

STATE COUNCIL ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

2021 Annual Diversity Award

I. Introduction

The State Council on Affirmative Action (SCAA) established the Diversity Award program in 2000 to recognize the achievements of outstanding Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA) practices among State Department Agencies, Wisconsin Technical Colleges, and University of Wisconsin system campuses. The SCAA is an appointed body pursuant to Wisconsin Statute, chapter 230.46. The Council advises the Division of Personnel Management's Administrator on the progress of affirmative action programs throughout the Wisconsin civil service system. The Council also seeks compliance with state and federal regulations and recommends improvements in the state's affirmative action efforts as an employer.

In 2020, the global disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing social awareness of systemic racial injustice and inequity within our country highlighted the need for the SCAA to reimagine the Diversity Awards and future award criteria. Last year's events underscored the severe need for concentrated work in addressing systemic racism and inequities within our civil service workforce community and the impact on the services provided by our state government.

This year, the SCAA would like to recognize state agencies and programs that rose to the challenges of 2020 while continuing to prioritize equity and inclusion during uncertain and rapidly changing times. The 2021 Diversity Awards will recognize state agencies, Wisconsin Technical Colleges, and University of Wisconsin system campuses that have provided innovative and inclusive solutions in the COVID-19 environment to ensure prompt and effective services for all Wisconsinites and support and grow a diverse workforce.

II. Eligibility

State agencies, Wisconsin Technical Colleges, and University of Wisconsin System campuses are eligible to apply through a self-nomination process. To be considered, state agencies, technical colleges/universities must have implemented a program or initiative no later than January 1, 2021 and continued the program to the present time. Please select a single program for award nomination rather than an array of programs or initiatives. You may submit a previously nominated program only if significant changes have been implemented since its prior submission.

III. Application and Selection Criteria

The Council will accept nominations for the 2021 Diversity Award until **Friday, September 3, 2021.**

In the selection process, the Council will review the nominations submitted by agencies and universities. Each nomination submitted to the Council for consideration must include:

1. A letter from the agency secretary, president, or university chancellor to the State Council on Affirmative Action. The letter and the description of the initiative should be no more than three to five (3-5) double-spaced, typed pages.
2. The rationale for developing or undertaking the program or initiative, including its connection to an identified disparity in service to marginalized groups in Wisconsin and or in support of underutilized and marginalized groups in Wisconsin’s workforce. The identified disparity should be related to the changing service needs and service models of the pandemic response or racial justice awareness.
3. A description of the program or initiative, including available metrics and outcomes. This description should highlight the impact of the program and its success in providing equitable service, employee support, innovation, access, or inclusion.
4. Information that demonstrates the organizations’ efforts and achievements, which addresses the following:
 - A solid commitment to the recruitment, retention, and promotion of a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace culture as measured by creating and implementing programs, initiatives, and practices in response to the events of 2020.
 - Dedication to providing equitable service to the entirety of Wisconsin, removing barriers for marginalized groups to access and utilization.
 - Demonstrated innovative recruitment efforts and initiatives that include components implemented to attract and provide access for a broader base of women, veterans, persons with disabilities, and racial and ethnic minority applicants with due consideration given to the changing employment environment of COVID-19.
 - Improvements in upward mobility for people of color, women, veterans, and persons with disabilities in management positions.

Please email applications to Nicole Bailie at nicole.bailie@wisconsin.gov with the subject line: **Diversity Awards**.

IV. Judges

The State Council members on Affirmative Action, representing diverse communities across the state, will review all nominations and rate them according to the selection criteria.

V. Award Presentation

The secretaries, chancellors, or CEO of the selected agencies or universities and the persons responsible for administering the programs are notified of the awards no later than September 27, 2021. Awards will be presented on Thursday, October 27, 2021, at the State Capitol in Madison.

VI. Contact Information

For additional information about the Diversity Award program e-mail:
nicole.bailie@wisconsin.gov