Disclaimer: This guide is written and maintained by high school students who are speaking from their own history, and giving tips they have found to be helpful, but may not necessarily apply to everyone.

A few Alumni’s guide on the basics of each award 1100 applies to, in English rather than in confusing submission-speak! Check the document outline (ctrl+alt+A ctrl+alt+H) for a quick jump to whatever you’re looking for. We hope this helps!

# General Awards Tips

## *The Importance of Records*

Once you get to writing your award, you’ll find a lot of details are fuzzy. *Exactly* how many teams did we start in 2012? Which members volunteered at that event? How much material did we give to that FLL team? The best way to keep this confusion from happening is to keep a detailed team record. Having dates and saved correspondence will be *very* useful, as judges will often ask for proof or pictures that you’ve accomplished something.

Our team record (which was started only two years ago) is organized into alumni, our FLL and FRC interactions, events we have participated in, our resources, and our internal team history (captains, subteams, etc.) It’s written on our team email’s google drive, and has a mix of charts, written paragraphs, and contact information for the various people we’ve worked with in the past.

Some alternative methods, other than a google doc, could be:

* A tablet where you take attendance, take pictures, and have the team email logged in
* A physical paper log where students write what they did by filling out forms at events
* Events on facebook/google maps with details written at the location
* So on!

## *Writing for Awards*

Awards jargon is very difficult to handle; *starting* a team is not the same as *mentoring* a team, which isn’t the same as *assisting* a team which is also different than *hosting* a team. Make sure you take the time to learn all the terminology and specific definitions. Besides the technical definitions, writing for awards is a precarious balance between trying to sound formal but without embellishing.

We’ve found that one of the best processes is to have a second year member write the paragraph outline with the information they know. Then an olders student edits it with all the information that the younger student missed, as well as fixing up the word choice and going over their changes with the younger student. Then our awards leader and mentor look over the section, adding transitional phrases and making sure all the jargon is correct. After everything has all the *required* info, we edit for word/character count and the sound.

For example: *“The amazing turnout at this event got 1100 members to consistently volunteer for [Organization.]”* Assuming the event has already been addressed, the sentence is missing how many are volunteering, how much, and what time. However, if you’re using our “one for many” rule, leaving it vague is a possibility in the essay, but be aware the judges WILL ask for specifics. The phrases like *amazing turnout,* while sounding encouraging, can often be an extra words when there’s already so much to squeeze in. After our editing, it would become *“The turnout at the event inspired several 1100 members to volunteer monthly for [Organization.]”*

However, due to the stricter character limits on these essays, contractions are allowed, as are most abbreviations. Be careful to define any abbreviations that are specific to your team/that the judges may not know before using them.

## *Judging*

Each award is judged at a different time; for example, a Dean’s list nominated student will be interviewed, but for Chairman’s, judges and other teams are *always* watching and checking in with the team to see how they treat other teams. The smaller awards (Creativity, Safety, Imagery, etc) do not need submissions and are awarded solely on the judge’s impressions of the team. This is why Gracious Professionalism (GP) is so important; members should always be polite and kind, to each other and other teams--with a stress on *each other,* as friend groups have a tendency to joke around in what could be taken as an offensive way. The competition can be fun, but team members have to be careful not to get out of hand.

### Judgetalking

At all times, there should be a member in the stands and in the pit who knows the team’s outreach and history well, accompanied by a well-spoken student who knows the robot. These students are called *judgetalkers,* and since judges for Chairman’s and any other award can come around at any time, it is important that these students be around to answer any questions. These members must think quick on their feet, because judges love to ask curveball questions. If they ask something a judgetalker doesn’t know, they can redirect the question to a student or mentor who does, but they’d have to *know* who those students and mentors are.

## *The Submission Process*

Most awards will be submitted through firstinspires.org, and will require a student submitter to be named. The student will have to enter their FIRST profile to sign up for being a submitter--but this does *not* mean the student should submit it alone. A proofreading team of mentors and students should go over everything before pressing the final *submit* button. Awards usually have a *save and exit without submitting* option, so don’t worry if you want to do it in chunks.

