

2024 Allie Awards Entries Overview and Guidelines

OVERVIEW

Over the course of the last 34 years, The Allie Awards has grown into the premiere recognition event for the live events industry which recognizes outstanding examples of quality and creativity from event professionals throughout the State of Georgia and the Southeastern United States. It demonstrates how working together for a common good can promote excellence in event design, planning, and production. This awards program remains a model for industry award programs across the country. This awards competition strives for the highest degree of excellence and in doing so, it has raised the standards and quality of the live events industry. Events of nearly every type and size will have the opportunity to be recognized in 38 categories, organized into eight disciplines plus three Best Team Effort awards.

Allie Awards Inc. is a certified **501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation** supported by a volunteer Board of Directors. Proceeds from this annual event will go toward scholarships established for Georgia hospitality students. Your organization will be recognized for taking part in raising the level of professionalism in the industry while improving the live events community.

2023 CATEGORIES

PLANNING

- Best Corporate or Association Event
- Best Social Event
- Best Non-Profit/Fundraiser
- Logistical Achievement in Planning
- Best Multi-Day Event (non-wedding)
- Best Public Event
- Best Event with a Social Responsibility/Inclusivity Component
- Most Creative Use of a Venue

WEDDING

- Best Wedding (<125 guests)
- Best Wedding (>125 guests)
- Best Wedding Print Suite
- Best Wedding Decor Design
- Best Wedding Cake/Dessert

CUISINE

- Best On Premise Event Catering
- Best Off Premise Event Catering
- Best Culinary Menu/Presentation
- Best Dessert Presentation (non-wedding)

DESIGN

- Best Floral Design
- Best Non-Floral Design
- Best Themed Event Decor
- Best Use of Tents
- Best Rentals
- Best Event Venue

ENTERTAINMENT

- Best Entertainment under \$10K
- Best Entertainment over \$10K

ENHANCEMENTS

- Best Print Piece (non-wedding)
- Best New Event Innovation
- Best Event Photography
- Best Event Videography
- Best Event Enhancement and/or Activation

TECHNICAL PRODUCTION

- Best Overall Technical Production – Corporate/Association Event
- Best Overall Technical Production – Social Event
- Best Creative Use of Lighting
- Best Staging and Rigging Design
- Best Content and Video Design

BEST TEAM EFFORT

- Corporate/Association Team Effort
- Social Team Effort
- Wedding Team Effort

ENTRY ELIGIBILITY

To expand the geographical footprint of the Allie Awards, in 2020, we modified our entry eligibility criteria. To ensure your entry is eligible for consideration, it is important to comply fully and accurately with the following rules:

A) Entrants must meet at least **TWO** of the following criteria:

- Entrant's company has a location based in **THE STATE OF GEORGIA**
- Entrant's event was held in **THE STATE OF GEORGIA**
- Entrant's company is a member in good standing in at least one **LOCAL OR NATIONAL** event industry/hospitality association or organization. IE: ILEA, NACE, WIPA, MPI, SITE, PCMA, CVB'S, ETC.

B) Event Date:

- The event must have occurred between **January 1, 2023** and **December 31, 2023**

C) Entry Limitations:

- Each Company may submit up to **TWO** entries per category.
- Each Company may submit the same event in a maximum of FIVE different categories.

D) Anonymity:

- The awards are to be judged without recognizing the identity of the company or individual presenting the submission. **Entrant's company name, employees or logo may NOT appear anywhere in the entry submission content or collateral.** If the entrant's name, logo, or image appears within the submission, the judging body is permitted to deduct points accordingly. **Please thoroughly check your photography images, BEOs, diagrams, documents, spreadsheets, etc.**
- If there are repeat offenses throughout, the submission will be disqualified, at the committee's discretion.
- If the entrant has permission, the name, logo, or employees of your client may appear in your submission.

