



## **Arizona State University President's Award for Transdisciplinary Collaboration**

*This award program description was jointly prepared by Arizona State University and the HIBAR Research Alliance, as part of the HIBAR Strategies Collection*

### **OVERVIEW OF THE ASU PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR TRANSDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION**

#### **What is the granting organization for this award?**

[Arizona State University](#) (ASU)

#### **What is the aim of this award?**

The Arizona State University President's Award for Transdisciplinary Collaboration seeks to recognize multidisciplinary project teams that have undertaken exemplary trans-sectoral collaboration addressing a complex societally relevant issue. These research teams work collaboratively with actively engaged participants from different sectors — academia, business and industry, government laboratories, agencies and organizations in civil society.

The approach to transdisciplinary collaboration exemplified in this award aligns with ASU's design aspirations of transdisciplinary intellectual fusion and use-inspired research. Successful projects will feature signature characteristics of Highly Integrative Basic and Responsive research projects. HIBAR projects pursue fundamental knowledge while addressing urgent societal challenges and integrate theories, concepts and methodologies across disciplines and beyond university walls.

#### **Who is eligible to receive the award?**

The President's Award for Transdisciplinary Collaboration is awarded to research teams whose leadership includes at least one researcher who is a member of the ASU academic community and at least one affiliated with a societal partner organization. A societal partner organization can be a government agency or laboratory, a for-profit company or a non-profit organization. Researchers in all fields are eligible to apply.

Exemplary transdisciplinary and cross-sectoral projects integrate the following characteristics:

- Dual motivations or integrated purposes that seek new knowledge and address a critical societal challenge. These purposes lead project teams to draw from a more comprehensive set of knowledge and skills.
- Shared leadership by academic and non-academic researchers representing wider society, working in a collaborative and equitable partnership. Participants from different sectors make more informed decisions when working together, including decisions regarding project goals, direction, theories, concepts and methods.
- Sustained urgency is a hallmark of a HIBAR project. Team members are intensely focused on addressing a societal program while recognizing that fundamental understanding requires sustained effort and must be guided by responsible research and innovation principles.

**How often is the award given?**

Annually

**Is this a competitive award process?**

Yes

**What is the form of the award (recognition, certificate, plaque, monetary award, etc.)?**

Recognition by the ASU President, along with a team plaque, individual certifications and recognition in ASU media outlets.

**ESTABLISHING THE AWARD PROGRAM**

**What was the motivation for establishing the award?**

As a Governing Member University of the HIBAR Research Alliance, senior leaders at ASU have participated in a number of discussions about the value of recognizing HIBAR research projects through awards. Though they are primarily intended to celebrate exemplary projects that integrate both purpose and cross-sectoral leadership, these awards also elevate the profile of HIBAR research within the institution and help identify and connect with researchers who are working on these projects. ASU chose to name the award for “Transdisciplinary Collaboration” to directly align with the existing language in ASU’s [design aspirations](#).

ASU has championed this type of research for nearly two decades, seeking to shift the practice of research out of the ivory tower and into the real world. This commitment compels universities to promote agility and collaboration; challenge long-held cultural expectations around the purposes of research; cultivate networks of internal and external change agents; and adopt a sustained sense of urgency toward developing solutions.

**When was this award program established?**

The award program was announced in early 2023, and the first awards were given in December 2023.

**What was the process for designing and approving the award program?**

The award concept was designed by a small task group, consisting of participants from both ASU and the HIBAR Research Alliance: William Dabars (ASU Office of the President & School for the Future of Innovation in Society), Paul Carrese (ASU School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership), Ed Hackett (ASU School of Human Evolution and Social Change), Anne Tsui (ASU W. P. Carey School of Business), Adriana Kuiper (ASU Knowledge Enterprise), and Lorne Whitehead (HIBAR Research Alliance Director).

They prepared a short proposal to describe the value of the new award and how it aligns with the ASU mission, [charter](#), and design aspirations and its approach to breaking down silos. President Michael Crow and Executive Vice President of Knowledge Enterprise, Sally Morton, approved the new award.