Here’s the order that the deadlines go in (without specific dates):

* Digital Animation Award
* Chairman’s Essay and Executive Summary; Woodie Flowers Award
* Entrepreneurship Award; Dean’s List
* At competition:
  + Chairman’s Video and Interview
  + Judge’s Information/Spotlight Page

In case something goes wrong, always submit a day or two before.

# Chairman’s

The Chairman’s award is the biggest award in FIRST, and is awarded to the team that best represents the spirit of FIRST--AKA, a team that spreads STEM into various communities in various ways, volunteers at events, and helps other FIRST teams. In essence, a community outreach+Gracious Professionalism award. *This award only applies to actions in the last five years.* The winners of this award have an automatic ticket to regionals. We write an essay, answer questions limited to 500 characters (the Executive Summary,) make a video, and make a presentation in person. This award is judged by the essay, summary, presentation, as well as judges around the competition and on-the-spot interviews in the pit.

Winning Chairman’s at a district competition will send your team to the regionals regardless of your ranking in the matches.

The parameters for this award are extremely open-ended, meaning you can talk about almost anything your team does to help other teams. This is *not* the time to go into the specifics of your robot’s design, or your strategy for the year. This *is* the time to discuss how your team worked together to design the robot, or that you came up with your strategy by having all the kids come up with their own and then comparing and taking the majority. This is a bullet list of things we’ve found judges are interested in:

* Continuing existing outreach while starting/creating new outreach opportunities
* Bringing STEM and FIRST to communities that didn’t have exposure to them before (parades, demos, events, etc)
  + If you manage to get your school, local representatives, news, or any other authority figure/reputable group to notice your team’s work, make sure you mention that.
* Helping/expanding the FIRST community (in any capacity or level; published resources, lending out space, providing food, starting teams, helping get grants, etc)
* Your team’s non-STEM volunteering/outreach (promoting safety training, charity work, etc)
* Recognition/appreciation of mentors
* Alumni relations
* The impact of your team on its students
* How your team’s setup/teamwork is inclusive of all students, especially new ones
* How your team is working to better itself (safety training, brainstorming sessions, mentor-student-leadership communication)
* Sponsor relations

Each part of the Chairman’s application will cover some of the same information, but each facet should bring focus to one section or another. However, it’s *paramount* that you don’t bring anything up that you don’t have evidence for. The judges want to believe you, but if you don’t have *any* way to prove it, they have to err on the side of caution and assume you didn’t. Let’s say you had email correspondence with another team wherein you sent them various links and resources, and helped them edit an application for a grant; interview one of their students, or if you can’t, one of yours that was involved, and show the emails. (It’s okay to talk about things that are still in the works; upcoming demos, an event in a few months, etc, just be careful to clarify that it has not happened yet.)

Our team likes to make a binder which we give to the judges during the presentation phase, containing all our “evidence.” Pictures, printouts of emails, copies of our published resources, and anything else we think the judges might be interested in. We’ve found that it’s served us well, and can act as a dual-purpose presentation aid too.

[Here’s a presentation we gave at Assabet Valley’s (Team 157’s) kickoff, if you’re looking for a powerpoint version of all this info.](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1RctBhlonAs4e3WEo5mASXXXl0wzmqrTfWhpV4u2NUmI/edit?usp=sharing)

## *The Essay*

The Chairman’s essay is the best time for numbers and statistics; years, attendance rates, team size, so on. The judges will read this essay before you present and will have questions at the ready, or they may ask for clarification on certain points. We’ve found that the essay does best as a basic overview of every event with the statistics associated with each event as well. You want to focus on the events that have the *most* impact, but you don’t want to leave anything out. You should at least mention every everything, even if you have to elaborate on them during your presentation.

For our process, we tried to make a system that would create strong essays but be inclusive of all students. First, we refer to our team history to see what we’ve been up to in the last five years. Then we write a basic bullet list of everything we’ve done, with the specific statistics and dates. We ask our freshman/Awards Team in Training to write draft paragraphs beneath the section of the list they’re working off of. We have our older kids read through it with the younger students, highlighting sections that could be improved and making minor edits; then the younger students make a second round of edits, using the advice from the older students. Some last tweaks are made by the Awards Team leaders/older students. The mentors give a final proofreading and the entire team double-checks all the facts and numbers cited.

