or policy has included an innovative stakeholder (e.g., public, Tribal) involvement component.
- The regulation or policy has been implemented.

Transportation Efficiency Innovations

- The project or program increases the number of available transportation options, improves transportation efficiency (e.g., fewer vehicles' miles traveled or better fuel consumption), and/or reduces travel time and costs, with the result of improving air quality.
- The development of the project or program is completed or substantially underway.

Thomas W. Zosel Outstanding Individual Achievement Award

- The individual has demonstrated leadership, outstanding achievement, and a lasting commitment to promoting clean air and helping to achieve better air quality.

Gregg Cooke Visionary Program Award

- The air quality project or program that most successfully blends aspects from two or more of the existing awards categories.

Presentation

Award recipients will be recognized by the U.S. EPA at a special awards ceremony held in Washington, DC, in 2025 (date to be announced later). Awards are honorary and do not include monetary recognition.

Questions

If you have any questions, please click here to contact us [via email](#).