



# ShowFest Excellence 2025 Awards



The 2025 ShowFest Awards Committee is excited to offer this year's Excellence Awards program to current members of the North Carolina Association of Festival & Events. The ShowFest-Event Innovators Conference will be held Monday – Tuesday, January 27-28, 2025, at the University Hilton in Charlotte, NC.

Awards are part of the industry's reward and recognition programs. The ShowFest Excellence Awards are a long-standing tradition of highlighting the best and brightest of festivals, events and associates across the Carolinas. Our full membership is dedicated to identifying the professionals that raise the bar and provide outstanding examples. We also use this program as a way to set new goals and standards for the profession. We can all learn from each other and give a hardy round of applause to those who distinguish themselves with great work.

Award nominations are a benefit of membership and open to those festivals, events and supporting members that are full members and have paid in full their membership dues. Membership dues for the year in which the nominated event was held must be paid prior to the nomination submission. Membership includes regular members, supporting members, educational members and legacy members.

Caution for Events that are *Calendar Listings* on NCAF&E website – As part of membership benefits festivals and events may pay additional fees to have an additional 2 events included on the associations calendar of events. However, additional calendar events are not considered members and do not receive the same benefits of full membership. Additional calendar listed events do not have voting rights, may not have logos posted on the website and are not be eligible for the annual association awards program.

**Award winners will be announced on Monday, January 27 as part of the ShowFest Awards & Entertainment Showcase Dinner.** Acrylic awards will be presented for the *Overall Recognition* categories. Award Certificates will be presented for the *Event and Promotional Recognition* categories.

If you have questions, please contact the NCAF&E Office.

NC Association of Festival & Events  
P.O. Box 1642, Lexington, NC 27293  
info@ncfestivals.com  
1-877-NC FESTS

## **How to Submit Nominations:**

All nominations will be accepted online through the Eventeny process. Search the ShowFest website for the Awards link to complete nominations on line, pay on line and upload supporting documents.

- ❑ **Step 1 – Complete the Awards Registration** – Use the online Eventeny platform to register and pay for all nominations. Select all the nomination categories you will be submitting and make one payment. The **registration form is due by Wednesday, January 15, 2025**. Late entries will not be accepted. Nominations are \$10 per entry.
- ❑ **Step 2 – Advanced Submissions** – ALL award nominations are due by **Wednesday, January 15, 2025** (*before the conference*). Nominations and materials will be submitted through the Eventeny process online. Judges will review these materials *before* the conference. Make sure to have all your materials in PDF format and ready to upload on the Eventeny platform. Refer to pages 3-7 for nomination requirements.
- ❑ **Step 3 – On-Site Submissions** - For several categories, additional materials are required on-site for review. First, complete the online awards registration in Step 2, and then, bring the original item to the conference for on-site review by the judges. On-site submissions must be turned in by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26 during conference check in. Award nominations requiring on-site materials to be submitted include: *Event of the Year, Photo, Press Kit, Non-Print Media, Sponsorship Packet, Merchandise, Brochure, Print Media, Poster and T-shirt*. Refer to the Refer to pages 3-7 for nomination requirements.

The "**Andy Smith**" **Best ShowFest Exhibitor Award** and the **Student Choice Award** will be reviewed on site during the conference. No paperwork or nomination forms required.

**Mail-in Nominations:** For entries that require originals to be on-site for review, nominations can be mailed or shipped in advance to the NCAF&E Office at 337 Dixon Street, Lexington, NC 27292 or mailed to P.O. Box 1642, Lexington, NC 27293.

- Shipped & mailed entries must be **received by Monday, January 20, 2025**.
- When mailing multiple boxes of nominations, please label each box, for example: "Box 1 of 5" so the NCAF&E office staff will be assured all your nominations have arrived safely.