E) Definition of Client:

The "Client" does **NOT** have to be a paying client – therefore if the entrant donated their goods and services or if the entrant was the client such as for their own wedding, these events can be entered – **however the anonymity rules do apply.**

While disqualifications are rare, please be advised of the following notes:

- Entries will be disqualified if your company is repeatedly identified in the entry content
- An entry does not properly meet the above identified criteria
- **NOTE: Fees for disqualified entries are not refundable**

IMPORTANT DATES & TIPS

Early-bird entries: Oct 17 (portal opens) – Jan 5 @ 5 pm	\$100.00 fee per entry
On-time entries: Jan 5 through Jan 15 @ 5pm	\$150.00 fee per entry
Late entries: Jan 15 (after 5pm) – Jan 22 @ 5pm	\$200.00 fee per entry

Entries will not be accepted after this final deadline!

TIP #1 – Start early, start now! Do not wait until the week of the deadlines to begin this process. Create your profile and click through the new portal to get familiar with it. Gather your collateral materials and write a draft while the event is fresh in your mind. Consider creating the written content in a document for easy editing, track your character and word counts. Then, simply “copy and paste” into the appropriate text boxes.

TIP #2 – You may save your progress at any point during the submission process and go back to it later to edit it. However, **you will be charged based on when the entry is completed and paid.** You cannot start during the early period and finish during the late period and expect to pay \$100.

JUDGING AND NOTIFICATION

Judges are selected by the Board of Directors and 2024 Planning Committee from top-tier event professionals outside the State of Georgia and will remain anonymous throughout the judging process.

The nominees and subsequent winners of any given category are based on merit as determined by the panel of judges and are not based upon the number of entries received in the category. There may not be nominees in every category, regardless of the number of entries received.

Nominees in each category will be notified on or before **Monday, February 12, 2024**. The awards will be presented at the Allie Awards on Monday, March 11, 2024 at The Signia by Hilton Atlanta

Tickets are the sole responsibility of the entrants and will be available online at www.allieawards.org

ENTRY PROCESS

[All entries must be submitted individually through our new online entry portal here.](#)

NOTE: If you are a first time user, create your user new profile – otherwise you will be able to use the same log in credentials as 2023. We will only use your contact information if there are any questions regarding your entry. The committee recommends creating and editing the written content in a document file, then simply copy and paste the text into the entry portal.

Once your Profile is created, click on the “Click here to begin a new submission”

Submission Settings:

- Complete the fields with event specific information. The Submission Title is how the entry will be identified. Creativity is encouraged here.
- Select a Discipline – this is the general grouping for the award categories
- Hit Submit to begin entering your entry information in the Task List View

Task List:

- Please click on each task below to enter the requested information.
- After you have completed each of the tasks below, you will see a green check mark by the task name.
- We recommend that you click on "Save Submission" **after every task** to avoid losing any information for whatever reason

Entry Qualifying Criteria – this area asks for the entry date, your client’s name, and phone number. While it’s rare, the judges may use this information to verify the validity of your entry.

Awards Night Information - Provide a single, hi-resolution, **LANDSCAPE ORIENTATION IMAGE**, .jpg file, which will be used on awards night and for media communications. Please note: this image will not be judged here; however, it may be duplicated in your collateral. The caption below the selected image will be used to summarize your entry should it be recognized as the winner, on the website and from the podium.

Entry Written Content

1. Event Review Summary - Provide a summary of the event to include: purpose, setting, and size of the event, as well as demographics of the audience. Include the client’s goals and objectives for your portion of the event. Maximum of 2,200 characters, approximately 350 words. **(10 points)**
2. Your Company’s Contributions - Review how you or your company contributed your products and/or services to this event to make it a success. You may also include the

effort taken or level of difficulty your company encountered with the execution of the event. Maximum of 4,500 characters, approximately 750 words. **(25 points)**

3. Unique Challenges and/or WOW Factor - Describe any significant or unique challenges you or your company faced, and solutions executed and/or describe what you would consider your WOW Factor, which makes this event award-worthy.

