



National Extension Diversity Award

Last updated February 2020

Co-sponsored by [Extension Committee on Organization and Policy \(ECOP\)](#) and [USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture \(NIFA\)](#)

Purpose

The purpose of this award is to acknowledge accomplishments of Cooperative Extension Professionals in achieving organizational changes that support diversity, pluralism and innovation in programs that impact our Extension audiences. The Award for Diversity is designed to focus national attention on innovative models and techniques that ensure that Extension programs equitably engage all appropriate audiences in an effective manner.

Meaning of Diversity and Pluralism

Beginning in 1991 with the distribution of “Pathway to Diversity: Strategic Plan for the Cooperative Extension System’s Emphasis on Diversity,” Extension forged a new commitment to expanding and reorganizing diversity efforts.

Diversity is defined as differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practices and other human differences.

Pluralism is defined as an organizational culture that incorporates mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork and productivity among people who are diverse in the dimensions of human differences listed above as diversity.

Award Presentation

The recipient of the Award for Diversity is recognized at the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Annual Meeting held in November each year with a commemorative trophy from USDA NIFA and a cash award from ECOP. Travel reimbursement to attend the awards event has been historically provided. The recipient will be asked to submit photos and a project summary for inclusion on the APLU and the eXtension Diversity, Equity and Inclusion websites, the NIFA Update and for inclusion in the Award Program Brochure. The award recipient will also be asked to submit an impact statement for the database landgrantimpacts.org which portrays Cooperative Extension impacts to the public.

Eligibility

The nominee can be an individual or a team or organization primarily composed of Cooperative Extension professionals. A Cooperative Extension professional (state, regional and/or county) is defined as having at least 50 percent EFT/FTE university appointment in Extension as of May 1 of the year of nomination. NOTE: Administrative EFT/FTE in these areas do not qualify a nominee. The Award for Diversity supports efforts that go beyond simply meeting EEO/AA program requirements. Extension efforts should support the creation of a diverse and pluralistic Cooperative Extension organization at the local, regional, state or national level. Such efforts could impact one or more of the following areas: Audience, Administration, Funding, Coalitions, Programs, Policies, Initiative, Staff, Advisory and decision-making groups, and Educational materials and delivery methods.

Criteria for Nominations

Nominations can be submitted from any level of the Cooperative Extension system. Nominees can be individuals, teams or Extension organizations. Nominations can be made by anyone, including self-nominations. Only electronic submissions will be accepted using the following link www.aplu.org/CESawards.

Since the program is limited to one award recipient per year, it is recommended that previously submitted non-recognized nominations be resubmitted. When writing nominations, special attention should be given to efforts that have the potential to be sustained over time or can be replicated in other comparable situations. [CLICK HERE for a list of previous recipients](#).

The following elements are considered in the review process.

NOMINEE (Individual, Group, Organization):

Purpose:

What was the issue addressed by the subject of this nomination/application? How did you determine that this issue was important to address? The nomination clearly describes efforts by a person, group or organization to achieve diversity/pluralism in Extension organizations, programs, and/or audiences. (Maximum 15 points)

Basis:

What did you do to address the issue? Why is this worthy of recognition? Are actions and activities in support of diversity appropriate and educationally sound? (Maximum 25 points)

Positive Impact:

Provide measurable evidence that your efforts have led to positive, sustainable programmatic and/or organizational change. (Maximum 30 points)

Scope:

How broadly did or likely will this effort affect the Cooperative Extension system? Evidence exists that the scope of impact is broad with observable multi-state or national impact. (Maximum 20 points)

Innovation:

How did this effort create new models for positive change? The effort is innovative in its application, methods, or approach in such a way that has led to new ways/models for positive organizational change in achieving diversity and pluralism in organizations, programs, and/or audiences. (Maximum 10 points)

Total Possible Points - 100

Nomination Package Guidelines

Nominations must not exceed five pages and must contain the following elements. It is recommended to prepare the following, ready to cut/paste before browsing to the Online Nomination form:

1. Name, title, address, phone number and e-mail of nominee(s).
2. Name, title, address, phone number and e-mail of person making nomination.
3. A brief synopsis of nomination (30 words or less)
4. A narrative explaining the six elements in the criteria given above (400 words or less, each).

Limitations

Incomplete applications or applications in excess of size limitations may not be considered. Please do not attempt to forward videotapes, bound publications or other support materials with the nomination. Only electronic submissions will be considered.

Selection Process

An Award Review Panel is appointed by the ECOP Program Committee to review nominations and recommend the recipient to the ECOP Chair and NIFA Director. The process is normally complete by mid-July.

Due Date

The due date for nominations is May 1st at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time. To be considered, nominations, submitted online, must be completed by this date and time.

To begin, download the nomination prep form at

<https://www.aplu.org/members/commissions/food-environment-and-renewable-resources/board-on-agriculture-assembly/cooperative-extension-section/extension-directors-and-administrators/awards/Award%20Prep%20Forms/Diversity%20Award%20Prep%20Form.docx>

Please contact Sandy Ruble, Assistant Director, Cooperative Extension/ECOP, at 202.478.6088 or sandyruble@extension.org if there are any questions.