



*U.S. Small Business Administration*

*"Today's SBA: Smart, Bold, Accessible"*

## **2015 Small Business Week Application & Guidelines**

Lower Rio Grande Valley District Office & Corpus Christi Branch Office

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Lower Rio Grande Valley District Office is seeking amazing entrepreneurs and champions of small business to honor during the 2015 National Small Business Week Awards event in May.



## 2015 Small Business Week Application & Guidelines

### A. NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Work Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Website:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**SBA Assistance (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

### B. NOMINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Work Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

### C. SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AWARD (Check ONLY one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Small Business Person of the Year <i>(National, State, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Small Business Exporter of the Year <i>(National, Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ 8(a) Graduate of the Year <i>(National, Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Phoenix (Disaster Recovery) Awards <i>(National, Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ SBA Resource Partner Awards <i>(National, Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Small Business Investment Company of the Year <i>(National, Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year <i>(Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Family-Owned Business of the Year <i>(Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Entrepreneurial Success Award <i>(Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Financial Services Champion of the Year <i>(Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Home-Based Business Champion of the Year <i>(Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Minority Small Business Champion of the Year <i>(Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year <i>(Region, District)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	➤ Women in Business Champion of the Year <i>(Region, District)</i>



**D. Part 1. AWARD NOMINATION FORM-BACKGROUND (SBA Form 3300)**

**Link:** [SBA Award Nomination Background Form \(SBA Form 3300\)](#)

**E. Part 2. NOMINATION LETTER**

**Note:** *Not to exceed four pages. Can be included here or attached separately*

**Nomination Letter** to include a concise statement of the qualities and performance that merit the award.

**Description of business (services and/or products):**

**Reason for nomination? If jobs were created, loans obtained and/or sales increased, please provide quantified numbers if possible.**

*(Review criteria and address each item if possible.)*

**F. Part 3. BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THE NOMINEE**

**Note:** *Not to exceed one page. (Team nominations require biography for each individual.)*

**G. Part 4. BUSINESS PROFILE**

**Note:** *Not to exceed one page.*

**Please include answers to these questions:**

When did you start your business (month/year)?

Any challenges that the business/business owner overcame?

What are the future plans for the business?

**H. Part 5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

**Note:** *Not to exceed 12 pages.*

The nominee's financial statement — including balance sheets, profit-and-loss statements and financial reports — not exceeding 12 pages, on 8 1/2" x 11" paper - for 2011, 2012, 2013.

**I. Part 6. OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Note:** *Supporting documentation must not exceed 10 pages. Videos will not be considered.*

Any other supporting documentation deemed significant by the nominator, including news clips, letters of recommendation and other evidence of the appropriateness of the nomination.

Has your business been published in any publications? If yes, what publication and when?

Do you have a copy? If available, please provide a copy via email (if possible).



**J. Part 7. PHOTO OF THE NOMINEE**  
*Note: Original 8"x10" or 5"x7" photo or digital photo at least 300 dpi.  
Photocopies are not acceptable.*

**K. Part 7. PHOTOS OF THE NOMINEE'S COMPANY AND EMPLOYEES AT WORK**  
*Note: Original 8"x10" or 5"x7" photos or digital photos at least 300 dpi.  
Photocopies are not acceptable.*

**L. KEY DEADLINES**

Award nomination packets can be postmarked or hand delivered no later than 2 p.m. CST, Monday, Jan. 5, 2015.

**M. WHERE TO SEND NOMINATIONS**

Nominations must be submitted to the U.S. Small Business Administration district office in the state or territory where the nominee is located – for Lower Rio Grande Valley District Office or Corpus Christi Branch Office please send to:

**U. S. Small Business Administration  
Lower Rio Grande Valley District Office  
Attn: Veronica Z. Ortega  
2422 E. Tyler Avenue, Suite E.  
Harlingen, TX 78550  
Phone: 956-427-8533 ext. 233  
Email: [veronica.ortega@sba.gov](mailto:veronica.ortega@sba.gov)**

**U. S. Small Business Administration  
Corpus Christi Branch Office  
Attn: Debbie Fernandez  
2820 S. Padre Island Dr., Suite 108  
Corpus Christi, TX 78415  
Phone: 361-879-0017 ext. 303  
Email: [debbie.fernandez@sba.gov](mailto:debbie.fernandez@sba.gov)**

National award nominations can be submitted online at <https://nationalsmallbusinessweek.sba.gov>.