## *The Executive Summary*

Here’s some stuff you can expect the summary to ask:

* How your team spreads the message of FIRST
* Your team’s impact on:
  + Its members
  + Its community
  + Other FRC teams (as role models and when working together)
* Your team’s starting/forming, assisting, and mentoring of:
  + FLL teams
  + FTC teams
  + FRC teams
* An “other” question where you can fill in anything that doesn’t fit in the above categories.

The Executive Summary can only have answers of 500 characters, so it’s essentially the bulleted list of everything your team does for outreach, but not much for details. However, it’s the best way for you to demonstrate what your team does, and it gives the judges a quick reference for all your outreach. With the word limit, the foremost concern is of course being concise; you’ll most likely spend most of your time on the summary just finding ways to cut corners and shorten the responses as much as possible.

The questions themselves aren’t overly difficult or hard to understand, it’s just the matter of answering the question correctly--a single word can totally change the response they’re looking for. Two questions from last year:

* Describe the team’s initiatives to help start or form other *FIRST* teams (including *FIRST* LEGO League Jr., *FIRST* LEGO League, & *FIRST* Tech Challenge)
* Describe the team’s initiatives on assisting other *FIRST* teams (including *FIRST* LEGO League Jr., *FIRST* LEGO League, & *FIRST* Tech Challenge) with progressing through the *FIRST* program

There’s hardly a difference in the wording, but they’ll have entirely different answers.

There’s also the issue of stating your answer; there is *no* room for embellishment (and sometimes even specific stats have to be removed) due to the character limit. Let me put it this way--this paragraph is just above five hundred characters. Our team usually likes to write the Chairman’s essay first, and then copy/paste the section that answers the question in, and then work directly off what we’ve already written to condense it. This makes it easy for kids who might not know the team’s outreach inside out to help.

## *The Video*

The video is essentially a restatement of your essay, but with the visual factor bringing the essay to life. The visual factor allows you to show the interactions of your members with members of the community and each other. The video won’t be seen by the judges unless you’re in their top three potential picks for Chairman’s, or unless you choose to show it during the presentation. We prefer to because it gives a good overview/reminder to the judges, but you don’t have to if you have another way you’d like to state the information.

There’s so much possible variety for a video that even among our team, the style changes drastically from year to year. We’re really not sure what to advise you, because every video is unique, and since every message each team is sending is so different, there’s no one tried-and-true format we can give you. Planning to use the video in your presentation will make a very different product than just creating one to be shown if you win; as will having a video with primarily interviews versus pictures and voice overs.

Here’re the *requirements* for the video, which everyone needs to follow:

* A 16:9 (“widescreen aspect ratio”)
* Not more than 3 minutes long, no shorter than 1 minute long.
* Include a clean audio track, no pops/hisses
* Free of copyright restrictions, including music. No offensive or suggestive language, and copyrighted music must have written permission/or be used in accordance with appropriate license and properly attributed
* Must be presented to Judges on a USB Flash Drive with ONLY the Chairman’s award video file, in .mov or .wmv, compressed with the H.264/MPEG-4 codec. Make sure it’s playable, and label the USB/clear, sealable plastic bag it’s in with your team number and name
* A completed [Chairman’s Award Video Use Consent Form](https://www.firstinspires.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resource_library/frc/game-and-season-info/awards/2018/chairmans/2018-ca-video-consent-use-form.pdf) must be folded and included in the plastic bag.

