

RURAL ONTARIO LEADERS AWARDS

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs



Program and Application Guide

2017

Rural Ontario Leaders Awards
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
1 Stone Road West, 3rd Floor SW
Guelph, Ontario N1G 4Y2
Tel: 1-877-424-1300
E-mail: ruralleaders@ontario.ca

www.ontario.ca/RuralLeaders

Rural Ontario Leaders Awards 2017

Program and Application Guide

Deadline: November 15, 2017 is the due date for applications. Electronic applications must be received no later than 5 p.m. EST and hard copy applications must be postmarked by the deadline date to be accepted.

Introduction

Rural communities are an essential part of our cultural and economic fabric and the Ontario government is committed to ensuring they remain vibrant places where our children can learn, grow, work and play.

Strong rural communities help create good jobs, attract investment and promote new economic opportunities for their residents and businesses.

Celebrating innovative leadership that keeps rural communities economically, socially and environmentally vibrant is a priority for the government of Ontario.

That is why the Ontario government created the **Rural Ontario Leaders Awards**.

Every two years, this program will recognize outstanding leadership in the area of rural economic development that supports one or more of the following outcomes:

- Training and skills development
- Entrepreneurship and local employment
- Strong social infrastructure
- Civic engagement

The Rural Ontario Leaders Awards has five streams with up to one winner in each of the following categories:

- Individual (25 years of age and older)
- Individual -Youth (24 years of age and younger)
- Community (lower-tier municipality, Indigenous community)
- Business
- Not-for-profit/non-government organization

Recipients in their award category receive:

- A Rural Ontario Leaders Awards plaque
- An invitation to attend the awards reception at the Rural Ontario Summit in February 2018
- Award recipients will also receive a media kit detailing recipient achievements in multiple formats and the use of the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards wordmark to support their marketing and promotional efforts

The recipients of the 2017 awards will be announced at The Rural Ontario Summit in February 2018.

Objectives

The objectives of the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards are to:

- Recognize rural Ontario's contributions to the economy
- Promote initiatives that contribute to the quality of life and economic well-being of rural Ontario
- Support knowledge and technology transfer to inspire the adoption of best practices and initiatives that enable rural economic development
- Raise awareness about rural Ontario's ability to foster a competitive and innovative business environment, and strong leadership

Eligibility Criteria

Nominees must meet the criteria for a category (a, b, c, d or e):

a) Individual Award (25 years of age and older)

- Be a resident of Ontario
- Must be 25 years of age or older
- Individual applicants need not be rural residents but their leadership achievement must result in a significant benefit to rural Ontario.

b) Youth Award (Individual - 24 years of age and younger)

- Be a resident of Ontario
- Individual youth applicants must be 24 years of age and younger Individual youth applicants need not be rural residents but their leadership achievement must result in a significant benefit to rural Ontario.

c) Community (Municipality, Town, Village, Hamlet)

- Only communities classified as rural (a population of less than 100 000) may be eligible for this award
- A group of communities or a region is eligible to apply if they are collaborating for the purposes of regional planning and managing common services such as counties or former counties
- Indigenous communities and remote northern communities are encouraged to apply for the award.

d) Business

- Must be Ontario based with a direct relationship to rural Ontario
- All types of businesses are eligible including:
 - Sole proprietorship
 - Corporation duly incorporated pursuant to the laws of Canada or the laws of Ontario
 - partnership
 - Unincorporated association
- Nominees must be in compliance with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal legislation that apply to the operation of the business.

e) Not-For-Profit/Non-Governmental Organization

- Not-For-Profit/Non-Governmental Organization that do not operate on a sole for-profit basis and may include:
 - Registered charities
 - Religious organizations
 - Social entrepreneurships
 - Cooperatives
 - Community development agencies or organizations
 - Economic development agencies or organizations
 - Individuals affiliated with any of the above organizations

Ineligibility Criteria

Nominees are ineligible for the program if:

- They are an employee of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)
- Individuals employed by OMAFRA who are owners of, members of, or have a controlling and/or financial interest in a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation and any combination of business or organization.

NOTE:

Nominators can nominate more than one nominee under each stream, provided that the nominee meets the eligibility criteria. A separate application form will be required for each nomination.

Nominees and nominators must be willing to participate in interviews, site visits, photographs and video recordings at the discretion of OMAFRA or selection committees.

OMAFRA has the right to refuse an application for any reason, including but not limited to concerns with compliance, undue influence, false or misleading information.

Areas of Leadership

Leadership may include demonstrated excellence in the following:

- Local and or regional rural economic development
- Fostering an innovative rural economy
- Rural community development
- Cultural development
- Attracting tourism
- Environmental stewardship
- Promoting the value of Ontario's agri-food sector
- Working to attract Human capital
- Youth retention

Application Process

Applications must be received either electronically or be postmarked **by 5 p.m. EST on November 15, 2017**. The application form can be downloaded from: www.ontario.ca/ruralleaders

Please refer to the last page of the Application Form for options to submit your completed application.

Please ensure that you answer all questions in the application form.

Applicants and nominators are strongly encouraged to include photos (300 dpi - dots per inch) supporting the application in electronic format, if available. Print copies will be accepted. Letters of support are also encouraged.

Nominees must consent to the collection of personal, business or organizational information in relation to the administration of the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards.

Nominees must consent to the disclosure of any personal information (name, job, title, etc.) collected in relation to the administration of the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards, including the publication of personal information used for the purpose of providing information about the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards.

Selection Process

The selection process for the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards recipients is as follows:

- An acknowledgement e-mail will be sent to each nominee.
- Applications will be reviewed for eligibility and considered by two independent review panels: (1) an internal OMAFRA panel with staff and; (2) an external panel of recognized leaders in the field of rural economic development.
- The internal review panel will evaluate all applications and provide a short list to the external review panel.
- The external panel will assess the selected award applications and make recommendations to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (Minister).
- The Minister will review the recommended applications and approve award winners in each of the five leadership categories.

