

HBA · 2026 Global Leadership Awards Criteria

An overview of eligibility, enhanced judging criteria, and nomination requirements for each of the twelve 2026 Global Leadership Award categories — organized by award type for quick reference.

SIGNATURE AWARDS

Chair Award	Recognizes an exceptional member leader who has demonstrated visionary leadership, measurable organizational impact, and strong engagement with members, volunteers, and corporate partners within the HBA community.
Innovation Award	Recognizes an individual or group who has demonstrated commitment, passion, and a drive for results by developing and successfully launching a new process, product, service, or recognition initiative that positively benefits HBA, its operations, and/or its financial sustainability.

EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Regional Excellence Award	Recognizes a regional council that has demonstrated exceptional performance and achieved measurable success in advancing membership, engagement, financial, operational, or other strategic goals across its region and chapters.
Chapter Excellence Award	Recognizes a chapter board that has demonstrated exceptional performance and achieved measurable success in advancing membership, engagement, financial, operational, and/or strategic goals while meeting HBA policies and exceeding the chapter's own expectations.
Member Network (formerly Affinity Group) Excellence Award	Recognizes a Member Network that has demonstrated exceptional performance and achieved measurable success in advancing membership, engagement, financial, operational, and/or strategic goals while meeting HBA policies and exceeding the group's own expectations.

LEADER ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Regional Leader Achievement Award	Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent, impactful leadership that advances their region and furthers HBA's mission.
Chapter Leader Achievement Award	Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent leadership that positively impacted their chapter and promoted excellence furthering HBA's mission.
Member Network Leader Achievement Award	Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent leadership that positively impacted their member network and promoted excellence furthering HBA's mission.

FUNCTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Corporate Relations Achievement Award	Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent leadership that advances relationships with Corporate Partners, fosters collaboration, and helps further HBA's mission.
Engagement Achievement Award	Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent leadership that advances member and member leader engagement, fosters collaboration, and furthers HBA's mission.
Education and Events Achievement Award	Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent leadership that positively impacted HBA educational programming and events, fostered collaboration, and promoted excellence furthering the HBA mission.
Marketing and Communications Achievement Award	Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated leadership in marketing and communications, elevating HBA's brand visibility, engaging stakeholders, and advancing HBA's mission.
Member Value Offerings Achievement Award	Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated exceptional leadership in creating, enhancing and delivering meaningful member value, fostering collaboration, and advancing HBA's mission.

Chair Award

Recognizes an exceptional member leader who has exemplified visionary leadership, measurable organizational impact, and strong engagement with members, volunteers, and corporate partners within the HBA community.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Providing visionary leadership that advances HBA's strategic priorities.
- Delivering measurable impact through programs, initiatives, or organizational improvements.
- Strengthening member engagement, volunteer leadership, or corporate partner relationships.
- Championing collaboration, innovation, and inclusive leadership across the HBA community.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to Global, Affinity Group, Regional, and Chapter leaders who have served in an HBA volunteer leadership role for two or more years.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- Describe the nominee's most significant contribution to HBA.
- *What challenge or opportunity did they address?*
- What measurable outcomes resulted from their leadership?
- *Include data, metrics, or specific examples whenever possible.*
- How has the nominee advanced HBA's mission or strategic priorities?
- How has the nominee influenced or inspired others?
- *Describe examples of mentorship, collaboration, or leadership development.*
- Why is this nominee uniquely deserving of the Chair Award this year?

Innovation Award

Recognizes an individual or group who has demonstrated commitment, passion, and a drive for results by developing and successfully launching a new process, product, service, or recognition initiative that positively benefits the HBA, its operations, and/or its financial sustainability.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Developing and successfully launching a new process, product, service, or recognition initiative that benefits HBA.
- Demonstrating creativity, commitment, and a drive for results in bringing innovation to life.
- Creating measurable positive financial, operational, or organizational impact for HBA.
- Demonstrating potential for sustained, long-term value and benefit to the association.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all Global, Affinity Group, Regional, and Chapter leaders.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Current HBA volunteer leaders and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What innovation did the nominee or group develop and launch?
- *What challenge or opportunity did it address?*
- What role did the nominee or group play in bringing the innovation to life?
- What measurable impact has the innovation had on HBA?
- *Include financial, operational, participation, engagement, or other relevant outcomes where possible.*
- How has the innovation created lasting value for HBA, and why is it deserving of the Innovation Award?