**N. SELECTION PROCEDURES FOR AWARDS**

Small Business Persons of the Year Award winners will be selected at the district, state and national levels. In those states served by more than one SBA district office, additional awards may also be given at the district level. Winners are selected by a panel of judges. Winners at each level will be considered for awards at the next highest level. Nomination packages for each state winner will be sent to regional SBA offices and prepared for transmittal to the SBA's Office of Communications and Public Liaison for review. The National Small Business Person of the Year will be selected by the SBA Administrator based on the recommendations of the Agency's National Small Business Week panel of judges. The winner will be announced during National Small Business Week. Non-federal employees serving as judges must sign a conflict of interest/non-disclosure certification.



## O. EVALUATION/SELECTION CRITERIA FOR SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

### **What are the evaluation/selection criteria for the Small Business Person of the Year award?** (National, State, District)

In evaluating the nomination packages, the judges will look at the following criteria:

1. Staying power — a substantiated history as an established business; including:
  - Number of years in business.
  - Sustained expansion, addition of territories, growth in square footage occupied.
  - Steady growth in net worth as evidenced by total assets less total liabilities on fiscal year end annual balance sheets for 2011, 2012 and 2013.
2. Growth in number of employees — a benchmark to judge the impact of the business on the job market.
  - Sustained over a minimum of three years.
  - Increase over the three years must be in excesses of growth in Gross National Product.
3. Increase in sales and/or unit volume — an indication of continued growth over the last three years.
  - Consistent growth in net income as evidenced by fiscal year annual profit-and-loss statements for calendar years 2011, 2012 and 2013.
4. Current and past financial performance — financial reports substantiate an improved financial position of the business.
  - Profit-and-loss statements for the calendar years 2011, 2012 and 2013, reflecting sustained upward growth.
  - Balance sheets for the calendar years 2011, 2012, and 2013, showing consistent increase in net worth and/or partners' return.
5. Innovativeness of product or service offered — an illustration of the creativity and imagination of the nominee.
  - Specific description of uniqueness of product or service.
  - Explanation of how product or service fits a niche not being adequately addressed by the competition.
6. Response to adversity — examples of problems faced in the nominee's business and the methods used to solve them, including:
  - Specific description of financial, physical, legal or other crisis.
  - Substantiation of the threat to the continuity of the business.
  - Defined actions taken by the nominee to resolve the crisis.
7. Contributions to community-oriented projects — evidence of the use of his/her personal time and resources, including:
  - Listing of specific contributions of money, time, or resources to charitable causes.
  - Membership in councils, boards and clubs providing support and services to the community.



## P. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AWARDS

### **Who is eligible to be nominated for other Small Business Week awards?**

To be nominated and receive one of these awards, the small business nominee must fit within the category of the award:

Small Business Exporter of the Year: An individual who owns and operates a small business engaged in exporting.

8(a) Graduate of the Year: This award recognizes a formerly certified 8(a) Business Development Program participant that graduated from the program for at least one year as of April 1, 2014. The firm does not have to currently be a small business.

Phoenix (Disaster Recovery) Awards: These awards are given to those individuals (business owners, public officials and volunteers) whose efforts and contributions have enabled their business or communities to recover successfully from a disaster.

Resource Partners Awards: Awards honor Small Business Development Centers, Veteran Business Outreach Centers and Women's Business Centers.

### Small Business Investment Company of the Year:

Award is presented to a Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) that has used the SBA Debenture program to enhance access to capital for America's small business.

SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year: To be considered a young entrepreneur, the individual must serve as a majority owner and operate or bear principal responsibility for operating a small business with a three year track record, and who will not have reached the age of 30 by June 1, 2015.

Family-Owned Business of the Year: This award honors a family-owned and operated business which has been passed on from one generation to the next. The owner must also serve as a majority owner and operator or bear principal responsibility with at least a 15-year track record.

Entrepreneurial Success Award: Individuals must own and operate businesses initially launched as small according to SBA size standards and subsequently developed into large businesses; and they must have received SBA assistance to help the businesses grow.