Video may consist of:

* Video footage
* Voice over/music over still photographs
* Animated presentation
* PowerPoint converted to VIDEO format

Content Guidelines:

* Please show us what you are doing to earn the Chairman’s Award
* Please do not identify minors by full name, use only first names. Other required information to be given to the judges:
* Permission for *FIRST* to use your video in marketing & promotional material and/or live at *FIRST* events & competitions ([Chairman's Award Video Use Consent Form](https://www.firstinspires.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resource_library/frc/game-and-season-info/awards/2018/chairmans/2018-ca-video-consent-use-form.pdf))

Here’s some links to our videos and winning teams’ videos:

[Team 1100, 2013, Winner for Districts](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lWtOJX4mJo)

[Team 1100, 2014, Winner for Districts](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CB2q7fQg--E)

[Team 2035, 2016, Winner for Districts](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZbdyyfsECs)

[Team 1538, 2013, Unsure](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p62jRCMkoiw)

[Team 2638, 2016, Winner for Regionals](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0R0S7-2ut0c)

[Team 2614, 2017, Winner Overall](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EeHoscHnKI)

## *The Presentation*

Is where you can elaborate on what you couldn’t fit in the executive summary and/or happened after the essay was written.

The Chairman’s interview takes place at every competition that you are applying for Chairman’s at. You should sign up for a Chairman’s slot on the first night of competition (when teams drop off the robot and set up the pits) so that you can do the interview on the second or third day of competition. If you do not win the Chairman’s Award at your first district event, you can try again at your second event.

The interview is 12 minutes total. 7 of these minutes consists of your presentation; the 5 remaining minutes are for the judges to ask you questions.

The first step is to determine your Chairman’s interview team. A maximum of three students are allowed in the room. Team 1100’s Awards team determines its interview team by polling for interest and then having interested members carry out a short “audition,” so that the Awards team can get a feel for their fluency in speech, experience and knowledge with FIRST, and quick-thinking for questions.

After the Awards team determines the Chairman’s interview team, they work together to write a script for the content of their presentation, and practice with a timer in the weeks leading up to competition. It’s important that each member gets their script finished in a consistent timeframe so the interview team doesn’t go overtime.

Your first interview will come in the slot you have signed up for during competition. Make sure to run through your Chairman’s presentation a few times before the actual interview. Also be sure that you fill out the feedback form found on the FIRST website so the judges can give feedback (<https://www.firstinspires.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resource_library/frc/game-and-season-info/competition-manual/2016/ChairmansAwardFeedbackForm.pdf>).

FIRST allows you to also have one mentor in the room, but they *may not* contribute to the interview whatsoever; they can only observe and provide feedback to the team after the interview is over.

Sometimes the judges will let you do a brief introduction before you begin, but others will not. It may be good to ask if you’re timed upon entering the room. During our 7 minute presentation, Team 1100 often plays its Chairman’s video. This allows the judges to see what we’ve accomplished in a concise way within the first 3 minutes (since that is the maximum length of the video). In the remaining 4 of the 7 minutes, we add other items of interest that were not mentioned or featured in detail in the video. This time is evenly split between the three members of the Chairman’s interview team.

The 5 minute question period will follow. The interview team may prepare for this by being knowledgeable about the team’s accomplishments. They can also do practice questions prior to the actual interview. Some questions are clarification about what the team has accomplished; others are questions like “What does Gracious Professionalism mean to *you?*” We’ve been asked about the impact of events we’ve been to (“How many of these kids are in FLL?” “How is that rookie team now/have you had contact?”) As well as more personal questions about our future career paths and how FIRST has impacted our lives.

After the interview is over -- congratulate your interview team! They’ve worked hard to get this far. You might want to give them snacks.

You will hear about the results of the Chairman’s Award at your event during the awards ceremony at the conclusion of competition.

## *What We’ve Learned*

* *The judges value growth.* Rookie teams will often win this award because judges love to see a team growing their outreach, and a team starting from nothing who end in about the same place as an established team is golden. The years we’ve won Chairman’s are the years we started new events, took new demos, got new sponsors, and had members start volunteering at new events.
* *It’s more than STEM.* Many teams who have won do non-STEM volunteering, like helping local soup kitchens, homeless shelters, or doing 5ks. Outreach and volunteering of all kinds are good.
* *Diversity helps.* Volunteering with diverse groups (or those worse off than you or from a different area) reads very well for judges, as well as being a really fun experience. Refugees, inner city students, children, deaf students-- as many groups as you can manage.
* *One to many.* The actions of one or two students can be attributed as “member(s) of our team did \_\_\_\_” because it casts the team in a good light for the work of just a few kids. Just be careful to get pictures or documentation to show this, and be wary of things like “our team went to this event” when only one student attended, and be extra careful not to blow the participation out of proportion.