Regional Excellence Award

This award recognizes a regional council that has demonstrated exceptional performance and achieved measurable success in advancing membership, engagement, financial, operational, or other strategic goals across its region and chapters.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Achieving measurable membership growth and/or retention.
- Delivering successful programs and drives strong participation and engagement.
- Achieving financial goals or demonstrates measurable financial growth.
- Advancing the region's visibility through effective marketing and/or public relations.
- Demonstrating strong collaboration, communication, and participation across the region and with HBA.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all HBA regions.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Current HBA volunteer leaders and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What were the region's most significant achievements during the award period?
- What measurable results did the region achieve?
- *Include membership, program participation, financial, marketing/PR, or other relevant metrics where possible.*
- How did the regional council work collaboratively to achieve these results?
- Why is this region deserving of the Regional Excellence Award?

Chapter Excellence Award

Recognizes an HBA chapter board that has demonstrated exceptional performance and achieved measurable success in advancing membership, engagement, financial, operational, and/or strategic goals while meeting HBA policies and exceeding the chapter's own expectations.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Achieving measurable membership growth and/or retention.
- Delivering successful programs and drives strong participation and engagement.
- Achieving financial goals or measurable financial growth.
- Advancing the chapter's visibility through effective marketing and/or public relations.
- Demonstrating strong collaboration, member satisfaction, and engagement.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all current HBA chapters.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Current regional council leaders, chapter board leaders, and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What were the chapter's most significant achievements during the award period?
- What measurable results did the chapter achieve?
- *Include membership, program participation, financial, marketing/PR, member satisfaction, or other relevant metrics where possible.*
- How did the chapter board work collaboratively to achieve these results and exceed its own expectations?
- Why is the chapter deserving of the award?

Affinity Group Excellence Award** Rebranded as Member Network Group

Recognizes a Member Network (formerly Affinity Group) that has demonstrated exceptional performance and achieved measurable success in advancing membership, engagement, financial, operational, and/or strategic goals while meeting HBA policies and exceeding the group's own expectations.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Achieving measurable membership growth and/or retention.
- Delivering successful programs and drives strong participation and engagement.
- Achieving financial goals or measurable financial growth.
- Advancing the group's visibility through effective marketing and/or public relations.
- Demonstrating strong collaboration, member satisfaction, and engagement.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all current HBA Affinity Groups.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Current Affinity Group members, regional council leaders, chapter board leaders, and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What were the Affinity Group's most significant achievements during the award period?
- What measurable results did the group achieve?
- *Include membership, program participation, financial, marketing/PR, member satisfaction, or other relevant metrics where possible.*
- How did the group work collaboratively to achieve these results and exceed its own expectations?
- How did the group demonstrate compliance with HBA policies and operational requirements?

Regional Leader Achievement Award

Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent, impactful leadership that advances their region and furthers HBA's mission.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- *Providing effective organizational leadership and contributing to strategic planning*
- *Collaborating across functions, chapters, and other regional stakeholders*
- *Contributing to the region's financial success*
- *Supporting chapter initiatives, outreach and guiding chapter leaders*
- *Delivering quantifiable outcomes/impact that support the region's success and HBA's mission*

ELIGIBILITY

Open to current regional council leaders, including chairs, deputy chairs, treasurers, functional presidents, and chapter presidents.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Current HBA volunteer leaders and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What has been the nominee's most significant contribution to the region?
- How has the nominee demonstrated leadership in planning, decision-making, or prioritization?
- How has the nominee collaborated across functions and/or with other regional stakeholders to achieve results?
- How has the nominee contributed to financial success and/or championed change within the region?

Chapter Leader Achievement Award

Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent, impactful leadership that positively impacted their chapter and promoted excellence in furthering the HBA mission.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- *Providing effective leadership that advances the chapter's goals*
- *Collaborating effectively across chapter functions and with regional leaders*
- *Contributing to the chapter's financial success*
- *Delivering quantifiable outcomes/impact that support the chapter's success and HBA's mission*
- *Supporting member leaders and helping the chapter navigate change effectively.*

ELIGIBILITY

Open to current chapter board leaders, including presidents, vice presidents, chapter operations directors, and Directors-at-Large.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Current regional council leaders, chapter board leaders, and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What has been the nominee's most significant contribution to the chapter?
- How has the nominee demonstrated leadership in planning, decision-making, or prioritization?
- How has the nominee collaborated across functions and/or with regional leaders to achieve results?
- Provide examples highlighting how the nominee helped the chapter achieve success.

Member Network (Affinity Group) Leader Achievement Award

Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent, impactful leadership that positively impacted their member network and helped advance the HBA mission.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- *Providing effective leadership that advances the team's goals*
- *Collaborating effectively across functions and supporting other leaders*
- *Contributing to the group's success and goals*
- *Delivering quantifiable outcomes/impact that support the chapter's success and HBA's mission*

ELIGIBILITY	WHO CAN NOMINATE
Open to current Member Network leaders.	Current Member Network Leaders and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- How has the nominee demonstrated leadership in planning, decision-making, or prioritization?
- Describe how the nominee has championed initiatives and/or collaboration.
- How has the nominee contributed to the success of the Member Network (include examples and metrics)?

