

Welcome to your 2021 Awards Journey

We've put together this guide to provide direction and helpful hints about what to include in your nomination.

Judging Criteria

The judging criteria are largely based on the International Customer Service Standard (ICSS:2020-2025), a framework of 24 specific measures designed to assist organizations in delivering consistently high levels of service. Using a balanced scorecard approach, these 24 measures can be grouped into four distinct perspectives:

- **A service perspective...** how do you deliver a *high quality of customer service in your organization?*
- **An operational perspective...** how do you ensure *consistency in the delivery of customer service?*
- **A learning and growth perspective...** how do you create a culture of customer service...*what do you put into it?*
- **A financial & governance perspective...** how does customer service deliver to the performance of the individual or organization overall... *what do you get out of it?*

As part of your nomination submission, we want you to talk to these, providing an overview of the individual, team, project, or organization, and explaining their performance in the last year in relation to these four perspectives.

Nomination Information

- The nomination forms have been created as a Word document so that they may be edited easily – if you need more space for a response, please add a page (or two!). **Just remember that the overall word count needs to be no more than 2,500 words.**
- **You can include documentation** to support your nomination if you'd like. Be aware that there is an upload limit of 7.5MB per file, so please keep the file size under this.
- We don't expect a comprehensive response for every question - the nomination forms are designed to be used with all of the ISEA categories, and we're aware that not every element is applicable to every individual or organization.
- **Use specific examples** and case studies as evidence where possible as evidence of your nominees performance across each perspective.
- **Nominations need to be submitted no later than 5:00pm CST, 3rd, September 2021.**

2021 International Service Excellence Awards

It has been 13 years since the inaugural International Service Excellence Awards (ISEA) recognized and rewarded the ingenuity and innovation of the globe's most outstanding customer service driven organizations and individuals. Entrants see a range of benefits in participating in the ISEAs, including:

- Recognizing the organization's achievements in customer service, enhancing its reputation with customers and competitors.
- Reinforcing the customer service focus within the organization, building both a greater confidence in working with customers and increased customer experience.
- Acknowledging and rewarding key team members for their contribution to the organization.
- Building the profile and legitimacy of customer service as a true profession.

With each year passing the Awards have grown in both size and stature, and an International Service Excellence Award is now a recognized and sought-after symbol of both personal and business excellence.

Who can enter?

The International Service Excellence Awards is about rewarding and recognizing customer experience in all organizations – regardless of size or location. The International Service Excellence Awards are open to all individuals and organizations.

Categories

The International Service Excellence Awards recognize individuals at all levels within organizations, as well as organizations from corporates through to small businesses. Following a complete review of the program, the categories for the 2021 International Service Excellence Awards are:

For organizations

- **Customer Service Organization of the Year - Large Business**
This category recognizes organizations that have championed customer service throughout the business in 2021 and is open to organizations with more than 2,500 full-time employees.
- **Customer Service Organization of the Year – Division of a Large Business**
This category recognizes divisions/business units that have championed customer service throughout the business in 2021 and is open to organizations with more than 2000 full-time employees. (Please note, the division or business unit can have as few as 8 individuals)
- **Customer Service Organization of the Year - Medium Business**
Like the Large Business category, this award recognizes organizations that have championed customer service throughout the business in the past year, but targets businesses with between 101 and 1999 full-time employees

- **Customer Service Organization of the Year – Division of a Medium Business**
 Like the Division of a Large Business category, this award recognizes organizations that have championed customer service throughout the division/business unit in the past year, but targets businesses with between 101 and 1999 full-time employees. (Please note, the division or business unit can have as few as 5 individuals)
- **Customer Service Organization of the Year - Small Business**
 Targeting businesses with fewer than 100 full-time employees, this award recognizes smaller organizations in the International market.
- **Customer Service Organization of the Year - Government**
 The CSIA understands that there are specific legislative requirements and budget limitations for government organizations that mean customer service excellence needs to be delivered in a different (and often, creative) way. This category recognizes government organizations – be they federal, state or local government – as a separate group as a way of acknowledging this difference.
- **Customer Service Organization of the Year - Not-for-profit**
 While budget isn't everything in customer service, we recognize that the structure of many not-for-profit organizations limit their abilities when it comes to customer service delivery. This category levels the playing field in providing a specific category for these vital organizations.
- **Service Excellence in a Large Service Center (formally Contact Center)**
 This award recognizes frontline teams in larger service centers - those with more than 250 seats – for the critical role they play in customer service delivery.
- **Service Excellence in a Service Center [formally Contact Center (small and medium)]**
 This category targets frontline teams in service centers... those under 250.
- **Visionary Award**
 The Visionary award is awarded to an organization focused on not only continuous improvement but looking and working beyond what is foreseen and creating ways to serve and innovate that are unique and revolutionary.
- **Customer Focused Innovation**
 This category recognizes organizations that go above and beyond in ensuring all investments made benefit the customer above the organization – truly placing the customer at the heart of the organization.
- **Customer Service Project of the Year**
 This category recognizes organizations that have implemented a project, in the award year, designed specifically to enhance customer experience. This category is has sub categories as well – Continuous Improvement, Customer Impact, Service Transformation, and Service Innovation. Simply submit in the category of Customer Service Project of the Year and the judges will take it from there.