## Questions We’ve Gotten

Clarification and Probing Questions

-Tell us about [event.] (They either want more detail, to hear about the results, or to make sure all members know things.)

-How many kids who participated in [event] are in FLL now?

-How many people were at [event]? How many were young women/refugees/special group?

-How many years have you been doing [event]?

-Describe in detail the robots you built for [event with children.] (Looking for info on if they were FLL bots, other robots, VEX, etc)

-How is that rookie team you said you met with? Have you had contact since then?

-Could *you* (points to the student who’s answered the fewest questions) explain the mission statement of [event]?

-Has anything happened since you submitted these materials you want to bring up?

The Team as a Unit

-How do you make sure your new students stay involved/what’s the hook? (We’ve gotten variations of this one *a lot.*)

-Why did your team structure change/how does your hierarchy work?

-How do the student leaders provide assistance to the rest of the team?

Personal and Human Interest Questions

-What does Gracious Professionalism mean to *you?*

-What are you going to major in? How has FIRST influenced that for you?

-How did you find out about your team? What was the first meeting like?

-What’s your job on the team?

-How’s your team doing?

-How are you today?

Other

-Have you applied for FIRST scholarships? Why or why not?

-Is the FIRST website easy to navigate?

-What suggestions would you have for making FIRST scholarships more accessible?

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# Woodie Flowers

The Woodie Flowers award is awarded to one mentor on a team who lead, inspire, and empower with good communication skills. This should be a mentor who is good with students, and has helped the team grow by integrating freshman and teaching any/all students. The students (awards subsection, often with the input of others on the team) nominate one mentor per year, and have a student-written short essay about them. There is no interview or in-person questions of any kind; the essay is the only judging criteria.

Here are some ideas of how the mentor can inspire, listed on the FIRST awards site.

* Level of student participation;
* Creativity of effort;
* Clear explanation of mathematical, scientific, and engineering concepts;
* Demonstration of enthusiasm for Science and Engineering;
* Encouragement to work on projects as a team effort;
* Inspiration to use problem-solving skills;
* Inspiration to become an effective communicator; and
* Motivation through communication.

## *The Process*

Our team tries to avoid nominating the same mentor two years in a row, but otherwise we don’t have much of a selection process. We choose a mentor who is well-regarded, works well with the kids, and fits the above criteria.

We assign an awards team student to the essay. They then interview 3-5 students, asking questions like *“*”How does this mentor communicate with you?” “How do you feel when you work with them?” “What would you say is their greatest asset to the team?” to try and get good quotes and useable info. (You DO NOT have to do this; our team just likes the format and using quotes from students who know that mentor best. )One year, we even did a wordsplash with one of our mentors, having each student submit a word to describe that mentor and focusing on the one that occured the most. Then comes writing.

## *The Essay*

The difficulty in this award is writing an essay that portrays the mentor in the best way possible, while still remaining objective and honest. We’ve found that the easiest way to go about the essay is to use student interviews for quotes/descriptors. Here’s how we integrated quotes this year:

Dr. Wig’s communication is effective and motivational. One of the first things students recount is that “he’s extremely friendly and tries to be relatable to younger students; he tries to make them feel comfortable,” as Sarah puts it.

We get that finding the words to describe somebody in the way the essay requires can be very difficult. Directly addressing the criteria is fine, as long as you elaborate. For example, here’s a sentence from our Woodie Flowers this year:

Tejas also notes how Dr. Wig treats students like peers while still maintaining a non-overpowering sense of authority; students feel respected and pay him respect.

However, that’s about all the depth you need. Something fairly simple that proves that you not only understand the criteria, but that you have examples from that mentor to match. Communication and integration of younger students is paramount and should be stressed.