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Following its approval, members of the task group recruited a set of examiners, who collectively constitute the President's Award for Transdisciplinary Collaboration Committee.

### **What resources (people, money, etc.) were needed to establish the program?**

The President's Awards are one component of the employee recognition program managed by the Office of Human Resources in partnership with the Office of the President, the Office of University Affairs, and other academic units.

Early planning and discussion of the President's Award for Transdisciplinary Collaboration occurred in the summer of 2022. Upon approval from senior administration, William Dabars (Senior Research Fellow for University Design and Research; Professor, Office of University Affairs) and Adriana Kuiper (Associate Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, ASU Knowledge Enterprise) connected with the Office of Human Resources to determine its inclusion into the existing President's Awards program (<https://cfo.asu.edu/presidents-awards>). Working with the assigned Senior Program Coordinator, they established a working/review committee to define the award further, criteria, a rubric/metric for evaluations and a timeline.

The assigned Senior Program Coordinator is key in establishing the working tasks/committees and overseeing the management of the award. They are responsible for the day-to-day coordination of the awards program, development of worksheets, scheduling meetings, the development of key materials/documents and the coordination of marketing and communication, and they are responsible for working with the selected project teams to honor them at an annual ceremony. They work closely with each committee member, marketing and communication personnel, and the Office of the President.

The President's Awards is funded primarily through the Office of the President. The Senior Program Coordinator is funded through the Office of Human Resources.

## **THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **How are potential applicants made aware of the award opportunity?**

The award is described on the [President's Award webpage](#) and it is promoted via internal ASU communication channels, including email lists and newsletters.

### **What are the award criteria?**

Award applications are evaluated using the following criteria, available on the ASU website [at this link](#). Scores are determined by rating the degree to which the project meets the criteria in these categories:

#### Development (20%)

- Demonstrate efforts in identifying partners and forming collaborations and connections.
- Describe a societal issue or problem addressed by the project, how it was identified, and why it interests the parties involved.
- Identify the discipline(s) involved and explain the transdisciplinary challenges - goal identification,

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methodologies, scheduling, and vocabularies - engaged in developing the project.

- Outline the vision and goals of the project.

### Collaborative Planning and Implementation (40%)

- Clearly describe the project implementation - who, what, where, how, and why.
- Identify the internal and external partners involved.
- Explain the steps taken in the project to promote transdisciplinary and trans-sectoral collaboration at ASU and beyond.

### Impact, Outcomes, and Measurable Results (40%)

- Define how the project's success was measured. This can be done using a wide array of quantitative, qualitative, or both measures. Examples might include, but are not limited to: artifacts, interviews, narrative reflections, newsworthiness linked to collaboration, media, releases, television stories, etc., pre- and post-tests, surveys, and testimonials.
- Demonstrate academic excellence in knowledge production and innovation, and a connection to any of ASU's overarching design aspirations.
- Describe the impact of the project and explain how it aligns with transdisciplinary collaboration goals.
- Explain how evidence was gathered and analyzed.
- Illustrate what policies and processes can be derived from the project.
- Indicate how long the project has been operating and if it will continue.
- Summarize the potential for this project to be replicated by other areas of ASU or by other organizations or if the project will expand its scope and impact.
- What impact did you see in the individual discipline(s) resulting from this transdisciplinary collaboration?

### **What is the application process?**

The award description [at this link](#) includes a critical cover sheet that describes the essential characteristics that projects must have in order to be considered for this award. This cover sheet, provided in Appendix A of this document (p. 8) is intended to aid project team lead in determining whether their project qualifies. Should their project not have the characteristics as outlined, the project does not advance.

Interested applicants submit an online prequalification proposal form, an example of which is shown in Appendix B of this document (p. 9). The evaluation committee reviews each submission and determines if the proposed project aligns with the award criteria.

For submissions that align with the award criteria: Applicants receive an official invitation to submit a full application and an awards packet detailing the second part of the application process. See Appendix C of this document (p.11) for an example of the 2025 awards packet for Transdisciplinary Collaboration. Note that the award packet is revised each calendar year. The packet includes: an invitation to attend an

informational and writers' workshop to assist with preparation of the submission, the detailed information required for the application, and instructions for how to ensure the project meets the full award criteria. The evaluation committee then reviews all completed submissions and select the final award recipient(s).