Maximum of 4,500 characters, approximately 750 words. **(25 points)**

Collateral Uploads - Add up to (15) files that best showcase your entry. **(20 points)**

- Use the "UPLOAD" fields to search and attach each selected item.
- Collateral files must be in one of the following formats: .jpg, .gif, .pdf, .doc, .docx, .xls, .xlsx, .mpg.
- Videos up to 3 minutes in length may also be included, where allowed (MAX video file size 500MB).
- **BUDGET:** If your entry category has a budget requirement, you are **required** to use the provided template. **Your budget MUST be uploaded as the first piece of collateral.** Budget categories are for the full retail or market value at the time of the event. Any donated products or services should also be included at full retail or market value.
- Collage images that include multiple photos, press coverage, including social media reviews, magazine or newspaper articles are **NOT PERMITTED** and will disqualify your entry.
- Please ensure your company name, brand or logo is not visible on any of the submitted collateral.

Payment:

- Credit Card payment is preferred for reconciling the online entry process.
- Entry fees are charged based on the date the submission is final (early, on time or late)
- **Your submission is NOT final without payment.**
- You will receive a confirmation email once submission and payment are final.

Additional Information for ALL Best Team Effort Awards:

- Any group of companies or individuals who together produced an event that meets the qualifications for award entry.
- The team must include a minimum of (4) four members who also individually meet the eligibility requirements to enter any of the award categories.
- Inclusion in the event production does not oblige team members to participate in this competition. Therefore, they must be willing to contribute a written statement of responsibility and payment for their entry as if it's an individual award.
- One Team Leader is responsible for collecting and submitting all the written content and collateral uploads for the combined team entry.
- In the written content portion, the use of "you/your company" should reflect the efforts, products, and services of the team as a whole, focused only on the "participating" vendor partners.

- Do not reference vendor partners in your entry who are not participating. Example: If your caterer is not willing to be part of the team do not reference the food in your written content or upload food focused images in your collateral.
- Within the collateral task (after the written content portion), your first upload is a **REQUIRED** word document summary of the participating team members; each of them providing the team leader with a statement of responsibility for their scope of work, products, and services (**100 words max** – per team member).
- When paying, select the number of team members to pay in full.
- **NOTE:** Your entry will not be considered complete without the full team payment.

SCORING

Judging Score Criterion of (100) points of merit maximum will be allowed.

- The Written Event Summary = (60) points of merit (covers all three questions).
- Collateral = (20) points of merit.
- Judges Overall Impression = (20) points of merit.

DESCRIPTION OF CATEGORIES & AWARDS

Planning

- **Best Corporation/Association Event-** is awarded to the company/individual who produced the best overall event, such as company milestones, product launch, marketing events, annual meeting, award gala and conference receptions.
- **Best Social Event-** is awarded to the company/individual who produced the best overall event in a social setting, such as bar/bat mitzvahs, milestone celebrations, birthdays, anniversaries, sweet 16's, family reunions, proms, etc...
- **Best Non-Profit Fundraiser** - is awarded to the company/individual who produces the best non-profit fundraiser event. Judging emphasis will be awarded on leveraging resources, active committee solicitation of donors and sponsors, as well as profitability back to the organization.
- **Logistical Achievement in Planning** - is awarded to the company/individuals who overcome substantial obstacles in the planning process for the entire event and not just a specific portion such as production or décor/design
- **Best Multi-Day Event (non-wedding)-** a multi-day event produced by a company or individual for a corporation or industry association or a convention/conference with a specific targeted audience, not open to the general public.
- **Best Public Event-** an event that is produced by a company or individual that is open to the general public, such as conventions, trade shows, road races, parades, fairs, concerts, etc.
- **Best Event with a Social Responsibility/Inclusivity Component** - Created for any event that puts emphasis on the social climate we live in today. It will be awarded to the event that best brought awareness of their cause to the forefront.

- **Best Creative Use of a Venue**- is awarded to the company/individual that utilizes a nontraditional venue for the location of their event, including weddings. Note: This is for events in venues not typically used as an event space.