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# Dean’s List

The Dean’s List award is for juniors only; each team is allowed to nominate two students. Any junior who is interested may apply by filling out the required forms, but the MENTORS (not the Awards subsection) decides who will be the final nominees for 1100. These two students will have to do an interview during one competition, and if they win, will do another at the regional level. There are no questions asked in the pit/of their team members.

Here are things the Dean’s List kids should do:

* Demonstrated leadership and commitment to the ideals of *FIRST*
* Effectiveness at increasing awareness of *FIRST* in the school and community
* Interest in and passion for a long-term commitment to *FIRST*
* Overall individual contribution to their team
* Technical expertise and passion
* Entrepreneurship and creativity
* Ability to motivate and lead fellow team members

## *Application Essay*

Since most teams will inevitably have more than two juniors who will be worthy of nomination, many teams have some sort of preliminary selection process. Our team has students write an application essay, asking about how FIRST has impacted their life, how they believe they have impacted the team, and why they believe they are eligible for the award. Our mentors then select and announce the two students they will nominate for the team this year.

A mentor will then complete the following information to finish applying for the award:

* The student’s cumulative GPA; although the Dean’s List Award is not a strictly academic award, the GPA may be considered when determining the outstanding students.
* Name & location of student’s high school
* Number of years the student has participated in *FIRST*
* Number of years the student has participated on the team
* **An essay of not more than 4,000 characters attesting to why the student has been nominated.**

The essay the mentor(s) write can often play off of what is written by the students, but should remain formal and without the student’s editing.

## *The Interview*

The interview isn’t extremely rigorous, so no need to get your pants in a twist. Take a breath and chill. The calmer you are, the more likely you’ll be able to give clear answers. We suggest that everyone practice for the Dean’s List interview as if it were a job interview; it’s important to think over your words (and it’s more than fine to take a few seconds to think before answering), shake hands when you come in and when you leave, keep good posture, and even more important is to answer honestly. However, unlike a job interview, you can go to the Dean’s List interview in team gear, face paint, and hairspray. We suggest you take off any bulky mascot costumes/masks, though.

Here’s a list of questions we collected, from students and students on CheifDelphi (the FRC forums):

*What is your job on the team? What do you do to contribute/how have you helped improve the team?*

*How do you help keep your team motivated when things aren't going well?*

*How do you help new members on the team?*

*How do you try to increase awareness of FIRST?*

*What other community service have you done?*

*How do you plan to stay involved with STEM in your future?*

*Tell me about a time when you had to come up with a creative solution to a problem.*

*Do you plan on returning to FIRST as a mentor after you graduate and transferring on the knowledge and skills you've learn to future generations and shape their minds the same way your mentors did? (direct quote from Chief Delphi)*

## *What We’ve Learned*

* *Know the essay that was submitted via mentor*. They often ask for elaboration on essay topics, and may ask you to tell them more about a certain line.
* *They’ll ask about your life goals, especially in STEM*. They want to see dedicated STEM students. Don’t be worried about saying you’ll do STEM if you aren’t going to; they won’t dislike you if you’re not going to spend every moment of your life in STEM. They want you to be honest more than anything, so explain what you plan to do with your life as truly as you can.
* *It might go on tangents.* If the judges think you have an interesting story with a certain outreach event, or your family life/story is very unique, you might end up going on a tangent for a few minutes. Don’t worry! Just answer the questions they ask you.
* *It often goes over time.* If they’re asking you questions/are intrigued by something, the judges will go an extra few minutes. Don’t worry about watching the clock; they’ll handle it for you (but don’t give any 6 minute answers either!) This is very different than other awards, where you’re responsible for maintaining your time.
* *They might ask about your team dynamic/reputation too.* How does your team’s spirit impact you? Do you think your team’s legacy has influenced your choices on the team? Know your team’s history and current reputation, and be ready to talk about how that affects you, your teammates, and other teams.