## **Nomination Considerations:**

- Final awards judging will be held on site during Saturday evening by nonpartisan judges, selected by the Awards Committee and approved by the NCAFE Executive Board.
- In recommendation letters, give details, tell the stories, and help the judges really understand the full impact of the situation. Brief is great for speeches and prayers, but not here – tell it all!
- Remember, for most categories, you do not have to be present to win – so everyone can enter!
- If your on-site award submission is smaller than a sheet of paper, please place it in an 8 ½ x 11 protective. This helps us keep track of the smaller items.
- If your award submission can be duplicated, ex: letters, mass produced merchandise, schedules, and printed materials, please do not ask for them to be returned.
- If you have unique items, that you need returned, pick up those pieces just prior to awards luncheon. We know everyone is in a hurry to pack, but please pick up entries. Any items not picked up will become property of NCAF&E and will be used or discarded in the manner best seen fit by the office staff.



# 2025 ShowFest Excellence Awards

While many of the award categories lend to self-nomination, we encourage all planners and associates to take a wider look within our membership and submit nominations for other members who are leaders, do outstanding work and deserve recognition.

## **Awards Registration and ALL nominations due by: Wednesday, January 15, 2025.**

All nominations will be accepted electronically, online, through the EVENTENY Awards process. Click the link on the ShowFest conference website and follow the instructions. For several award categories, on-site submission of materials are also required. After completing the online nomination, you will need to bring the original item to the conference for review. On-site submissions must be turned in by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26 during conference check in time.

## **Overall Recognition Awards**

One winner will be chosen from the categories below. Acrylic awards will be bestowed during the Awards luncheon.

- 1. Event of the Year** – This award recognizes the most outstanding event or festival of the year. Nominations must complete the *Event of the Year* award form. The award form includes goals of the event, estimated attendance, paid staff size, volunteer base, schedule of events and overall budget range.
  - The information provided on the form must be complete. Any missing or skipped information will automatically exclude consideration for award. Along with the online nomination, events must also attach a copy of the schedule or program guide and submit maximum of six (6) slides of photos or materials for review.
  - The association requires all *Event of the Year* nominees to set up an event display during ShowFest to help others learn about prestigious programs. Displays are typically presented on a tri-fold stand (3ft x 4 ft) with a variety of photographs and festival materials. Binders and electronic displays may also be included. Electronic displays must self-generate. Judges will not be allowed to operate electronics. **NOTE:** The on-site display must be set up by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26 in the Awards Gallery.
  - Judges will review Advanced materials before the conference and then review the display on-site before submitting their final review.
  - Any award winner within the past 3 years may not be nominated again. The association strives to recognize a wide variety of events throughout North Carolina.
  - Those submitting a nomination for the *Event of the Year* award must have a representative from their organization attend ShowFest.

2. **Director of the Year** – This award recognizes excellence in event management. Nominees should have demonstrated leadership, competence, achievement, ethical standards and a strong commitment to the festival industry. Please include a description of the nominee’s contributions to the festival industry, as well as to their particular festival or event.
  - Submissions may be two-typed pages maximum and must include a photograph of the Director.
  - Any award winner within the past 3 years may not be nominated again. The association strives to recognize a wide variety of professionals throughout North Carolina. Should a festival or event hire a new director, that person would be eligible for nomination.
  - Those submitting a nomination for the *Director of the Year* award must have a representative from their organization attend ShowFest.
  
3. **The “Besty Rosemann” Volunteer of the Year** – Named after long time member of NCFA&E, we are looking for that special person, or group, that was invaluable to the success of your festival or event. Please include a detailed description of what this person/group does to make your event a success and why you feel they deserve the award. Submissions may be one-typed page maximum and must include a photograph of the volunteer.
  
4. **Sponsor of the Year** – This award is given to recognize the business, civic or service organization whose outstanding financial support and/or manpower to the festival/event sets an example for others in the community to follow. Please include a detailed description of what the sponsor has done for your event and why they deserve this award. Submissions may be one-typed page maximum and must include a photograph or logo of sponsor.
  