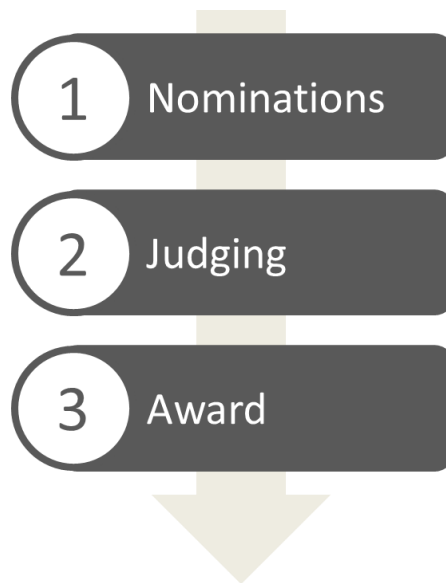
- **Customer Service Team of the Year**
This category recognizes a team within an organization who has moved the dial in some way with regards to service improvement. This could be through rigorous process improvement, design and development of a project or company initiative, etc.
- **Employee Engagement Award**
Employee engagement is key not only for a happy workforce and work environment, but integral in generating and maintaining outstanding customer relationships and experiences. This award truly demonstrates an organization who has “got it right” internally, leading to external success.
- **Customer Culture Award**
Culture is king, well, and the customer. Having a culture laser focused on customer and corporate values; why a company exists and how the team members each contribute to that vision. This category recognizes those organizations and the dedication to developing and maintaining a Customer Culture.

For individuals

- **Customer Service CEO of the Year**
This category targets business leaders and looks at their role in driving an organization toward true customer centricity. The category is open to all business leaders, including CEOs, Managing Directors, General Managers and small business owners.
- **Customer Service Executive of the Year**
Customer Service Executive of the Year is open to C-level executives with a direct responsibility for customer service as part of their role, including Chief Operating Officers (COOs), Customer Experience Officers (CXOs), Executive General Managers and Vice Presidents of Customer Service. Unlike Customer Service CEO of the Year, this is a category that targets c-suite roles that predominantly focus on customer service.
- **Customer Service Manager of the Year**
Customer Service Manager of the Year suits those roles behind the frontline but below c-level and can include Customer Service Managers and Customer Experience Managers.
- **Customer Service Leader of the Year**
This category is aimed at team leaders managing a team that services internal or external clients. While they might also take a frontline role in working with customers, their role is predominantly around managing a team of frontline service professionals.
- **Customer Service Professional of the Year**
This award champions the people who deliver customer service everyday...the frontline team members who work with internal or external clients.
- **Customer Service Advocate of the Year**
Advocate of the Year is aimed at recognizing customer champions at any level in a business, from the frontline to the c-suite. These people in an organization are the ones that demonstrate true passion for customer service excellence in everything they do and infect those they work with this zeal and commitment.

Awards Process

The judging process for the International Service Excellence Awards comprises three distinct parts:



Key Dates To Remember

- **March 2021** – ISEA nominations open
- **3rd September 2021** – ISEA nominations close
- **20th – 24th September 2021** – finalists are notified
- **October through early-December 2021** – On-site /Zoom / WebEx interviews are completed
- **Week of December 20th 2021** – All finalists notified if they were successful in their category/categories on or before December 23, 2021
- **24th January 2022**– International Service Excellence Awards award winners are announced via media release, website and social media

Fees

Individual nominations are \$250 (includes telephone interview with awards judge)

Organization fees:

Organizations (> 100 FTEs) - \$347 submission fee and \$3,897 on-site visit/Zoom/WebEx fee (per-site). Please note, this fee includes 2 tickets to CSIA’s virtual benchmarking event taking place in Q2 2022 after the announcement of the award winners. (**Note:** the \$347 submission fee is deducted if move forward as a finalist) [travel expenses for on-site visits not included in this fee and expenses will be invoiced to the finalist]

Small Business (< 100 FTEs) - \$97 submission fee and \$997 WebEx “visit” fee for finalists (Note: the \$97 submission fee deducted if move forward as a finalist). This fee includes 1 ticket to CSIA’s virtual benchmarking event taking place in Q2 2022 after the announcement of the award winners. (**Note:** the \$97 submission fee is deducted if move forward as a finalist)

Nominations

Organizations and individuals can nominate by downloading the submission forms, completing it and mailing it to us at isea@serviceinstitute.com. You'll receive an email confirming receipt of your nomination.

