

FAQs

How will my project be judged?

The County Strategic Technology Advisory Resource Committee (CoSTAR) will rate each project based on the following seven attributes: creativity; innovation; cost savings; replication; leadership; increase efficiency; cooperation with others; and perseverance.

What are the awards categories?

Individual

The county employee that demonstrates excellence in action in improving the services delivered to the citizens of their county.

County inter-office

Projects that demonstrate excellence in action in crossing local county office lines to deliver services to the citizen.

Inter-governmental

Projects that show excellence in action in crossing governmental lines to deliver services to the citizen.

What are some examples of area of eligibility?

1. Arts and Historic Preservation
2. Community/Economic Development
3. Criminal Justice and Public Safety
4. Conservation and Environmental Stewardship
5. Information Technology
6. Transportation
7. Civic Education and Public Information
8. County Administration and Management
9. Emergency Management and Response
10. Health and Social Services
11. Planning
12. Volunteers

Where can I view past winning submissions for the award?

Clicking the Excellence in Action Award link on the ISAC website will allow you to view past submissions.

What happens if my county wins an award?

The Individual Award winner will receive the Excellence in Action crystal award. Entities award winners will receive a single crystal award with certificates for individuals on the entities' team. All NACo eligible winning projects will be forwarded to the National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Program for possible additional recognition. The fee for the NACo submission will be paid by ISAC.

How and when will I be notified if my county has won an award?

The contact person will be notified in October regarding the judges' decision on the application.



2010

Excellence in Action Awards



Send all applications to:

Iowa State Association of Counties
501 SW 7th Street, Suite Q
Des Moines, IA 50309

For more information contact:

Robin Harlow
515.244.7181
rharlow@iowacounties.org

What is the Excellence in Action Award Program?

The Excellence in Action Award Program is a competitive awards program which seeks to recognize innovative county government employees, programs, and projects.

Eligibility and Criteria

Who is eligible to submit applications?

Only county governments are eligible to submit applications. There is no limit to the number of applications county governments can submit.

What are the eligibility standards?

1. The program must have become operational after **January 1, 2009**, and must have measurable results.
2. County officials and/or staff, as part of their official duties, must have played a significant role in developing and implementing the program, with limited assistance from outside entities/individuals.
3. The program must meet the criteria outlined below.

What are the program criteria?

1. It must do one or more of the following:
 - **offer a new service** to county residents, fill gaps in the availability of existing services, or tap new revenue sources;
 - **improve the administration** or enhance the cost effectiveness of an existing county government program;
 - **upgrade the working conditions** or level of training for county employees;
 - **enhance the level of citizen participation** in, or the understanding of, government programs;
 - **provide information that facilitates** effective public policy making; or

- **promote intergovernmental cooperation** and coordination in addressing shared problems.
2. In the case of a program that is in response to a federal or state law, regulation, or order, the program must go beyond mere compliance with the statute, regulation or order, and must display a **creative approach** to meeting those requirements.
 3. The program **must have proven measurable results** (e.g. cost savings, enhanced employee productivity, improved constituent service, created better intergovernmental cooperation).
 4. The program **must be innovative** and not rely on the application of techniques or procedures that are common practice in most counties of similar population size.
 5. All aspects of the program must be consistent with acceptable governmental and financial management practices and must **promote general governmental accountability**.

Nomination Summary and Required Format

The nomination summary must:

- be written on no more than seven one-sided typewritten letter size pages;
- be written in layman's terms, so that the average reader can understand the objectives and judge the merits of the program. ISAC reserves the right to disqualify programs whose summaries are too technical;
- be well written. Poorly written applications are subject to disqualification;
- have measurable results. ISAC reserves the right to disqualify programs that are submitted prematurely and without measurable results; and
- have the name of the program and county submitting the application on the top of each summary page. Pages must also be numbered.

In the summary of the nominated program, the following seven items **must** be addressed in a number by number format. Failure to address any of these items may result in your applications disqualification.

1. **Abstract of the program:** In approximately 200 words or less, summarize your program.
2. **The problem/need for the program:** Discuss the problem/need that prompted the development of the program and the county's legal obligation, if any, to take action.
3. **Description of the program:** Provide a description of the nominated program, including: the objectives; the time frame for development and implementation; the cliental being served; the county's role in devising and implementing the program; and the contribution, if any, of other partners (e.g., state and federal government, consultants, private partner(s)).
4. **Use of technology:** Describe all items of technology that your program utilizes in its implementation. This could include intranet, internet, website, GIS, GPS, cable, kiosks, software, LAN, WAN, databases, etc. You may provide this information in a list or paragraph form. This information will be useful in helping ISAC highlight how big a role information technology plays in local community programs
5. **The cost of the program:** Describe both the operating and capital costs incurred in developing and implementing the program.
6. **The results/success of the program:** Provide a description of the results and the success of the program in meeting its objectives.
7. **Worthiness of an Award:** Give justification for why this program meets outlined criteria and should be awarded a 2010 ISAC Excellence in Action Award.

Application Deadline: September 10, 2010