

10 Tips for Applying to External Awards

Faculty members looking to apply for external honorific awards should carefully prepare their applications to stand out in a competitive field. Here are ten tips to help you improve your chances of success:

1. Research and Select Appropriate Awards:

- Start by researching various external honorific awards relevant to your field, career stage, and achievements. Choose awards that align with your expertise and accomplishments and consider awards that allow you to receive exposure to that are important to you and your work (travel awards, fellowships, etc.) External award reports are sent to department chairs on a monthly basis so consider reaching out to your Chair to determine which award would best fit your background.

2. Review Award Criteria:

- Thoroughly review the eligibility criteria and selection process for each award. Ensure that you meet all the requirements and can provide the necessary documentation. A common requirement for awards is that you are a member of their particular society. Make sure you are already a member or consider becoming a member of societies in your field to open up more opportunities for awards.

3. Plan Well in Advance:

- Give yourself plenty of time to prepare your application and a strong package. Many awards have strict deadlines, so plan months in advance to gather materials and craft a compelling submission. Some awards require external letters of recommendation which can take time to receive.

4. Compile a Strong Portfolio:

- Prepare a comprehensive portfolio of your achievements, including publications, research projects, teaching innovations, and service contributions. Highlight your most significant and impactful work. Review the requirements for the application and create a checklist to make sure you're preparing the correct materials and not leaving anything out.

5. Seek Strong Letters of Recommendation:

- Reach out to colleagues, mentors, and collaborators who can write persuasive letters of recommendation on your behalf. Choose individuals who can speak to the quality and impact of your work. If external letters are required, choose individuals who are well known in the field and can attest to your achievements.

6. Craft a Convincing Personal Statement:

- Write a well-structured, engaging personal statement that articulates your contributions, impact, and future goals. Clearly explain why you are deserving of the award and how it aligns with your career trajectory.

7. Showcase Impact and Leadership:

- Emphasize the broader impact of your work on your field, your institution, and society at large. Highlight any leadership roles you've undertaken, such as serving on committees, organizing conferences, or mentoring students and junior faculty.

8. Align with the Award's Mission:

- Tailor your application to align with the mission and values of the awarding organization. Show how your work and contributions reflect the award's goals and priorities, demonstrating a strong fit with their objectives. Consider using key words in the award description in your nomination materials.

9. Practice Effective Storytelling:

- Craft your application materials as a compelling narrative that effectively conveys your journey, challenges overcome, and your vision for the future. Engage the reviewers with a well-structured and captivating story that resonates with them on a personal and intellectual level.

10. Pay Attention to Detail:

- Review your application materials carefully for grammar and formatting. Ensure all documents are submitted on time and that you've followed the award's specific submission guidelines.

Remember that each award may have unique requirements and expectations, so it's essential to adapt your application strategy to the specific award you're pursuing. Tailoring your materials and presenting a strong case for your candidacy will significantly enhance your chances of receiving external honorific awards.

Additionally, consider seeking guidance and feedback from colleagues who have received similar awards or who have experience with the application process. Keep in mind that the competition for external honorific awards can be fierce, so make your application as compelling as possible to increase your chances of success. If you would like guidance or more information about awards in your field, please contact Bailey Benninger at 607-777-6985 or at bbenning@binghamton.edu.