



The **Excellence in Entrepreneurship Education Awards** are presented each year by USASBE to colleges or universities in recognition of bold and innovative programs that make an impact in the field of entrepreneurship education. USASBE is an inclusive community that is proud to elevate entrepreneurship education by rewarding forward-thinking teaching, scholarship and practice. For the 2025 award year, we are accepting nominations in eight award categories:

Award Categories:

- [USASBE Model Program Award – Large Institution](#)
- [USASBE Model Program Award – Small Institution \(New in 2025\)](#)
- [USASBE Model Emerging Program Award](#)
- [USASBE Model Re-emerging Program Award \(New in 2025\)](#)
- [USASBE Model Community Entrepreneurship Accelerator/Incubator Award](#)
- [USASBE Model University Accelerator/Incubator Award](#)
- [USASBE Excellence in Pedagogical Innovation Award](#)
- [USASBE Excellence in Co-Curricular Innovation Award](#)

General Application Requirements:

Beyond the category-specific requirements, discussed below, each application must include the following:

- The name of the individual or school being nominated
- The name of the person submitting the nomination
- A secondary contact person name (someone who can provide any additional materials needed).
- Secondary contact person email
- Secondary contact person phone number
- **A Service Commitment Letter:** Each award winner agrees to judge the category won in three of the following five years, including the year immediately following their award. A letter from the applicant's Dean is required to indicate support for this commitment and should be included with the nomination. The individual who nominates the program should be available to fulfill this commitment.

The Rule of 1: Any college or university may submit nominations in more than one category. However, no organization or individual may be a finalist in more than one category for that year. Should a college or university be selected as a finalist in more than one category, they must choose the category in which they will compete, and must withdraw their other nominations for that year.

Self-Nominations: Self-nominations for awards are both acceptable and encouraged. Nominations are evaluated by a committee typically composed of past award winners. The award committee will identify finalists in their category. Finalists must submit a video presentation of their program in advance of the conference and be available for a live Q&A session with the finalist judges prior to the USASBE Conference.

Announcement of Winners: Winners are announced at the USASBE Conference. Finalists must be represented by one or more registered attendees at the conference in order to win an award category.

USASBE Model Program Award – Large & Small Institution Categories

The USASBE Model Program Awards recognize colleges and universities that provide comprehensive, bold, high-quality educational programs that train future generations of entrepreneurs. The program must have an

established record of accomplishment for a minimum of three years. This award category recognizes the comprehensiveness of a curricular program.

Large & Small Institution Definitions (New for 2025)

Large Institutions are any institution with a total enrollment over 5000 students.

Small Institutions are defined as any institution with a total enrollment up to 5000 students.

Application Criteria:

1. Clearly communicate the purpose and/or mission of the nominated program.
2. List the primary objectives of the program.
3. Provide a brief description of the program. Include activities that provide evidence of the comprehensiveness of the program.
4. Describe the team who work with this program.
5. Describe sources of funding and support for the program.
6. Describe boards, partner organizations, affiliates, etc., who connect the program to your larger community?
7. Describe key program innovations and provide evidence of their impact on students, your campus, and/or your community. Include both short-term and long-term outcomes that have been achieved.
8. Describe key program accomplishments over a duration of at least three years.
9. Why do you believe this program deserves to be recognized as a USASBE Model Program?
10. **Appendices:** Upload items that best support your application. (*Note: Judges are expecting applications to be approximately ten pages long and are not encouraged to read beyond that point in the application. You are encouraged to carefully select content that efficiently and effectively supports your application. Parsimony is encouraged.*)

Judging Criteria: Rate the USASBE Model Program nominee from 1-10 on each of the following:

1. The program's mission and objectives are clearly communicated and appropriate to a USASBE Model Program award winner.
2. The program described is comprehensive in nature and substance. (*This might be contrasted to a program that is narrowly targeted or highly specific.*)
3. Please rate the program's record of accomplishments over a period of 3 years or greater. (*While three years is the minimum period allowed, longer duration is not necessarily superior beyond that threshold. Please prioritize the quality and impact of the accomplishments.*)
4. Rate the boldness and innovativeness observed across the program.
5. Rate the degree to which innovations may be replicable by other USASBE programs.
6. Rate the degree to which you feel this nominee deserves to be recognized as a USASBE Model Program.
7. **Optional:** Offer feedback that you believe would be beneficial to this program. (Note: Nominees are often quite grateful for thoughtful feedback.)