Assessment Criteria

The following criteria will be used to assess applications:

- **Uniqueness and Originality** - where and how the leadership initiative originated and the uniqueness of design or style used to produce positive change in rural Ontario.
- **Community Benefits** - The extent to which the leadership achievement is leading to, or has led to, demonstrable positive change in rural Ontario.
- **Impact** - the positive economic and/or social benefit to rural Ontario communities, businesses and development organizations.
- **Development** - the extent to which the leadership initiative has been thought through to implementation.
- **Broader Use** - the potential for use on a broader basis and be able to demonstrate the potential for having a positive effect if applied elsewhere in rural Ontario.

Nomination Form

***NOMINATION DEADLINE: November 15, 2017 by 5:00PM
EST***

NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Individual, Youth Individual, Business, Community or Non-Government Organization:

Nomination Type (check one):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual (25 years of age and older) | <input type="checkbox"/> Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual – Youth (24 years of age and younger) | <input type="checkbox"/> Community |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Government Organization |

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ Region/County/District: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Website: _____ Social Media Accounts: _____

NOMINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

- ☐ IF THIS IS A SELF-NOMINATION, PLEASE CHECK THIS BOX AND PROCEED TO THE NOMINEE PROFILE SECTION.

Nominator Contact: _____ Title: _____

Relationship to Nominee: _____

Phone: _____ Alternate/Cell Phone: _____

Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Website: _____

Has the nominee been told that they are being nominated for this award? Y/N

NOMINEE PROFILE

Individual / Youth Individual:

Please attach a brief biography of the nominee. You may include links to web-sites, media stories or other materials that would help describe the individual.

Business / NGO:

Please attach your organization's mission statement, purpose and objectives. You may include links to web-sites, media stories or other materials that would help describe the organization.

Community / Region:

Please attach a brief profile of the community or region being nominated including location, size, economic and demographic statistics, etc. You may include links to web-sites, media stories or other materials that would help describe the community or region.

LEADERSHIP ACHIEVEMENT DESCRIPTION

- ☐ **Provide a Title of the Leadership Achievement. (15 words maximum)**
- ☐ **Summarize the Leadership Achievement. (50 words maximum)**

Describe the Leadership Achievement. (Maximum 1000 words)

- ☐ Please provide a detailed description of the reason(s) why the nominee should receive the award. You may use the assessment criteria as sub-headings (Uniqueness and Originality, Community Benefits, Impact, Development and Broader Use) within your document or you may provide an essay-format submission. Content may include:
 - A description of the individual or organization as it relates to the leadership achievement and any background or contextual information.
 - What made this an outstanding leadership achievement – indicate any extraordinary circumstances or challenges.
 - The impact that this achievement has had locally and/or on the rest of the province.
 - Best practices in leadership.
 - When the leadership achievement was initiated and completed, or if it is ongoing.

Testimonials / Letters of Support

- ☐ A minimum of two signed testimonials from individuals, other than the nominator, who have direct knowledge of the value and impact of the nominee's achievement and who support the nomination. Please ensure that the contact information of the testimonial writer is included.

Additional Material (optional)

The following materials are not mandatory but you are encouraged to supplement your nomination in order to improve its overall strength.

- ☐ Additional supporting material such as supplementary testimonials, publications, media stories, evidence of leadership excellence being recognized by other groups or individuals.

ELIGIBILITY

- ☐ I certify that the nominee(s) meet the eligibility criteria for the program stream for which they are nominated, as set out in the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards 2017 Guidebook.

CERTIFICATION

Compliance with Terms and Conditions of Participation

- ☐ I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have read, understood, agreed and complied with the terms and conditions of participation in the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards program, as outlined in the 2017 Program Guidebook and Application Form, and certify that the information provided on all parts pertaining to the program is true, complete to the best of my knowledge and can be substantiated.

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Family Relationship

- ☐ I certify that the nominee(s) are not employees of OMAFRA.
- ☐ I certify that I, the nominator, am not an employee of OMAFRA.

Applicant: _____

Title: _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

PART D - CERTIFICATION

The information you supply on this form is being collected by the OMAFRA Economic Development Division and will be used and disclosed for the purpose of administering and promoting the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards Program. This includes processing this form, confirming any eligibility requirements and contacting you in the event that you or the nominee is an award recipient. The information you provide in this form may be subject to audit and also be shared with external review panels. In the event that you are an award recipient, your name, contact information and photographs may also be disclosed in print and/or electronic form to promote the objectives of the Rural Ontario Leaders Awards Program as set out in the 2017 Program Guidebook and Application Form. Recipients of this award will be recognized at an awards event in 2018.

Questions about the collection of personal information on this form can be directed to the Program Analyst, Regional Economic Development Branch, OMAFRA, 1 Stone Road West, 3rd Floor SW, Guelph, Ontario, N1G 4Y2, or by phone at 1-519-826-3278.

Mailing address and contact information.

Submit your application postmarked by 5 p.m. EST on

November 15, 2017 to:

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Attn: Rural Ontario Leaders Awards

1 Stone Road West, 3rd Floor SW

Guelph, Ontario N1G 4Y2

Online at: www.ontario.ca/ruralleaders

E-mail: ruralleaders@ontario.ca

Fax : 519-826-3442

For more information, contact the Agricultural Information Contact Centre at 1-877-424-1300.

Contact Information

Agricultural Information Contact Centre: 1-877-424-1300
E-mail: ruralleaders@ontario.ca
Fax: 519-826-3442

ontario.ca/ruralleaders



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