# Entrepreneurship

# The Entrepreneurship award is to recognize teams that create a comprehensive business plan and then stick to it, while defining, managing and achieving the team’s business objectives for the year. However; what we’ve seen is that FIRST cares more about *how* you can best use the resources you *have,* rather than constantly acquiring more resources or having the most. The winning team shows “entrepreneurial enthusiasm” and has made a self sustaining program. You’ll need to submit a formal business plan through the Youth Team Member Registration Sys[tem](https://my.firstinspires.org/stims/site.lasso). A hard copies of a supplemental plan in a different format will also be accepted by judges at events. Below are the ideals that FIRST is aiming to see in winners of the Entrepreneurship award:

# The team has a clear concept or approach to building their team and functions as a complete unit.

# They assumed risks and were successful in managing that risk, dealing appropriately with adversity and unexpected events.

# They had a plan and executed it successfully.

# They understood the goals of the competition and the goals of *FIRST*.

# They demonstrated sustainability through, for example, succession and contingency planning.

# And here’s all the information you’ll need for the form (and notice how similar it is to Chairman’s, until the end; if you’ve done Chairman’s, you’re pretty much good to go for this award as well.)

# Teams must complete the following fields in English in order to be considered for this award.

# TEAM MISSION STATEMENT: Please briefly indicate what you believe to be the “driving engine” of your team. Your mission should be clear and concise. It should represent to any reader exactly what your business plan strives to accomplish. (1600 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

# TEAM ORIGIN: Please provide the date that your team formed, the location of your team, the current number of team members (highlighting any growth over past years) and describe the challenges the team had to overcome in order to participate in *FIRST* events. (1600 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: Please detail how the team is structured to 1) Raise funds; 2) Ensure funds are properly spent; 3) Find and engage sponsors; 4) Recruit team members/ mentors for current & future seasons; 5) Ensure *FIRST* principles remain core to the team’s efforts. Uploading an image of your team organizational chart below, will also satisfy this requirement. (1600 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation. Graphic image allowed in addition to or as an alternative to text - upload 5” x 4” 100 dpi resolution images that end in .JPG or .GIF)

# RELATIONSHIPS: Please detail team efforts to specifically engage, inspire, educate and retain 1) Team members; 2) Mentors; 3) Sponsors/Community. (1600 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

# DEPLOYMENT OF RESOURCES: Please detail how the resources of your team (Financial or otherwise) have been deployed to 1) Engage the community to spread the message of *FIRST*; 2) Inspire others to get involved so that *FIRST* continues to grow; 3) Ensure all team members get the most out of their *FIRST* experience. (1600 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

# FUTURE PLANS: Please indicate specific plans the team has for the next 3 years in regards to sponsorship, team and community outreach (including helping *FIRST* grow) and detail how you expect to be able to accomplish these goals. (1600 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

# FINANCIAL STATEMENT: Please include information on team finances (include financial statement detailing income and expenditures). Uploading an image of your team financial plan below, will also satisfy this requirement. (1600 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation. Graphic image allowed in addition to or as an alternative to text - upload 5” x 4” 100 dpi resolution images that end in .JPG or .GIF)

# RISK ANALYSIS: Please describe the team’s risk mitigation plan. Present a SwOT (Strengths, weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis or narrative that describes the team plan to identify and respond to sustainability threats. (1600 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

# PICTURES: Please upload Organizational Charts and Budgets. Picture 1: Please upload 5” x 4” 100 dpi resolution images that end in .JPG or .GIF Picture 2: Please upload 5” x 4” 100 dpi resolution images that end in .JPG or .GIF Picture 3: Please upload 5” x 4” 100 dpi resolution images that end in .JPG or .GIF Picture 4: Please upload 5” x 4” 100 dpi resolution images that end in .JPG or .GIF

## *The Importance of Records: The Records Strike Back*

And here’s where record keeping becomes absolutely vital; for this award, you need to have an *iron grip* on your financial records and be well aware of all the ways your team makes money. Our school district has very strict rules on how money can be taken from a club account as well, so getting copies of all that paperwork could be very helpful in figuring out where the money goes.

But you’ll have to track more than just your monetary value; allocation of resources includes volunteer time, lending tables, letting people use your space, and so on. Ask students what they did *immediately* after they assist with an event to make sure nobody forgets any details. If you can, take pictures so you can double check your records against the photos. Sign-up or sign-out sheets for students volunteering can act doubly as attendance sheets and a time log. Anything that can ensure you don’t accidentally create fraudulent records is a good thing.