The judging criteria are largely based on the International Customer Service Standard (ICSS:2021-2025), a framework of 24 specific measures that can be applied equally to government, not-for-profit and for-profit organizations of all sizes and across industry sectors. Using a balanced scorecard approach, these 24 measures can be grouped into four distinct perspectives:

- A service perspective... how do you deliver a high quality of customer service in your organization?
- An operational perspective... how do you ensure consistency in the delivery of customer service?
- A learning and growth perspective... how do you create a culture of customer service...what do you put into it?
- A financial & governance perspective... how does customer service deliver to the performance of the individual or organization overall... what do you get out of it?

As part of your nomination submission, we want you to talk to these, providing an overview of the individual, team, or organization, and explaining their performance in the last year in relation to these four perspectives. For a copy of the ICSS, contact us at info@serviceinstitute.com.

While the **individual criteria** for a becoming a finalist vary across the categories, successful nominations in the past have:

- Provided a **clear explanation of the organization, its customers and the customer service challenges faced.**
- Demonstrated the **passion for exceeding customer expectations and achieving customer service excellence** within an organization, a team or an individual, including an infectious impact on the way the rest of the organization approaches customer service.
- An accurate **description of the breadth and depth of activities / projects...** how many customers are impacted? How large is the project within the business?
- Shown the **effectiveness of people and programs...** what results have been delivered by the nominee and their work?
- **Demonstrated continuous review and improvement** in what they're doing.

You can include supporting documentation as part of your nomination but be aware that there is a word limit of 2,500 words for organization nominations and 1,000 words for individual nominations.

Judging

Judging for the ISEAs follows two distinct approaches: organization nominations are evaluated with an on-site visit, while individuals are evaluated with a structured telephone interview.

How are organizations judged?

Like nominations, the judging of finalists is based on a framework built from the International Customer Service Standard (ICSS 2020:2025). While the individual measures vary from category to category, they include consideration of:

- How well the organization or individual recognizes the importance of a strategic relationship with customers, taking on board feedback and complaints, and using this insight to drive business improvement;
- How the organization or individual engages and communicates with stakeholders both inside and outside the organization;
- How customer service is used within the organization or by an individual to improve the quality of processes, products and services of the organization;
- How technology and innovation is used by the organization or individual to improve the quality of customers service;
- How the organization or individual drives organizational change toward customer service excellence.

On-site/Zoom/WebEx visits - organizations

One of the more important judging criteria for organizations is that of customer service passion – that there is an organizational enthusiasm for customer service excellence. This is something that simply cannot be evaluated simply by reading documents. Our judges need to experience this passion firsthand. For this reason, all organizational judgings are conducted either on-site or via Zoom / WebEx, providing an opportunity for finalists to further demonstrate their commitment to the customer, as well as answer questions that might not have been answered in the original submission. These sessions are usually four-six hours in length and include a high-level presentation to judges, detailed review of the submission, as well as a Q&A session and walk-around (on-site). Note, not all finalists will be given the choice between on-site and video conference. The judging panel's discretion is required.

Telephone interviews - individuals

With nominees for individual categories spread throughout the globe, judging for individuals is conducted over the telephone to ensure a standardized approach. These interviews are scheduled to fit in with the finalist's availability and work schedule, and normally take between 30 and 45 minutes. The interview is structured as a dynamic conversation, covering a range of topics with an emphasis on presenting case studies and examples. While no formal preparation is required, we suggest individuals review the past year's achievements in driving customer service excellence.

Award Winners

Award winners are determined by the International Service Excellence Awards judging panel and are based on scores assigned during the on-site/Zoom or WebEx visits and interviews.

All finalists are notified if they are successful in their category and, if so, will be featured in a CSIA media release, CSIA's website, and CSIA social media posts. Our team will also assist with provided quotes, if requested, for ISEA winners' media releases.

Due to the large scope and area covered for these awards, there is no formal, in person awards ceremony. However, award winners and finalists will be recognized and are invited to present during CSIA's Virtual Benchmarking Tour, which will take place in Q2 of 2022. All awards are shipped to the winners the within one month after the winners are announced to the public.

Other Questions?

Please reach out to us on +1-630-541-9545 or email us at isea@serviceinstitute.com.