Corporate Relations Achievement Award

Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent, impactful leadership that advances relationships with HBA Corporate Partners, fosters collaboration, and furthers HBA's mission.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Providing effective leadership that advances corporate relations goals
- Contributing to strategic planning, decision-making, and prioritization
- Collaborating effectively across functions and with chapters and regions
- Contributing to the financial success of the corporate relations function
- Championing positive change and supporting member leaders

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all Regional Corporate Relations Leaders.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Current Regional Council leaders and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What has been the nominee's most significant contribution to corporate relations?
- How has the nominee demonstrated leadership in planning, decision-making, or prioritization?
- How has the nominee collaborated across functions and/or with chapters and regions to achieve results?
- Provide examples and/or metrics to highlight the nominee's impact this year.

Engagement Achievement Award

Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent leadership that advances member and member leader engagement, fosters collaboration, and furthers HBA's mission.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Providing effective leadership that advances member and volunteer engagement goals.
- Contributing to strategic planning, decision-making, and prioritization.
- Collaborating effectively across functions and with chapters and regions.
- Contributing to the financial success of the functional area.
- Delivering quantifiable impact that increases member engagement rates

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all Global, Affinity Group, Regional, and Chapter leaders responsible for engagement, member experience, volunteer experience, and/or member and volunteer engagement.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

OB leaders responsible for engagement, member experience, and/or volunteer experience; regional council leaders; chapter board leaders; and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What has been the nominee's most significant contribution to member and/or volunteer engagement?
- How has the nominee demonstrated leadership in planning, decision-making, or prioritization?
- How has the nominee collaborated across functions and/or with chapters and regions to achieve results?
- How has the nominee contributed to financial success and/or championed change within the functional area?

Education and Events Achievement Award

Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated consistent leadership that positively impacted HBA educational programming and events, fostered collaboration, and promoted excellence furthering HBA's mission.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Providing effective leadership that advances education, programming, and events.
- Contributing to strategic planning, decision-making, and prioritization.
- Collaborating effectively across functions and with chapters and regions.
- Contributing to the financial success of programs and events
- Delivering quantifiable impact that supports HBA programming and events

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all Global, Regional, and Chapter leaders responsible for programming, education, and/or events.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Members of the OB, regional council leaders, chapter board leaders, and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What has been the nominee's most significant contribution to education, programming, and/or events?
- How has the nominee demonstrated leadership and achieved results?
- How has the nominee collaborated with others to advance the work?
- How has the nominee contributed to financial success and/or championed change?

Marketing and Communications Achievement Award

Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated exceptional leadership in marketing and communications, elevating HBA's brand, engaging stakeholders, and advancing the association's mission.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Providing strategic marketing and communications guidance that promotes HBA's mission and brand.
- Developing innovative marketing and communications strategies that drive engagement and impact.
- Collaborating effectively across functions, chapters, and regions to strengthen organizational outcomes.
- Using data and audience insights to inform decisions and optimize results.
- Delivering measurable outcomes/results that have enhanced HBA's visibility and reach

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all Global, Affinity Group, Regional, and Chapter Marketing and Communications leaders.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Members of the OB, regional council leaders, chapter board leaders, and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What initiative or priority did the nominee support through marketing and communications, and what was their most significant contribution?
- How did the nominee's marketing and communications efforts help achieve measurable results?
- *Consider reach, engagement, participation, awareness, media coverage, or other relevant outcomes.*
- How did the nominee collaborate with others to develop and execute effective marketing and communications strategies?
- Why is this nominee deserving of the Marketing and Communications Achievement Award?

Member Value Offerings Achievement Award

Recognizes an individual who has demonstrated exceptional leadership in creating, enhancing, and delivering meaningful member value, fostering collaboration, and advancing HBA's mission.

CRITERIA

Nominees should demonstrate excellence in:

- Leading the development and delivery of innovative programs, services, or experiences that enhance member value.
- Identifying member needs and translating insights into impactful solutions and offerings.
- Collaborating effectively across functions, chapters, and regions to strengthen the member experience.
- Contributing to strategic planning and organizational priorities that increase member engagement and value.
- Championing innovation and continuous improvement to ensure HBA delivers meaningful and evolving benefits to its members.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to Global, Regional, and Member Value Offerings team members.

WHO CAN NOMINATE

Members of the OB, regional council leaders, chapter board leaders, and HBA staff.

PROMPTS FOR THE SUBMISSION FORM

- What has been the nominee's most significant contribution to member value offerings?
- How has the nominee demonstrated leadership and shown support to member leaders?
- With examples, share how the nominee generated results/impact/outcomes.
- Why is this nominee deserving of the Member Value Offerings Achievement Award?