



2017 GRANDE PRAIRIE CHAMBER AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

General Eligibility Requirements

To be a valid entry in the Grande Prairie Chamber Awards of Distinction, your business must:

- Have 100 or less full-time equivalent employees (three part-time equal one full-time)
- Have operated in the Grande Prairie area/Peace Region for a minimum of three years *;
- Be operating in the Grande Prairie area/Peace Region and continuing to do so at the time of the awards presentation;
- Not have won in the same category in the past three years *;
- Not have anyone in your management, on your board, or in your employ serving on the *Grande Prairie Chamber Awards of Distinction* selection committee for the category for which you've been nominated.

* With the exception of the Best New Business category which is for companies established within the past two years.

Entry Deadline

In order to be eligible, your submission must be delivered to the **Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce** office no later than 4:30pm, September 1, 2017. Due to the number of entries received, entry packages cannot be returned. If unable to submit your application electronically, please submit a printed copy of this form and all other documents to the following:

2017 Grande Prairie Chamber Awards of Distinction
c/o Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce
#127 Centre 2000, 11330 - 106 Street
Grande Prairie, AB T8V 7X9

Award Selection Process

Nominations:

The award selection committee will review all nominations.

Online Voting:

Online voting will commence on September 14, 2017 and will run until September 29, 2017. The award selection committee will take the online vote into consideration in their overall evaluation of the nominees.

AWARD CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA

SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR – UNDER TEN EMPLOYEES

SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR – TEN OR MORE EMPLOYEES

These awards recognize business owners who have demonstrated excellence in business in a number of areas.

In a minimum of 300 words, if possible, (paragraph or point form), please describe the owner's:

- Business Performance: Note measures of growth, like increases in employee or client numbers, or expansions
- Strength of Management: Note the owner's ability to lead their team (there is no need to share confidential information)
- Community Involvement (be specific)
- Future Planning Ability: Note decisions that position the business for future growth and development (i.e. Training or personal development programs, restructuring operations to provide a separate customer service division)
- Human Resources Practices: Note the steps taken by the owners to provide a healthy, productive workplace
- Integrity / Consistency: Note the ways in which the owner demonstrates integrity in all aspects of the business and/or the steps taken to ensure consistent & exceptional customer service

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

This award recognizes businesses for their outstanding community spirit in supporting events, programs, services or initiatives that benefit Grande Prairie and the Peace Region. The beneficiaries of this support may include minor sports, culture, youth, those with special needs, seniors, the economically disadvantaged, education and other worthwhile causes that benefit our community.

Do you belong to a community organization, sports or not for profit group? We want to help you recognize the local businesses that consistently support your group. Nominate them for this award based on the following guidelines in a minimum 300 words (paragraph or point form).

In order for a business to be considered, it must meet the following criteria:

- Be a business in good standing and a model of good corporate citizenship
- Have a record of involvement and support for events, programs, services or initiatives that benefit the community
- Provide support through monetary contributions, in-kind assistance, leadership or volunteer time

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR

This award recognizes outstanding achievement in business by those aged 18-34, who have, as the Director/Owner successfully launched a productive and viable business. The business must have been in operation for at least two years.

In a minimum of 300 words (paragraph or point form) describe:

- The business, including its target market
- How the product/service meets the needs of the target market
- The young entrepreneurs success story, including their outstanding business achievements, how they achieved these results and why they are outstanding
- Any challenges that had to be overcome in order to achieve these results, and how they did so
- How they are involved in the community (be specific)

BEST NEW BUSINESS

This award recognizes a new business that has been established within the last two years, and has already demonstrated notable achievements.

In a minimum of 300 words (paragraph or point form) describe:

- The business and how it has demonstrated creativity and innovation
- Key achievements, why they are outstanding and how the results were achieved
- Any challenges that had to be overcome in order to achieve these results
- How the management is involved in the community (be specific)

EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

Employees! This is your opportunity to tell the community about the positive work environment your employer has created. This award is presented to an organization that, through its innovation and dedication, provides employees with an outstanding positive, healthy and productive workplace.

In a minimum of 300 words (paragraph or point form) describe:

- How your employer has made your workplace an exceptional place to be employed
- Some of the innovative ways your employer supports its employees and works to facilitate their growth and development.
- How the culture at your workplace encourages employees to be respected and engaged?
- How your workplace culture reflects the importance of work/life balance
- Any other examples of what makes your employer exceptional

ARTS AND CULTURE

Applications are welcome from all non-profit organizations that enrich Grande Prairie's arts and culture scene. This award recognizes a cultural and art organization that demonstrates outstanding achievement and contribution to their community and at the same time develops business acumen and management practices to ensure their long-term sustainability.

