

Celebrate Literacy Award Guidelines and Report Form

An International Reading Association
Award for Presentation by
Local Councils, State or Provincial Associations

The International Reading Association seeks to promote literacy worldwide by improving the quality of reading instruction through the study of the reading process and teaching techniques. IRA supports two award programs that recognize significant contributions to literacy: the International Reading Association Literacy Award, presented each year by UNESCO, and the Celebrate Literacy Award, implemented by the local councils and state and provincial associations of IRA.

The Celebrate Literacy Award recognizes organizations, institutions, and individuals that have made significant literacy contributions at the local, state, or provincial level. We hope the celebration will familiarize the public with literacy activities in the community and call attention to the work that is being done by the schools and the International Reading Association to promote literacy worldwide.

Candidates who have shown exemplary accomplishments in any of the following areas may be suggested for consideration as Celebrate Literacy Award recipients: (1) direct teaching at any level, (2) organizing local literacy programs, (3) promoting support from the public relative to enhancing literacy, (4) producing teaching materials or special media for literacy programs, (5) conducting research in field related to literacy, (6) conducting special surveys of importance for literacy planning, (7) providing young people the opportunity to help in literacy activities, and (8) conducting informal educational activities of a social, cultural, economic, or political nature in which literacy activities are included (radio and television programs, publications and press, library programs, and projects for special populations, such as the handicapped and the aged).

Each nomination must include the following information:

(a) name, address, and phone number of the nominee; (b) description of the contributions to literacy on which the nomination is based (not to exceed three pages); and (c) results of the contributions and their benefit to the community, state, or province.

The council should determine specific guidelines for the Celebrate Literacy Award. However, many associations follow the IRA suggestion that eligibility to receive the award be open to all segments of the community, state, or province—not just to those who hold membership in the organization. Many states and provinces follow the practice of accepting the recipients of the local councils' Celebrate Literacy Award as nominees for the state or provincial level of the award.

INTERNATIONAL
Reading Association



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Celebrate Literacy Award

Steps for Implementation

Commitment and Budget:

At the beginning of the council year, the Celebrate Literacy Award is adopted as a project, and sufficient funds are budgeted. The budget may include printing or copying of the new nomination form, postage, telephone, committee expenses, and possible recipients' travel expenses.

Committee

Appointment: A chairperson and committee should be appointed to organize and carry out the project, and specific responsibilities should be designated to the appropriate individuals or committee (i.e., publicity, liaison with local councils, treasurer, etc.). Areas of responsibility must be clearly defined and understood by everyone involved.

Suggested

Procedures:

Develop a timeline for processing and implementation including time, date, and place of the awards presentation.

Develop criteria for selecting the recipients.

Prepare a nomination form to be distributed to council members and other individuals, agencies, and institutions interested or involved in literacy that are eligible to nominate potential candidates. *The deadline, criteria, and process for returning nominations must be clearly stated on the form.*

Coordinate activities with the public information or publicity committee to ensure maximum publicity.

Participation by the state or provincial award committee in the state or provincial association's leadership workshop for local council officers is recommended. The committee should make a presentation related to the award and discuss how local councils may participate in this award project.

Select a minimum of five people to serve as members of the jury that will be responsible for reviewing all nominations submitted and for selecting the recipients. Members of the jury should be representative of persons throughout the community, state, or province not just the council. (See section on selecting a jury.)

Announce the award to the community. Include information on how to submit the names of nominees, as well as the criteria and deadlines for submission of nominations. Include institutions of higher education, ministerial associations, government agencies, libraries, civic groups, and service organizations in your contacts.

After receiving nominations by the deadline, have the jury meet to screen the nominations and choose the recipients.

Notify the recipients immediately, and advise them of the time and place of the awards presentation.

Order the specially designed certificate from IRA Headquarters using the form provided. The certificate will be personalized with the recipient's name and signed by the current IRA President, with a place for the council president to cosign and date the certificate.

Complete the plans for the awards presentation.

Present the awards.

Distribute press releases prior to and following the presentations.

Celebrate Literacy Award

Further Recommendations

Selecting a Jury:

To minimize expense and time involved in the screening of the nominees, the jury members may be drawn from the same locale, with the understanding that the locale will alternate annually.

Jury members should represent a broad cross-section of the community; areas of selection may include government, business, education, medicine, law, and civic and religious groups. The chairperson of the Celebrate Literacy Award Committee serves as an ex officio member of the jury. The council's Board of Directors or other designated body should make any necessary approval of the jury.

Letters of invitation to participate should be mailed to the selected individuals. If any decline to serve, a list of alternates should be available.

Awards

Presentation: Plans for the awards presentation may vary. Some councils hold their awards ceremony in connection with the annual conference, while others have a separate presentation. In either case, the time, date, and place should be announced at the council meetings and programs, with subsequent publicity included in council newsletters and informational mailings.

The program for the awards ceremony may involve student groups, community resources, and activities that will promote maximum participation and attendance. The site should be selected to ensure good attendance and media coverage. Consideration should be given to changing locations annually so all interested parties may participate.

Request that the appropriate government official proclaim the date of the awards ceremony as "Literacy Day" in the community, state, or province. Or, plan your event to coincide with the International Literacy Day, September 8.

Select and invite a keynote speaker or presenter for the ceremony. The individual could be a community, state or provincial official, civic or business leader, IRA Board member, or educator.

Send special invitations to community, state, or provincial and community leaders to attend the ceremony. Encourage civic organizations, school groups, and other agencies interested in literacy to participate.

Report and Order Form:

Included with this set of guidelines is a form for reporting the names of your recipients and for ordering certificates. The names of the individuals or institutions receiving your award must be printed legibly or typed.

Because the intent of the Celebrate Literacy Award is to recognize truly exemplary and outstanding contributions to literacy, we ask that you request no more than five certificates. We encourage each council to create its own "honorable mention" item for others worthy of recognition.

If appropriate, information on the various award recipients may be submitted to appear in *Reading Today*.

Celebrate Literacy Award

Checklist of Responsibilities

Task	Date Due	Responsible Person/Committee
Accept as a project by council.	_____	_____
Adopt budget.	_____	_____
Select committee.	_____	_____
Send chairperson's name to IRA.	_____	_____
Review guidelines of responsibility.	_____	_____
Set timeline.	_____	_____
Set selection criteria.	_____	_____
Distribute nomination forms.	_____	_____
Publicize nomination information.	_____	_____
Select jury.	_____	_____
Receive nominations.	_____	_____
Review jury recommendations.	_____	_____
Select recipients.	_____	_____
Notify recipients.	_____	_____
Prepare for awards ceremony.	_____	_____
Request certificates from IRA using the enclosed report form.	_____	_____
Publicize awards ceremony.	_____	_____
Present award.	_____	_____
Publicize award recipients.	_____	_____
Begin plans for next year.	_____	_____