The following Champion award nominees may or may not be small business owners:

Financial Services Champion of the Year: An individual who assists small businesses through advocacy efforts to increase the usefulness and availability of accounting or financial services.



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Home-Based Business Champion of the Year: An individual who has experienced the rewards and difficulties of owning a home-based business and has volunteered to improve the climate for these businesses may be nominated.

Minority Small Business Champion of the Year: An individual who has fulfilled a commitment to the advancement of small business opportunities for minority business owners.

Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year: An individual who has fulfilled a commitment to the advancement of small business opportunities for veterans of the U.S. armed forces may be nominated. Nominees may or may not be veterans.

Women in Business Champion of the Year: An individual who has fulfilled a commitment to the advancement of women's business ownership may be nominated.

#### **Q. EVALUATION/SELECTION CRITERIA FOR SMALL BUSINESS WEEK AWARDS**

##### **What are the evaluation/selection criteria for the Small Business Week Awards and Champion Awards?**

Each award has specific evaluation criteria which are listed below for each award:

##### **Small Business Exporter (National, Region, District)**

1. Increased sales, profits and/or growth of employment because of exporting.
2. Creative overseas marketing strategies.
3. Effective solutions to export-related problems.
4. Demonstrated encouragement of other small businesses to export.
5. Volunteer assistance to other small businesses entering the export market.
6. Cooperation with other businesses in the creation of export trading companies and/or introduction of unique trading relationships, products or services.

##### **8(a) Graduate of the Year (National, Region, District)**

1. Management –Overall qualifications/expertise, familiarity with Government Regulations, Technical Capabilities, Customer Support and response to adversities, obstacles, etc., to achieve present level of success.
2. Exceptional Results/Special Achievements-Deliverables in line with or exceeds contract requirements, full and efficient utilization of assets.
3. Cost Performance-Sustained control over performance costs, financial stability, contingency labor adjustments, performance adjustments, and internal cost controls.
4. Increase in sales and/or unit volume over the last three calendar years 2011, 2012 and 2013.
5. Current and past financial performance-document an improved financial position in the business to include profit and loss statements and balance sheets for the last three calendar years and growth in full time employees.



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6. Innovativeness of product(s) or service(s) offered-specific description of unique/superior product or service and explanation on how the product or service fills a niche or technical need not being adequately addressed by the competition.
7. Description of exceptional results and/or delivery performance that makes this company a valued product/service provider.
8. Economic engagement of the disadvantaged community-use of minority firms as suppliers, subcontractors, etc., and noted employment of the disadvantaged.

**Phoenix (Disaster Recovery) Awards (National, Region, District)**

For evaluation and criteria information, please contact Veronica Ortega at the Lower Rio Grande Valley District Office at [Veronica.ortega@sba.gov](mailto:Veronica.ortega@sba.gov) or 956-427-8533 Ext. 233. At the Corpus Christi Branch Office contact Debbie Fernandez at the, [debbie.fernandez@sba.gov](mailto:debbie.fernandez@sba.gov) or call 361-879-0017 Ext. 303.

**Resource Partners Awards (National, Region, District)**

For evaluation and criteria information, please contact Veronica Ortega at the Lower Rio Grande Valley District Office at [Veronica.ortega@sba.gov](mailto:Veronica.ortega@sba.gov) or 956-427-8533 Ext. 233. At the Corpus Christi Branch Office contact Debbie Fernandez at the, [debbie.fernandez@sba.gov](mailto:debbie.fernandez@sba.gov) or call 361-879-0017 Ext. 303.

**Small Business Investment Company of the Year\_(National, Region, District)**

For evaluation and criteria information, please contact Veronica Ortega at the Lower Rio Grande Valley District Office at [Veronica.ortega@sba.gov](mailto:Veronica.ortega@sba.gov) or 956-427-8533 Ext. 233. At the Corpus Christi Branch Office contact Debbie Fernandez at the, [debbie.fernandez@sba.gov](mailto:debbie.fernandez@sba.gov) or call 361-879-0017 Ext. 303.

**SBA Young Entrepreneur of the Year (Region, District)**

1. Evidence of success as measured by sales and profits.
2. Increased employment opportunities created by the nominee's business.
3. Development and/or utilization of innovative or creative business methods.
4. Demonstrated entrepreneurial potential necessary for long-term business success and economic growth.