5. **Supporting Member of the Year** – A supporting member, associate, or business that provides a service or product to the festival and event industry, but is not directly engaged in the management of the event. The nominee must be a NCFA&E member who has shown exceptional leadership and cooperation in assisting event staff to meet their goals. Please include a detailed description of what the member does to set themselves apart, and why they deserve this award. Submissions may be two-typed pages maximum and must include a photograph or logo of supporting member.
  
6. **Rising Star Award** - This award is given to recognize new events or festivals that are only 1-3 yrs old. We are seeking events that provide a unique experience for their community. Please include when the event started, the goal, focus or purpose of the event, a listing of the key partners for the event, overall budget amount, estimated attendance and summary of growth, and basic event information such as schedule, promotions and merchandise. Submissions may be two-typed pages maximum. Previous winners may not re-apply. Photos and supporting materials are limited to two additional pages.
  
7. **Event Associated with an Event** – This award is given to recognize new events or activities held associated with an established event or as an event-within-an-event. We are seeking new events that provide additional unique experiences. Please include why and how the additional event was added. Include any key partners, additional expenditures, estimated participation and how the additional event supported your main event. Submissions may be one-typed page maximum. Photos and supporting materials are limited to two additional pages.

8. **Best Children’s Program** – This is for festivals that have programming exclusively for children under 12 years of age. Please describe the purpose and objective of the program for children. Provide a detailed description of how this idea came into fruition and how it was implemented. Submissions may be one-typed page maximum. Photos and supporting materials are limited to two additional pages.
9. **Best Community Outreach Program** – For events and festivals that benefit or support a community initiative, raise awareness, raise funds that benefit a cause or hold additional programs for community outreach. The program may be held anytime throughout the year. It is not limited to your main event/festival. Provide detailed description of how this program supports the community, the purpose of the program, description of the cause or charity, how it was selected and how the program was implemented. Provide explanation of how the outreach ties into your main event/festival. Submissions may be one-typed page maximum. Photos and supporting materials are limited to two additional pages.
10. **Best Event Social Media** - Examples of social media include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, webcasts, blogs, Instagram, Tik Tok, Flickr, Smartphone App. Include a screenshots of the platform and tell a brief story of how it was used, audience engagement, navigation ease, visual impact, original to event, and the impact on your festival. Include three screenshots as part of your nomination along with the URL address (<http://>) or app download name. Entries can be considered as a “campaign” with multiple examples on a variety of social media platforms or can be considered separately. If nominated separately, submit separate nomination forms and payments for each entry. And, understand they will be compared against one another for the one award.
11. **Best Event Website** – We all understand that in today’s world, a great internet presence is required to attract attendees to your festival/event. Websites will be reviewed for ease of navigation, user friendliness, event information, engagement and design. For events that are held in Fall or end of the year, please make sure your website is live. For events early in the year, submit a screen shot of your Home page and 3 additional screen shots of your best website pages.
12. **Best Supporting Member Website** - Seeking nominations of NCAF&E best supporting member that provides valuable information through the internet. Submissions should include distinct examples of how the internet presence helps planners or associates communicate details or make decisions regarding event planning. Entry must include a printed copy of the web home page with web address for review. Submissions may be one-typed page maximum.

## **Event Recognitions**

One winner will be chosen from the categories below. Award Certificates will be bestowed during the Awards luncheon. All nominations must be completed online by Monday, January 16, 2023. Several categories require original items to be submitted on-site for review during the conference, read carefully. **NOTE:** Original item must be submitted by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26.