USASBE Model Emerging Program Awards

The USASBE Model Emerging Program Awards recognizes colleges and universities for their efforts developing nascent entrepreneurship programs that demonstrate outstanding progress towards becoming comprehensive, bold, and innovative educational programs with early records of student impact. Programs nominated for this award were founded three years ago, or less, measured as measured from January 1. This award category recognizes the start of a curricular program.

Application Criteria:

1. Clearly communicate the purpose and/or mission of the nominated program.
2. List the primary objectives of the program.
3. Provide a development timeline for this program over the past three years.
4. Provide a brief description of the program. Include activities that provide evidence of the comprehensiveness of the program.
5. Describe the team who work with this program.
6. Describe sources of funding and support for the program.
7. Describe boards, partner organizations, affiliates, etc., who connect the program to your larger community?
8. Describe key program innovations and provide evidence of their impact on students, your campus, and/or your community. Include both short-term and long-term outcomes achieved as applicable.
9. Why do you believe this program deserves to be recognized as a USASBE Model Emerging Program?
10. **Appendices:** Upload items that best support your application. (*Note: Judges are expecting applications to be approximately ten pages long and are not encouraged to read beyond that point in the application. You are encouraged to carefully select content that efficiently and effectively supports your application. Parsimony is encouraged.*)

Judging Criteria: Rate the USASBE Model Emerging Program nominee from 1-10 on each of the following:

1. The program's mission and objectives are clearly communicated and appropriate to a USASBE Model Emerging Program award winner.
2. The development timeline demonstrates the emergence of a strong, innovative, and comprehensive entrepreneurship program.
3. Please rate the program's progress and development as described in its timeline.
4. Rate the boldness and innovativeness observed across the program.
5. Is this program built to be sustainable into the future?
6. Rate the degree to which innovations may be replicable by other USASBE programs.
7. Rate the degree to which you feel this nominee deserves to be recognized as a USASBE Emerging Model Program.
8. **Optional:** Offer feedback that you believe would be beneficial to this program. (Note: Nominees are often quite grateful for thoughtful feedback.)

USASBE Model Re-Emerging Program Awards

The USASBE Model Emerging Program Awards recognizes colleges and universities for their efforts developing nascent entrepreneurship programs that demonstrate outstanding progress towards becoming comprehensive, bold, and innovative educational programs with early records of student impact. Programs nominated for this award were **founded more than 8 years ago**, measured as of January 1; AND have gone through a **major restart following dormancy or organizational restructure during the last 3 years**. This award category recognizes the restart of a curricular program.

Application Criteria:

11. Clearly communicate the purpose and/or mission of the nominated program.
12. List the primary objectives of the program.
13. Provide a development timeline for this program over the past three years (a visual timeline or table in appendices would also be helpful) of how your program has experienced a significant “restart” event, please briefly describe the event and why it causes your program to fit the “re-emerging” program award category.
14. Provide a brief description of the program. Include activities that provide evidence of the comprehensiveness of the program.
15. Describe the team who work with this program.
16. Describe sources of funding and support for the program.
17. Describe boards, partner organizations, affiliates, etc., who connect the program to your larger community?
18. Describe key program innovations and provide evidence of their impact on students, your campus, and/or your community. Include both short-term and long-term outcomes achieved as applicable.
19. Why do you believe this program deserves to be recognized as a USASBE Model Re-emerging Program?
20. **Appendices:** Upload items that best support your application. (*Note: Judges are expecting applications to be approximately ten pages long and are not encouraged to read beyond that point in the application. You are encouraged to carefully select content that efficiently and effectively supports your application. Parsimony is encouraged.*)

Judging Criteria: Rate the USASBE Model Emerging Program nominee from 1-10 on each of the following:

9. The program’s mission and objectives are clearly communicated and appropriate to a USASBE Model Emerging Program award winner.
10. The development timeline demonstrates the emergence of a strong, innovative, and comprehensive entrepreneurship program.
11. Please rate the program’s progress and development as described in its timeline.
12. Rate the boldness and innovativeness observed across the program.
13. Is this program built to be sustainable into the future?
14. Rate the degree to which innovations may be replicable by other USASBE programs.
15. Rate the degree to which you feel this nominee deserves to be recognized as a USASBE Emerging Model Program.
16. **Optional:** Offer feedback that you believe would be beneficial to this program. (Note: Nominees are often quite grateful for thoughtful feedback.)

USASBE Model Community Entrepreneurship Accelerator/Incubator Award

This Model Award is for community* accelerator or incubator programs primarily designed to develop and support community entrepreneurship at any stage appropriate for the community context. This could mean an accelerator or incubator focused on any stage of the startup lifecycle (ideation through scaling).

Qualifying programs for this award should receive less than 25% of their funding directly or indirectly from a university and it should not be branded as a university accelerator or incubator.