**Family-Owned Business of the Year (Region, District)**

1. Evidence of success as measured by sales and profits.
2. Increased employment opportunities for family members and non-family members for the nominee's business.
3. Demonstrated potential necessary for long-term business success and economic growth.
4. Voluntary efforts to strengthen family-owned businesses within the community.

**Entrepreneurial Success Award (Region, District)**

1. Staying Power-substantiated history as an established business to include a minimum of three years, sustained expansion of either territories or growth in square footage occupied, and steady growth in net worth evidenced by total assets less total liabilities on calendar year end annual balance sheets for 2011, 2012 and 2013.



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2. Growth in number of employees-a benchmark to judge the impact of the business on the job market sustained over a minimum of three years.
3. Increase in sales and/or unit volume: an indication of continued growth over the last three years. Consistent growth in net income as evidenced by fiscal year annual profit and loss statements for calendar years 2011, 2012 and 2013.
4. Current and past financial performance-financial reports substantiate an improved financial position of the business reflecting an upward growth and consistent increase in net worth and/or partners' return.
5. SBA Assistance-documentation of the type(s) and amount(s) of SBA assistance received by the business and the year(s) in which it was received.
6. Innovativeness of product or service offered-an illustration of the creativity and imagination of the nominee to include the description of product or service and explanation of how the product or service fits a niche not being adequately addressed by the competition.
7. Response to adversity-examples of problems faced in the nominee's business and the methods used to solve them, to include specific description of financial, physical legal or other crisis, substantiation of the threat to continuity of the business, and defined actions taken by the nominee to resolve the crisis.
8. Contributions to community oriented projects-evidence of the use of his/her personal time and resources including listing of specific contributions of money, time or resources to charitable causes and memberships in councils, boards, and clubs providing support and services to the community.

**The following Champion award nominees may or may not be small business owners:**

**Financial Services Champion of the Year (Region, District)**

1. Outside of regular business duties, the amount and quality of assistance given small businesses to obtain financing.
2. Advocacy for changes in the financial services industry to assist small companies.
3. Encouragement of the flow of investment capital to small ventures.
4. Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small firms.
5. Other significant contributions through the advocacy efforts of the financial services or accounting industries to advance small business interests.

**Home-Based Business Champion of the Year (Region, District)**

1. Volunteer time and energy to improve the conditions for home-based businesses.
2. Engage in entrepreneurial training, policy development efforts, or financial or business planning specifically tailored for home-based businesses.
3. Demonstrated interest in home-based businesses by an owner or former owner.
4. Measurable accomplishments in advancing home-based businesses, such as adoption of public policy or expansion of a program.



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**Minority Small Business Champion of the Year (Region, District)**

1. Volunteer efforts beyond business/professional responsibilities to advance minority small business interests within the community, state and/or nation.
2. Demonstrated efforts to improve conditions in the minority small business community as a whole, not solely for individual personal advancement.
3. Voluntary provision of professional services to the minority small business community in a legal, legislative, managerial or financial capacity.
4. Demonstrated accomplishments in advising minority small business groups of opportunities within the overall business community.
5. Other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's merit as an effective advocate for minority small business interests.

**Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year (Region, District)**

1. Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small businesses.
2. Evidence of increased business opportunities for veterans as a result of the nominee's actions.
3. Advisory activities to improve awareness of small business opportunities among veterans' groups.
4. Advocacy of special consideration for veteran-owned small businesses in government policymaking.
5. Demonstrated success in obtaining support within the community for the establishment of veteran-owned small businesses.
6. Other accomplishments demonstrating the nominee's effective advocacy of veteran-owned small businesses.

**Women in Business Champion of the Year (Region, District)**

1. Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small businesses.
2. Efforts to increase business and financial opportunities for women.
3. Legal, financial or managerial assistance provided to enhance women's business ownership.
4. Voluntary efforts to strengthen the role of women business owners within the community.
5. Advocacy of the women-owned business community as a whole, not solely for individual personal advancement.
6. Other accomplishments demonstrating effectiveness in improving the environment for the creation and expansion of businesses owned and operated by women.

The National Small Business Person of the Year will be announced and honored at a National event during National Small Business Week. ***The Agency reserves the right, in its sole reasonable discretion, to remove a nominee from the selection process.***