*All budgeted categories should be accompanied by your budget calculating **RETAIL/MARKET** value. Nonpaid, donated or sponsored elements should be listed at their equivalent full retail value. You **MUST** use the provided budget template on website and upload the budget either in Excel or as a PDF and **MUST** be your first collateral piece.

Who Can Enter: Event planners, producers, and coordinators; meeting planners; party planners; facility and venue managers; institutions (educational, cultural and non-profit), circuses and carnivals, sporting events and concerts, conventions and expositions service managers, destination management companies, incentive travel companies and any other entities that provide these types of services for the special events industry. **Wedding submissions will not be accepted in the Planning discipline with the exception of the Logistical Achievement category where all events are applicable.**

Wedding

- **Best Wedding (Under 125 Guests)** - is awarded to the company/individual who produced the best overall wedding.
- **Best Wedding (Over 125 Guests)** - is awarded to the company/individual who produced the best overall wedding.
- **Best Wedding Print Suite** – is awarded to the company/individual who provides, creates, and produces the best collection of printed materials used to communicate prior to, on and after the wedding day.
- **Best Wedding Decor Design** - is awarded to the best company/individual who produces the best comprehensive design throughout multiple elements of an actual wedding event.
- **Best Wedding Cake/ Dessert** - is awarded to the company/individuals who creates the best visual display of the wedding cake, specialty cake or Dessert table for a wedding.

Who Can Enter: The entity responsible for creating, producing and the delivery of the defined products and services. Including, but not limited to wedding planners, event designers, stationers, pastry chefs, photographers, videographers, fully engaged venue managers and catering service representatives.

*All budgeted categories should be accompanied by a budget calculating **RETAIL/MARKET** value. Non-paid, donated or sponsored elements should be listed at their equivalent full retail value. You **MUST** use the provided budget template on the website.

Cuisine

- **Best Off Premise Event Catering** - is awarded to the company/individual who creates the best catered event, delivered into an off-premise setting, working from trucks, tents or an off-site kitchen.
- **Best On Premise Event Catering** - is awarded to the company/individual who creates the best catered event, from a full-service, on premise production kitchen such as an in-house venue caterer or a hotel.
- **Best Culinary Menu/Presentation** - is awarded to the company/individual who delivers the best menu experience, *and/or* provided a unique technique or experience, regardless of price or presentation format, with the emphasis on culinary creativity, flavors, and transition, flair of plate/table presentation, layers, garnish, colors, and detail.
- **Best Dessert Presentation (non-wedding)** – this award includes all forms of dessert including but not limited to event cakes, pastries, plated desserts, and dessert buffets.

Who Can Enter: Caterers, either off-premise or in-house, including specially bakeries, restaurants, facility operators, hotels, clubs, and any other entities that provide food for the special events industry. All entries must have been produced for an actual event.

Design

- **Best Floral Design** - is awarded to the best company/individual who produces the best floral design for an event of any type – including tabletop designs, weddings, other social events as well as non-social.
- **Best Non-Floral Design** - is awarded to the best company/individual who produces the best non-floral design for an event.
- **Best Themed Event Décor** - is awarded to the company/individual who creates an overall décor/design which best represents the client's event theme.
- **Best Use of Tents** - is awarded to the company/individual who best utilized or provided tenting in any setting, including wedding events.
- **Best Rentals**- is awarded to the company/individual who best uses rental equipment, tabletop needs, furniture, etc. or provides these items to enhance the event and its overall design décor impression.
- **Best Event Venue**- Created to highlight the special places, venues, event spaces around Georgia that can hold any event. What makes your venue the best?

Who Can Enter: The entity responsible for creating and producing the design and decor, including, but not limited to event designers; floral designers, prop, scenery, and display designers; venue/property owners, balloon artists, providers of rental equipment, tenting, or artists in other media.

