

Tips for writing a high-quality awards nomination

The quality of an award nomination has a significant impact on the outcome. A well-written nomination supported by evidence makes it easier for the judging panel to see why the nominee should receive the award.

Start strong with a clear introductory statement

Open with a concise and impactful introductory statement summarising the highlights of the nominee's career, key achievements and qualifications upfront to immediately grab attention. For the Outstanding Library Team award, start with an introductory statement that gives context about the team or project group being nominated. Describe the role of the team, the nature of the project, and how it fits within the broader organisational goals. Highlight the purpose, key responsibilities, and the unique contributions they have made to demonstrate why they deserve recognition.

Tailor the nomination to the criteria

Carefully review the award's criteria (provided in the form of prompts for you to respond to on the nomination form) and ensure your nomination directly addresses each one. Use specific examples that align with the values and purpose of the award.

Provide evidence of impact

Include concrete examples of the nominee's achievements and contributions, backed by data or testimonials. Show how their work has made a meaningful difference, whether to their organisation, community, or field. The emphasis on evidence that the criteria have been met.

Tell a compelling story

Go beyond listing accomplishments. Use storytelling to humanise the nominee, showing their journey and the lasting impact of their work.

Be specific and quantifiable

Use measurable outcomes where possible, such as percentage improvements, numbers of people helped, or specific milestones achieved. This helps paint a clear picture of the nominee's impact.

Highlight unique qualities

Emphasise what sets the nominee apart from others. Highlight qualities, skills, or contributions that make them unique and especially deserving of the award.

Use clear and concise language

Keep the nomination focused and to the point. Avoid jargon, and ensure your writing is clear, well-structured, and easy to read.

Proofread and edit carefully

Ensure your nomination is free from errors, as this can distract from the content. Review for clarity, flow, and consistency to make sure the nomination presents the nominee in the best possible light.

Seek impactful testimonials and support statements

The quality and strength of testimonials and the supporting statement from the University Librarian or equivalent is just as important as the quality of the nomination. Seek statements from others who have worked with or benefited from the nominee's contributions. Choose people with the insight to speak to the nominee's achievement of the criteria. This will add credibility and provide a well-rounded perspective to the nomination.

You can improve the quality of testimonials and supporting statements with the following tips:

1. Provide context

When asking for a testimonial, share background information on the award and the specific qualities or achievements being recognised. This helps the person understand how their input will contribute to the overall nomination.

2. Highlight key areas

Suggest specific areas they can focus on, such as how the nominee made an impact, their leadership style, or specific contributions they've made. This ensures the testimonial aligns with the award's criteria.

3. Share examples

If possible, share examples of the nominee's achievements with the person writing the testimonial. This can help jog their memory and provide direction on what to highlight.

4. Be clear about deadlines

Give them a clear deadline for submitting the testimonial, and follow up with reminders as needed. Let them know how important their input is to the nomination process. And make sure you ask them early – give them plenty of time to write the response.

5. Offer to draft a template

If the person is busy or unsure how to start, offer to provide a draft or template they can edit. This can save time and ensure the testimonial captures key points, while still allowing for their personal input.