In a minimum of 300 words (paragraph or point form) describe:

- The organization—its history, products and/or services, financial and other performance indicators, markets and plans for growth, etc.
- Challenges the organization may have encountered in planning and establishing the business, and explain how they were overcome
- The organization's achievements over the past three years including community involvement over-and-above its main endeavour
- The organization's positive impact on the community including fostering greater visibility and understanding the value of Arts & Culture
- How the organization encourages excellence and builds new leadership within the Arts & Culture community as well as working relationships and involvement within the business community
- What the organization is doing to remain competitive in the Arts & Culture market
- What the biggest operational challenge is for the organization and what measures are being taken to overcome that challenge

EAGLE FEATHER

This award is given to a First Nation, Metis or Inuit owned business that demonstrates outstanding achievement in business and incorporates entrepreneurial and cultural concepts into its operation for long-term success.

In a minimum of 300 words (paragraph or point form) describe:

- The business's achievements over the past three years
- The business's positive impact on the community
- Active involvement with business/professional associations or other groups
- Involvement in the community at large
- If you are a non-profit entity, your business activities that are applicable to be considered for this award
- In a list, all First Nation, Metis, and Inuit communities with which your business is affiliated

EMPLOYER OF PERSONS WITH CHALLENGES

This award is given to a business that demonstrates creative, leading edge practices in hiring, training and developing employees with challenges. This award is given to an employer who has been instrumental in removing barriers to employment for persons with challenges.

"Challenges" is defined as the consequence of an impairment that may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, developmental, or some combination of these. This may be present from birth, or occur during a person's lifetime. In addition including an organization that is reintegrating people back into the work force.

In a minimum of 300 words (paragraph or point form) describe:

- Approximately how many employees are employed in your organization
- Approximately how many persons with challenges are employed in your organization
- What programs and/or initiatives are in place within your organization to attract and retain persons with challenges
- How your organization employs persons with challenges and provides them with career-oriented activities. (Career-oriented activities can include career guidance, training, job shadowing, mentoring, etc.)
- Your organization's success in eliminating systemic workplace barriers to hiring and/or retaining persons with challenges, such as making appropriate physical adjustments in the workplace
- Your organization's commitment to accountability in hiring and retaining persons with challenges (Is this hiring practice identified in your business plan? Describe how it is part of your workplace culture.)

MARKETING

This award is given to a business that has developed and implemented successful marketing strategies that have a significant impact on the organization.

In a minimum of 300 words (paragraph or point form) describe:

- What were your marketing objectives (Increased market share, developing new markets, introducing new products/services, etc.) Provide a copy of your marketing plan.
(Note: this information is for judging purposes only and will not be shared publicly)
- What promotional tools were used? (Advertising, sales promotion, direct mail, telemarketing, trade shows, Internet, multimedia, etc.)
- What results were achieved and how were they measured
- Given the funds expended, why you feel the results were significant

SERVICE SUPERSTAR

This award honours employees in the local hospitality, service and retail sector who go above and beyond normal expectations in the delivery of customer service. These are the employees who provide the finest experience to visitors to and residents of the Grande Prairie Region. The award is open to all employees who regularly interact with the public.

In a minimum of 300 words, if possible, (paragraph or point form) describe:

- The employee's range of duties and responsibilities
- Reliability, dependability, and work ethic of the employee, and other factors that make them exceptional at their job including consistency, quality, customer satisfaction, problem solving, innovation, initiative, and accountability
- Extra-curricular activities and community involvement (be specific)
- Factors that may pose some barriers for the employee who, despite such hurdles, overcomes them to succeed in their position

THE INNOVATOR

This award provides peer recognition from the greater community to those individuals who have demonstrated value to their respective organizations through the creative application of technology in support of their organization's key and strategic business objective. This also provides an opportunity for innovative solutions to be openly shared with the community for possible application; and to acknowledge the creative and innovative application of technology in company development and growth and industry in general.

In a minimum of 300 words (paragraph or point form) explain your nomination using the following guidelines:

- There must be a direct correlation between the innovation and accomplishment of the company's objective(s). Achieved benefits from innovation must be quantifiable and sustained.
- Concept must be transportable and have application within and beyond its industry sector.
- Accomplishment must have written acknowledgment from its organization.
- The innovation must have been completed within two years of the submission date of this completion.
- Give a compelling value proposition for your innovation. Provide some context behind your inspiration, your vision and the journey of your concept development. Describe and explain the thought processes behind developing your innovative concept and how that has evolved. Highlight any significant hurdles or challenges you have overcome.
- Describe your unique skill set and experience in executing your innovation. What skills have you been able to leverage from others including partners, mentors, joint ventures, employees and more?
- Discuss the tangible and intangible outcomes which have eventuated or which you think have the potential to eventuate from your innovation. Are these commercial outcomes? Social outcomes? Environmental outcomes? Personal or professional outcomes?