Entertainment

- **Best Entertainment (Under \$10K/over \$10K)** - is awarded to the company/individual who provides the best overall entertainment production – which can include lighting, rigging, and A/V elements – however this is for DJ's, Bands, and all other professionals whose sole responsibility is to provide entertainment for the event attendees. Either a budget just for the entertainment portion or a line-item invoice must be the first uploaded piece of collateral.

*All budgeted categories should be accompanied by your budget calculating RETAIL/MARKET value. Non-paid, donated or sponsored elements should be listed at their equivalent full retail value. You MUST use the provided budget template on website and upload the budget either in Excel or as a PDF and MUST be your first collateral piece.

Who Can Enter: Producers, choreographers, designers and suppliers of entertainment and entertainers.

Event Enhancements

- **Best Print Piece (non-wedding)** - is awarded to the company/individual who creates the best tangible, printed invitation, menu cards, programs, flyers, or promotional items that support the event's brand and/or messaging.
- **Best New Event Innovation** - is awarded to the company/individual who introduces an innovative product, service, or concept - new to our market - to meet the goals of a specific event and benefits the overall event industry.
- **Best Event Photography** - is given to the company/individual whose photography best captures the event, theme, and overall spirit of an occasion for any corporate or social occasion, including weddings.
- **Best Event Videography** - is given to the company/individual whose video best captures the event, theme, and overall spirit of an occasion for any corporate or social occasion, including weddings.
- **Best Event Enhancement and/or Activation** - is awarded to that special "something" that enhances an event to be unique and amazing. This will be awarded to the company/individual who added to an event something specific that gives it the wow factor, examples include: special photo booth activations, specialty food/drink activations/enhancements, etc. Not for planners or decor vendors to enter.

Who Can Enter: Graphic designers, stationers, print companies, marketers, producers and designers of event collateral, promotional products suppliers, event photographers and video film makers, video/sound producers. ***Best New Event Innovation AND Best Event Enhancement can apply to a broader reach of vendors in the special event industry.**

Special Notes for Photography/Videography:

- Provide an illustrative summary of the event to include setting, purpose, size and demographic of the audience and your company's unique approach to its execution, as defined by the category.

- Be sure the images reveal the important event elements including design, production, catering, entertainment, activities, and audio-visuals.
- Assess the images on composition, frame, exposure, and focus.
- If any images are digitally altered, what was the purpose and extent of the changes?

***SPECIAL PHOTO/VIDEO JUDGING SCORE CRITERION** – as with all awards, (100) points of merit maximum will be allowed; however, the breakdown will be different:

- The Entry Written Content task = (20) points of merit, covering all three sections.
- Collateral = (60) points of merit.
- Judges Overall Impression = (20) points of merit.

Technical Production

- Best Overall Technical Production – Corporate/Association Event
- Best Overall Technical Production – Social Event
- Best Creative Use of Lighting
- Best Staging and Rigging Design
- Best Content and Video Design

Who Can Enter: Companies providing staffing, lasers, lighting, special effects, pyrotechnics, audiovisual, and any others providing technical, logistical, or design services for the special events industry.

Best Team Effort

- **Corporate/Association Event | Social Event | Wedding Event** - is awarded to the event team with the best collaborative effort between the various disciplines of the events industry. The event should be entered into the appropriate market segment, with non-profit falling into the category of social event.

Additional Information for Best Team Effort ONLY:

- Any group of companies or individuals who together produced an event that meets the qualifications for award entry.
- The team must include a minimum of (4) four members who also individually meet the eligibility requirements to enter any of the award categories.
- Inclusion in the event production does not oblige team members to participate in this competition. Therefore, they must be willing to contribute a written statement of responsibility and payment for their entry as if it's an individual award.
- One Team Leader is responsible for collecting and submitting all the written content and collateral uploads for the combined team entry.
- In the written content portion, the use of "you/your company" should reflect the efforts, products, and services of the team, focused only on the "participating" vendor partners.