Impact is assessed based on:

- Program alignment with the stated mission
- Collaboration(s) with other organizations within the community
- Effectiveness of business model
- The curriculum for continued learning supports entrepreneurs

- Funding and support provided to entrepreneurs
- Sustainability of funding and support of accelerator/incubator
- Impact metrics of programming align with goals
- Length of operation
- Staffing (full-time/part-time)

***Community is broadly defined.** A community can be a geographic community, a community of practice, or a discipline-specific community.

Application Criteria:

1. Clearly describe the purpose and/or mission of the nominated accelerator/incubator. Provide a brief description of the accelerator/incubator, and describe key program accomplishments over a duration of at least three years.
2. Describe collaborations with key partners such as boards, partner organizations, affiliates, etc., who connect the program throughout the community.
3. Provide a history of the business model articulating key changes over the years that make it effective
4. Describe key *learning programs, innovations, mentoring or resources used to develop* entrepreneurs, and provide evidence of their impact on aspiring or nascent entrepreneurs, and/or your community.
5. Describe sources of funding and support for *entrepreneurs and startups* within the accelerator/incubator.
6. Describe sources of funding and support for the *accelerator/incubator* with special attention devoted to efforts for sustainability.
7. Provide evidence/metrics of the effectiveness of the program as it aligns with your goals. Examples can include both short-term and long-term outcomes achieved.
8. Describe the team who work with this accelerator/incubator. *Please include descriptions of paid and volunteer staff and resources.*
9. **Appendices:** Upload items that best support your application. (*Note: Judges are expecting applications to be approximately ten pages long and are not encouraged to read beyond that point in the application. You are encouraged to carefully select content that efficiently and effectively supports your application. Parsimony is encouraged.*)

Judging Criteria: Rate the Model Community Entrepreneurship Accelerator/Incubator nominee from 1-10 on each of the following:

1. The program's mission and objectives are clearly communicated and appropriate to a USASBE Model Accelerator/Incubator award winner.
2. The program described is comprehensive in nature and substance.
3. Please rate the program's record of accomplishments over a period of 3 years or greater. (While three years is the minimum period allowed, longer duration is not necessarily superior beyond that threshold. Please prioritize the quality and impact of the accomplishments.)
4. Rate the boldness and innovativeness observed across the program.
5. Rate the degree to which innovations may be replicable by other accelerators/incubators.
6. Rate the degree to which you feel this nominee deserves to be recognized as a USASBE Model Accelerator/Incubator.
7. Optional: Offer feedback that you believe would be beneficial to this program. (Note: Nominees are often quite grateful for thoughtful feedback.)

USASBE Model University Accelerator/Incubator Program

This Model Award is for University-affiliated accelerator or incubator programs primarily designed to develop and support students or community members at the idea stage. Impact is assessed based on:

- Program alignment with the stated mission
- Effective student engagement
- Breadth of faculty support
- Breadth of engagement with the community
- Alumni and/or mentor engagement
- Programming support and engagement
- Sustainability of funding and support including university support
- Spaces (physical and virtual)
- Length of operation
- Staffing (full-time / part-time)

*Community is broadly defined. A community can be a geographic community, a community of practice, or a discipline-specific community.

Application Criteria:

1. Clearly describe the purpose and/or mission of the nominated accelerator/incubator. Provide a brief description of the accelerator/incubator, and describe key program accomplishments over a duration of at least three years. It is recommended to provide evidence/metrics of the effectiveness of the program as it aligns with your goals. Examples can include both short-term and long-term outcomes achieved.
2. Describe the breadth of engagement the program has with students including key *learning programs, innovations, mentoring or resources used to develop* entrepreneurial mindset. Provide evidence of their impact on aspiring or nascent entrepreneurs.
3. Provide examples of faculty support
4. Describe engagement with and/or collaborations with key partners such as boards, partner organizations, affiliates, etc., who connect the program throughout the community.
5. Describe alumni and mentor engagement including metrics
6. Describe university and external sources of funding and support for the *accelerator/incubator* with special attention devoted to efforts for sustainability.
7. Describe the spaces and places of the accelerator/incubator on your campus.
8. Describe the team who work with this accelerator/incubator. *Please include descriptions of paid and volunteer staff and resources.*
9. **Appendices:** Upload items that best support your application. (*Note: Judges are expecting applications to be approximately ten pages long and are not encouraged to read beyond that point in the application. You are encouraged to carefully select content that efficiently and effectively support your application. Parsimony is encouraged.*)

Judging Criteria: Rate the Model University Accelerator/Incubator nominee from 1-10 on each of the following:

1. The program's mission and objectives are clearly communicated and appropriate to a USASBE Model Accelerator/Incubator award winner.
2. The program described is comprehensive in nature and substance.
3. Please rate the program's record of accomplishments over a period of 3 years or greater. (While three years is the minimum period allowed, longer duration is not necessarily superior beyond that threshold. Please prioritize the quality and impact of the accomplishments.)

