

GFOA's 2012



Awards for

Excellence

in

Government Finance

Application deadline: December 15, 2011

Application form and more information available on the GFOA's Web site at
www.gfoa.org/awardsforexcellence

Contact: Marcy Boggs, 312-977-9700
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Government Finance Officers Association

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Frequently Asked Questions

What Are the Awards for Excellence?

The GFOA Awards for Excellence recognize outstanding contributions and innovations in the field of government finance.

Within this program are two special recognition awards:

Small Government Awards are given to organizations with fewer than 200 full time employees.

The Louisville Award for Innovation in Government Finance recognizes an exceptional accomplishment that introduces a new concept or technique with enduring value to the government finance profession.

Why Should I Enter?

Winning the GFOA's Award for Excellence is an honor – the highest level of professional acknowledgement within the public finance profession today. Winners also can be proud that their creativity and innovation will provide examples for other jurisdictions to follow, promoting best practices in government finance.

Who Can Enter?

All GFOA members are eligible to participate. Non members may also submit entries, but their applications must be sponsored by an active GFOA member.

How Much Does It Cost?

There are no fees or charges associated with the program; however, winners must be present at the GFOA's annual conference to accept the award in person. The 2012 annual conference will be held in Chicago, Illinois, June 10-13.

What Projects and Programs Are Eligible?

Any project or program that takes the practice of government finance to a higher level of excellence is appropriate for submission. Each application must specify the category and subcategory in which it will be judged. Descriptions of each category and subcategory are provided on the following page to help you determine which are most appropriate for your entry. The bullet points under each category are intended as examples only – they are not all inclusive.

The GFOA will review all applications to make sure they are categorized appropriately. The GFOA reserves the right to reassign submissions to a more appropriate category.

Previously submitted entries cannot be re-submitted.

How Do I Submit an Application?

Complete the official Awards for Excellence application form, which is available on the GFOA's Web site at www.gfoa.org under Award Programs. Please respond to all of the application questions, adding additional pages as needed.

Submit the application electronically, along with all documentation, to awardsforexcellence@gfoa.org.

When Is the Deadline?

Your application form and any supporting documentation must be submitted by **December 15, 2011**.

How Are Entries Judged?

Applications are reviewed by a panel of experienced government finance professionals. Panel members are assigned to review applications in categories in which they have expertise.

What Criteria Are Used to Evaluate the Entries?

Applications are reviewed using standard evaluation criteria that include technical significance, transferability, documentation, originality, cost effectiveness, and finance officer involvement.

An Award for Excellence will not necessarily be awarded every year in each category and subcategory.

How Can I Increase My Chances of Winning?

Awards for Excellence winners showcase true innovations, as opposed to well executed versions of established practices. Clearly document all the benefits the innovation provides to the jurisdiction and its citizens, explaining the local need being addressed and how the idea can be translated to help others in similar situations. Benefits should be quantified in real terms such as budget savings or operational efficiencies.

In addition, the materials submitted by the winners of the 2011 awards are available on the GFOA's Web site at www.gfoa.org under Award Programs. Reviewing these documents can provide a good understanding of how to present an innovative project or program.

What Do I Do If I Win?

Award winners will be notified on or around April 1, 2012. Winners must accept the award in person at the GFOA's annual conference. Winners also will be asked to write an article for GFOA's member magazine, *Government Finance Review*, and to prepare a presentation describing the winning entry to be displayed on GFOA's Web site.

Award Categories and Subcategories

Categories

Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting:

- Financial and cost accounting
- Interim and annual financial reporting
- Internal control and financial auditing

Budgeting and Financial Planning:

- Operating and capital budgeting
- Financial forecasting
- Multi year budgeting
- Long range financial planning
- Revenue and cost analysis
- Fiscal trend monitoring

Capital Finance and Debt Administration:

- Capital financing techniques such as municipal bonds and lease financing
- Debt planning, issuance, and control
- Creative uses of debt finance

Economic Development and Capital Planning:

- Projects that have been completed and show a positive demonstrated economic impact
- Economic development planning, policies, and procedures that provide groundwork for future economic development initiatives

E Government and Technology:

- Citizen portals and links to back office systems
- Constituent relationship management
- E commerce and e procurement
- Inter jurisdictional cooperation on systems
- Data warehousing and business intelligence
- Technology for budgeting
- Innovative system procurement and contracting methods
- Implementation methodology
- Change management programs (e.g., training, end user documentation)

Management and Service Delivery:

- Innovative service delivery (e.g., privatization, vouchers, franchises)
- Purchasing, risk management, and grants administration
- Quality and productivity tools relevant to finance officers
- Performance measurement

Pensions and Benefits:

- Retirement and health benefits and other employment and postemployment benefits such as family leave, childcare, and wellness programs

Treasury and Investment Management

- Public funds investing policies and practices
- Cash forecasting, monitoring, and control

Subcategories

Policies and Procedures includes financial and administrative policies and procedures governing state, provincial, and local finances or financial practices.

Management and Policy Studies includes publications, projects, and consulting studies describing new management tools and/or policy analysis methodologies.

Communications and Reporting includes publications, reports, or other media designed to improve the understanding or awareness of the finances and operations of the organization. Documents eligible for the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award, or the Popular Annual Financial Reporting Award are not eligible for the Awards for Excellence.

Training and Technical Guides includes any program or document designed to instruct or guide others in the implementation or use of financial systems, procedures, or techniques.

Awards for Excellence in Government Finance

2012 Application

This application form must be completed and returned along with your entry in electronic form by December 15, 2011, to awardsforexcellence@gfoa.org.

Title of Entry: _____

Category (Select only one):

- Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting
- Budgeting and Financial Planning
- Capital Financing and Debt Administration
- Economic Development and Capital Planning
- E Government and Technology
- Management and Service Delivery
- Pensions and Benefits
- Treasury and Investment Management

Subcategory (Select only one):

- Policies and Procedures
- Management and Policy Studies
- Communications and Reporting
- Training and Technical Guides
- Other

Name of government submitting entry: _____

Population served: _____ Number of employees: _____

Name of person submitting entry: _____

Title of person submitting entry: _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E mail address: _____

If the person submitting the entry is not an active member of GFOA, an active member must sponsor the entry. If applicable, provide sponsor information below.

Name of sponsor: _____

Title: _____

Government: _____ Telephone: _____

Mailing address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Awards for Excellence in Government Finance

2012 Application

Please provide simple and direct answers to each of the questions below. *Use additional pages as needed (in a separate Word document or a non-copy protected PDF).*

Local Significance and Value (Background)

1. Please give a brief general description of the project or program being submitted.
2. Describe the local events and/or problems that led to the undertaking of this project/program.
3. Describe the role the finance office/finance officer played in this project/program.
4. How much time did each participant devote to this program/project? Were outside consultants engaged?

Technical Significance

What financial concepts, standards, or techniques are displayed or advanced by this entry? Why is this important to the public finance profession?

Transferability

How can this project/program be adapted for use by other organizations? Who else might benefit by its adoption? Would significant modifications be required for implementation?

Documentation

What documentation describes the entry (e.g., reports, forms, memoranda, software, audio visual materials, etc.)? All materials must be provided in electronic format.

Cost/Benefit

Quantify the total resources (money and time) devoted to this project/program and identify the value added (tangible and/or intangible) as a result of undertaking it.

Complexity

Describe the complexity of the project/program. How much training and technical skill is required for employees to make use of this solution?

Originality, Creativity, and Innovation

To your knowledge, is this the first time this type of project/program has been implemented by a government entity? If not, identify previous work in this area and explain the uniqueness of your approach.

Other Distinguishing Features (Optional)

Highlight any other noteworthy features about your project/program.