# Accepting Other Awards

There are smaller, other awards (creativity, engineering inspiration, judge’s, rookie all star, etc) that are given to teams at each competition, that are not applied for. They are usually earned through a very well designed robot, a spirited and helpful team, decoration of the robot and pit, or a rookie team that does very well considering their age.

Below is a table of all these types of awards (there are a lot:)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Creativity Award Sponsored by Xerox* | Celebrates creativity in design, use of component, or strategy of play. |
| *Digital Animation Award Sponsored by Automation Direct* | Celebrates the art of the digital animation and its close relationship to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics). |
| *Engineering Inspiration Award* | Celebrates outstanding success in advancing respect and appreciation for engineering within a team’s school and community. |
| *Excellence in Engineering Award sponsored by Delphi* | Celebrates an elegant and advantageous machine feature. |
| *Finalist* | Celebrates the Alliance that makes it to the final match of the competition. |
| *Founder’s Award* | Recognizes the organization or individual that has contributed significantly to the growth of FIRST. |
| *Gracious Professionalism® Award Sponsored by Johnson & Johnson* | Celebrates outstanding demonstration of FIRST Core Values such as continuous Gracious Professionalism® working together both on and off the playing field. |
| *Highest Rookie Seed Award* | Celebrates the highest-seeded rookie team at the conclusion of the qualifying rounds. |
| *Industrial Safety Award Sponsored by Underwriters Laboratories* | Celebrates the team that progresses beyond safety fundamentals by using innovative ways to eliminate or protect against hazards. |
| *Innovation in Control Award Sponsored by Rockwell Automation* | Celebrates an innovative control system or application of control components – electrical, mechanical, or software – to provide unique machine functions. |
| *Quality Award Sponsored by Motorola Solutions Foundation* | Celebrates machine robustness in concept and fabrication. |
| *Imagery Award in honor of Jack Kamen* | This award celebrates attractiveness in engineering and outstanding visual aesthetic integration of machine and team appearance. |
| *Industrial Design Award Sponsored by General Motors* | Celebrates form and function in an efficiently designed machine that effectively addresses the game challenge. |
| *Judges’ Award* | During the course of the competition, the judging panel may decide a team’s unique efforts, performance, or dynamics merit recognition. |
| *Rookie All-Star Award* | Celebrates the rookie team exemplifying a young but strong partnership effort, as well as implementing the mission of FIRST to inspire students to learn more about science and technology. |
| *Rookie Inspiration Award Sponsored by National Instruments* | Celebrates a rookie team’s outstanding success in advancing respect and appreciation for engineering and engineers, both within their school, as well as in their community. |
| *Safety Animation Award Sponsored by UL* | Recognizes the team that submits a short animated film that best promotes the current season’s team safety focus. Please visit the Safety Page for more information about this award. |
| *Team Spirit Award sponsored by FCA Foundation* | Celebrates extraordinary enthusiasm and spirit through exceptional partnership and teamwork furthering the objectives of FIRST. |
| *Volunteer of the Year Award* | Presented to an individual, business, or organization that consistently excels in their efforts, with proven results in the areas of Impact, Leadership, Personal Commitment, Community, and Historical Contributions. |
| *Winner* | Celebrates the Alliance that wins the competition. |

When the award is being given to the team, be sure to listen to *why.* If the judges like how GP your team is, do more of that (and capitalize on it in your upcoming awards.) In regards to robot design, listening to why other teams win can often inspire new methods to design or machine our robot. Every award given is a learning opportunity, and a chance to try and improve in other sections. A team that wins Chairman’s will most likely qualify for some of these awards, but not all, and teams that win Entrepreneurship will qualify for others. Accept the award gracefully, and always keep looking to improve.

# Links/Resources

[The Awards description website](https://www.firstinspires.org/resource-library/frc/submitted-awards)

[Feedback Form for judges during Chairman’s Interview](https://www.firstinspires.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resource_library/frc/game-and-season-info/competition-manual/2016/ChairmansAwardFeedbackForm.pdf)