13. **Best Press Kit** – Communication with the press is vital to get your message out to the masses. Submit your press kit, brochure or handouts. If your kit is digital/online, you may print a copy or submit under the “*Non-Print Media*” category instead. **NOTE:** Original item must be submitted on-site during the conference check-in for review by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26.
14. **Best Non-Print Media** - Festivals and events may submit a wide variety of non-print media used for promotion, awareness and engagement. As many events are moving away from printed materials and using more digital options, submission may include, but are not limited to: TV, Radio, Internet, PSA, press kits, sponsor packets, schedules and brochures. (no on-site submission requirements)
15. **Best Event Photo** – A picture is worth a thousand words. Submit your best event photo for consideration. Photos can be black & white or color. Photos must be original, may not be computer generated or altered by technology. Upload your photo for nomination. **NOTE:** Original item must be submitted on-site during the conference check-in for review by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26. Display photos are typically 5 x 7 or 8 x 10.
16. **Best Sponsorship Packet** – Cultivating sponsors is a major milestone. Sponsorship packets, handouts, resources and information provide guidance and assurance of return on investment. Submit your sponsor materials for consideration. If your packet is digital/online, you may print a copy or you may submit under the “*Non-Print Media*” category instead. **NOTE:** Original item must be submitted on-site during the conference check-in for review by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26.

## Promotional Recognitions

Three winners will be chosen for each award category. Award Certificates will be bestowed during the Awards luncheon. All submissions must be completed online by Wednesday, January 15, 2025. All categories require original items to be submitted on-site for review during the conference. On-site items must be submitted by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26.

### Promotional Recognition Categories:

- Small – festival overall budget of \$25,000 or under
- Medium – festival overall budget of \$25,000 - \$149,000
- Large – festival overall budget of \$150,000 or above

17. **Best Merchandise** (S/M/L) – Festivals and events now sell or give out all sorts of merchandise items. They can range from small collectables to large purchases. Events may submit any type of item that is NOT a t-shirt. (*T-shirts are a separate category.*) Events may submit multiple merchandise items, however keep in mind they will compete against one another. Upload a photograph of your merchandise item in your nominations. **NOTE:** Original item must be submitted on-site during the conference check-in for review by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26.
18. **Best Brochure** (S/M/L) – Festivals use printed brochures for a variety of reasons - maps, schedules, special events, sponsor recognition and more. Submit your printed brochure. Both black & white and color entries are accepted. (*Note: All other printed materials are included under the Print Media category. This award is for printed brochures only.*) Upload an electronic version of your brochure or PDF. If your brochure is digital/online, you may print a copy or submit under the “*Non-Print Media*” category instead. **NOTE:** Original item must be submitted on-site during the conference check-in for review by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26.
19. **Best Print Media** (S/M/L) – Submit any type of print media including, but not limited to, advertisement in a newspaper or magazines, billboard, flyers, handouts, and additional print items such as invitations, calendars, schedules, rack cards, post cards, programs, etc... (*excluding brochures*) **NOTE:** Original item must be submitted on-site during the conference check-in for review by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26.
20. **Best Event Poster** (S/M/L) – Festivals use poster for publicity, to announce event dates & information and as collectable fine art. Submit any size or style for consideration. Upload an electronic version of your poster, a PDF or photograph for registration. **NOTE:** Original item must be submitted on-site during the conference check-in for review by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26.
21. **Best T-shirt** (S/M/L) – Event t-shirts share the message, become collectables and keep the event alive in the community beyond the event date. Submit your t-shirt for consideration. Shirts can include short sleeve, long sleeve, one color print or multi-color. (*Note: This category is for t-shirts only. All other wearable items must be submitted under the Best Merchandise category.*) Upload a photograph of your t-shirt within your nomination form. **NOTE:** Original item must be submitted on-site during the conference check-in for review by 5 pm on Sunday, January 26.

## 22. **Conference Recognition**

NCAF&E certificates will be presented to winners during the awards luncheon. No entry forms are required and all participants will be automatically considered.

23. **The “Andy Smith” Best ShowFest Exhibitor** - Named after a long-time member of NCFA&E, during ShowFest, conference attendees will vote and select the people’s favorite exhibitor based on interactions and display from those participating in the Exhibit Hall. No entry required and all exhibitors are automatically nominated and eligible.

24. **Student Choice Award** – students from affiliated colleges and university that are attending ShowFest will select one item from all the merchandise entries (#19-S/M/L) to designate the top winner.