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- Within the collateral task (after the written content portion), your first upload is a **REQUIRED** word document summary of the participating team members; each of them providing the team leader with a statement of responsibility for their scope of work, products, and services (100 words max – per team member).
- When paying, select the number of team members to pay in full.

NOTE: Your entry will not be considered complete without the full team payment.

INDIVIDUAL SPECIAL RECOGNITION – LEGACY AWARDS

Nominations for these four awards (*and the Hall of Fame*) will be accepted via the Allie Awards website and NOT the award entry portal. Please check www.allieawards.org for more information

TIM LUNDY, CSEP RISING STAR AWARD

At the 21st anniversary of the Allie Awards we remembered the entrepreneurial spirit of the team that created the Allies, in particular its founder, Tim Lundy, CSEP. The spirit and intent of this award is designed to honor, recognize, encourage, and inspire a young event professional toward his/her greatest potential in the special events industry.

Nominees shall:

- Be within their first five years in the special events industry
- Be actively involved in the Georgia events industry and association community
- Have exhibited innovation and leadership and made an impact on their company
- Have clear potential to grow into more responsibility in their company, association organization and the community at large.

DALE RIGGINS HUMANITARIAN AWARD

Shepard Convention Services introduced the Dale Riggins Humanitarian Award in 1993 as a tribute to, and in memory of, their valued employee, Dale Riggins, who made great contributions to the special event industry. This prestigious honor is awarded each year to an individual who donates time, talent, effort, and expertise to community service both within our industry and in our community. The recipients of this award are among the most honored luminaries in our industry. Consider for a moment the individuals who truly “make a difference” to those in need and whose effects give the live events industry its true impact and high profile. Please take time to nominate someone in our industry whom you feel is worthy of this honor.

Nominees should be of high moral and ethical stature and exhibit outstanding professionalism in their service to the events industry and the community at large.

BOB BLAESING, CSEP LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

A Lifetime Achievement Award was established in the first year of the Allie Awards to honor individuals in our industry who have made a mark in the events community over their career. Past recipients are event professionals for 20 years or more who are well known for their contributions to the events industry. The title “Lifetime Achievement Award” implies a long period of time, and while honoring longevity is good, the key word is “achievement.” We chose in 2004 to honor the late Bob Blaesing, CSEP, co-founder of Experience by Design, by renaming the award the “Bob Blaesing, CSEP, Lifetime Achievement Award.” Bob was a visionary whose philosophy exemplifies what we honor with the Lifetime Achievement Award: nurturing those around us through education, pursuit of ethical and professional behavior throughout the industry, and commitment to the growth of special events. May his spirit live on in those who are honored with this award. Nominees should be individuals who have made an impact in our events community over the course of their career, through innovation, dedication, and achievement.

INNOVATOR AWARD

Introduced in 2021, this award was created to recognize the trailblazers and trendsetters of the hospitality and event industry! These recipients are true pioneers in our industry – someone who is constantly developing innovative ideas that have a lasting impact on the way we do business, or someone who has reinvented themselves or their business to stay current with ever-evolving industry trends, or the person who is always offering new services to their clients. Our Innovators take the risk to step outside the box and are persistently helping to elevate the event industry to the next level.

ALLIE AWARDS HALL OF FAME

Introduced during the 2021 Allie Awards, our “Hall of Fame!” was created to honor individuals in our industry who go above and beyond before, during and after the events we produce. This recognition celebrates all of those individuals who represent the setup crew, servers, behind the scenes production, and so much more.

Nominees for the Hall of Fame demonstrate dedication, hard work, ingenuity, and professionalism. This is someone on your team that you can always count on to manage their task exceptionally well and lead by example with a positive attitude. This recognition is for our unsung heroes who make each and every event a success for our clients and their guests. Think of your most tenured banquet captain, talented bartender, sous chef, delivery driver, linen steamer... the most valued member of your crew and team!

All recipients of these Legacy Awards will be selected by the Allie Awards, Inc. Board of Directors and the honor will be presented on awards night.