Awards for Excellence in Government Finance

Past Winners, 2005 2011

2011 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

- Capital Financing and Debt Administration*
Electricity at a Discount: Using Tax Exempt Debt to Prepay for Energy in Fayetteville, North Carolina
- e Government and Technology*
One System for All Taxes: Automated Tax Management in Arlington County, Virginia
- e Government and Technology*
From Paper to the Web: Streamlining Grants Management in Los Angeles
- e Government and Technology*
Realizing the Benefits of ERP through Process Improvement: Pennsylvania's Finance Transformation Initiative
- Management and Service Delivery*
Coast to Coast Cooperation for Business Continuity Planning in Treasury Management
- Management and Service Delivery*
Cooperating to Assure Financial Management Capability in Local Government: Finance Officer Development in British Columbia
- Management and Service Delivery*
Measuring Service Performance, Not Departments: Using Dashboards to Communicate Results
- Pensions and Benefits*
Innovating to Cut the Costs of Retirement Benefits: The City of Beverly Hills Alternative Retiree Medical Program
- Pensions and Benefits*
Reducing OPEB Liabilities by Improving Wellness: Irving's I Win Awards Incentive

2010 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

- Capital Financing and Debt Administration*
Implementing Asset Maximization Strategies: The MWAA Dulles Corridor Enterprise Initiative, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority
- Economic Development*
Traffic Trip Financing of the 169/Bren Road Interchange, City of Minnetonka, Minnesota
- e Government and Technology*
Johnson County, Kansas, Treasurer's Line Management Program, Johnson County, Kansas, Treasurer

2009 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

- Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting*
Financing Our Future: Authentic Community Engagement and Learning around Public School Finance, Toledo City School District, Toledo, Ohio
- Economic Development and Capital Planning*
Civic Master Plan for the East Riverfront, City of Savannah, Georgia
- e Government and Technology*
Business Intelligence for Government Transparency: Where the Money Goes, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts
- Management and Service Delivery*
Revitalized Purchasing Card Program Leads to Phenomenal Growth, Johnson County, Kansas
- Pension and Benefits*
Master Trust and Investment Pool for OPEB and Pension Benefits, City of Winston Salem, North Carolina
- Pensions and Benefits*
Shared Services for OPEB Actuarial Reporting, North Central Texas Council of Governments and City of Carrollton

2008 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

- Budgeting and Financial Planning*
Public Stewardship for a City Beautiful, City and County of Denver
- Capital Finance and Debt Administration*
Debt Management Analysis and Planning Model, City of Scottsdale, Arizona
- e Government and Technology*
Johnson County Revenue Recovery Program: Developing a Governmental Collections Unit, Johnson County, Kansas Treasurer's Department
- Management and Service Delivery*
TIB Dashboard: True Transparency in Government Operations, Washington State Transportation Improvement Board
- Pensions and Benefits*
Ohio Deferred Compensation on Ohio Business Gateway, Ohio Deferred Compensation
- Pensions and Benefits*
Funding an Eligibility Policy for Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB), Gwinnett County, Georgia

2008 LOUISVILLE AWARD

- Bank on San Francisco, City and County of San Francisco, California

2007 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

- Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting*
Interactive Popular Reporting, District of North Vancouver, British Columbia
- e Government and Technology*
Assessment Review on the Web: AROW, Nassau County, New York
- Management and Service Delivery*
OakVideo, Oakland County, Michigan

2006 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

- Budgeting and Financial Planning*
Long Term Fiscal Plan, City of Toronto, Ontario
- e Government and Technology*
Electronic Information, Billing, and Collection Program, Johnson County, Kansas Treasurer's Office
- Management and Service Delivery*
Integrating Sustainable Development into Business Decisions, Manitoba Lotteries Corporation
- Management and Service Delivery*
Our Accountabilities Plan: A Five Star Plan for Excellence, University of Missouri Kansas City
- Pensions and Benefits*
Employee Compensation Report, City of Laguna Hills, California

2005 AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

- Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting*
eCAPRIS: Project Reporting Information System, City of Austin, Texas
- Management and Service Delivery*
CITISTAT: Improving Performance and Infusing Accountability in Municipal Government, City of Baltimore, Maryland
- Management and Service Delivery*
Insuring Our Future: Creating Districts Mutual to Serve the Wisconsin Technical College System, Wisconsin Technical College System
- Pensions and Benefits*
Managing Health Care in Montgomery, Ohio, City of Montgomery, Ohio
- Pensions and Benefits*
Annual Statements, Ohio Public Employees Deferred Compensation Program
- e Government and Technology*
Vendor, Contract, and Payment Information Search Database, City of Chicago, Illinois