4. Rate the boldness and innovativeness observed across the program.
5. Rate the degree to which innovations may be replicable by other accelerators/incubators.
6. Rate the degree to which you feel this nominee deserves to be recognized as a USASBE Model Accelerator/Incubator.
7. Optional: Offer feedback that you believe would be beneficial to this program. (Note: Nominees are often quite grateful for thoughtful feedback.)

USASBE Excellence in Pedagogical Innovation Award

The USASBE Excellence in Pedagogical Innovation Awards recognizes colleges and universities for innovation in entrepreneurial education at the course level. These innovations are assessed based on creativity, quality, sustainability, and impact. This award category celebrates innovation in entrepreneurial education at the course level.

Application Criteria:

1. What goals were being pursued in creating this course?
2. Provide a brief description of the course.
3. Please describe the innovation(s) that makes this course worthy of the Excellence in Pedagogical Innovation Award.
4. How does this course improve entrepreneurial education/learning?
5. How long/how many times has the course been offered?
6. Describe any results that demonstrate the success of this course.
7. Provide evidence of student/participant response to this course.
8. Describe key accomplishments since you began offering this course.
9. Why do you believe this course deserves to be recognized for Excellence in Pedagogical Innovation?
10. **Appendices:** Upload items that best support your application. (*Note: Judges are expecting applications to be approximately ten pages long and are not encouraged to read beyond that point in the application. You are encouraged to carefully select content that efficiently and effectively supports your application. Parsimony is encouraged.*)

Judging Criteria: Rate the Excellence in Pedagogical Innovation nominee from 1-10 on each of the following:

1. How well designed is this learning experience relative to the goals that were set?
2. How innovative is this course?
3. Rate your impression of the overall quality of this course design.
4. Is this a course that offers a sustainable benefit to students and/or programs?
5. How impactful has this course been?
6. How replicable might this course be by other USASBE member universities and colleges? Can others benefit from the innovations described?
7. Rate the degree to which you feel this nominee deserves to be recognized for Excellence in Pedagogical Innovation.
8. **Optional:** Offer feedback that you believe would be beneficial to this program. (Note: Nominees are often quite grateful for thoughtful feedback.)

USASBE Excellence in Co-Curricular Innovation Award

The USASBE Excellence in Co-Curricular Innovation Awards celebrates the critical role of co-curricular programming in the overall entrepreneurship education ecosystem. This award category encourages and recognizes colleges and universities for innovative, co-curricular programs that demonstrate creativity, quality, sustainability, and impact. Nominees should illustrate best practice and be a model for others.

Application Criteria:

1. What goals were being pursued in developing this co-curricular activity/innovation?
2. Provide a brief description of the co-curricular activity?
3. Please describe the innovation(s) that makes this activity worthy of the Excellence in Co-Curricular Innovation Award.
4. Who is the target audience for this co-curricular activity? Who has participated to date?
5. What does this activity add to the student learning experience on your campus?
6. How long/how many times has the activity been offered?
7. What are the benefits to participants in this co-curricular activity?
8. Provide evidence of student/participant response to this activity.
9. Describe key accomplishments since you began offering this co-curricular activity on campus.
10. Why do you believe this activity deserves to be recognized for Excellence in Co-Curricular Innovation?
11. **Appendices:** Upload items that best support your application. (*Note: Judges are expecting applications to be approximately ten pages long and are not encouraged to read beyond that point in the application. You are encouraged to carefully select content that efficiently and effectively supports your application. Parsimony is encouraged.*)

Judging Criteria: Rate the USASBE Excellence in Co-Curricular Innovation nominee from 1-10 on each of the following:

1. How well designed is this co-curricular activity relative to the goals that were set?
2. How innovative is this activity?
3. Rate your impression of the overall quality of the activity's design.
4. Is this an activity that offers a sustainable benefit to students/participants?
5. How impactful has this activity been?
6. How replicable might this activity be by other USASBE member universities and colleges? Can others benefit from the innovations described?
7. Rate the degree to which you feel this nominee deserves to be recognized for Excellence in Co-Curricular Innovation.
8. **Optional:** Offer feedback that you believe would be beneficial to this program. (Note: Nominees are often quite grateful for thoughtful feedback.)