For submissions that do not align with the award criteria: Applicants will be notified and invited to a future President's Awards workshop, which will provide feedback on how to prepare for future submissions.

### **What is the timeline for the application process?**

The typical timeline for the application process is:

- Call for proposals is released in December - February
- Deadline for proposal submission is end of February
- Invitation to submit full applications sent by early March
- Deadline for application submission is April-May.
- Review of final applications/selection is late May through June.
- Selected award winners are notified in the fall.
- Awards are conferred in a ceremony in early December.

## **THE REVIEW PROCESS**

### **What is the evaluation process?**

The evaluation committee reviews each submission and determines if the proposed project aligns with the award criteria, and later reviews all completed applications and selects the final President's Awards recipients.

The Senior Program Coordinator is responsible for scheduling a final review and discussion after the review committee has completed its independent review and scoring process. A scoring rubric is provided to each review committee member. Using this rubric, each member independently evaluates each submission, tracks their scoring, and sends the information to the Senior Program Coordinator to compile a ranked-order master list of the submissions. This compiled list does not define the winner, but rather guides the final review and discussions.

During this final review, committee members use the scoring rubric to guide them as they discuss how each submission aligns with the award criteria and where it failed to meet the criteria. Each member is asked to vote on whether a submitted project should be awarded, and those not awarded receive a follow-up communication from the program coordinator outlining a few points where the submission failed to meet the criteria.

### **Who is on the review committee?**

The review committee includes participants from the Office of the President, Knowledge Enterprise, faculty from different academic units across campus, and several external partners and community members.

### **What resources (people, money, etc.) are needed to implement the ongoing award program**

The continued support of the Office of the President, the Office of University Affairs, academic units and senior administrators are required. This ongoing support includes funding to assist with program and personnel needs. Also, a point person such as a program coordinator or manager, or a specific office or unit is needed to oversee the continuation of the award.

## **THE AWARDING PROCESS**

### **What is the awarding process?**

Arizona State University President Michael Crow honors recipients at the President's Awards ceremony.

### **How are awardees notified?**

The Senior Program Coordinator notifies all applicants – those who are selected as the award recipient(s) and those who are not. Those who are not selected are provided feedback about where the project failed to meet the award criteria.

### **How are the awards publicized?**

The team's accomplishments are featured online in ASU News and publicized via the HIBAR Research Alliance.

## **REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

### **Is there anything specific about ASU that made establishing this award program more or less challenging?**

This award was relatively straightforward to establish at ASU for two reasons:

- It emphasizes ASU's commitment to transdisciplinary collaboration and societal impact. Since 2002, ASU has conducted innovative use-inspired fundamental research that has both intellectual purpose and real-world societal impact. The organization has radically reordered its research enterprise, and has developed an extensive network of governmental, private sector, and community partners that help to shape research priorities, participate, and translate research into practical, tangible results.
- The President's Awards program was already established. The program provides the university and employees with opportunities to recognize and celebrate the commitment and contributions of individuals within the ASU community, including its collaboration with societal partners.

**Have any changes been made to the award program since it was established?**

A detailed checklist was developed and is now provided to interested applicants at the prequalification proposal stage and full application stage. This checklist aids applicants in ensuring that their project meets the award criteria prior to submission. Additionally, the description and criteria were updated to emphasize that the award recognizes specific exemplary HIBAR projects; it is not intended to recognize overall research programs (which are typically comprised of many individual projects).

**Did you experience any pitfalls in establishing or implementing this program, and if so how did you address them?**

When this new award for Transdisciplinary Collaboration was confirmed, it was included in the 2023 President's Awards competition on a somewhat rushed basis, and the description of the award criteria had not yet been fully developed or vetted. This caused some confusion among interested applicants because it was unclear what was required for the submission and how it would be evaluated. The review committee recognized this problem and revised the application criteria description midway through the review process, and reevaluated their decisions based on the revised description. In hindsight, this initial confusion could have been avoided by involving ASU marketing and communication personnel from the beginning of the process, at the time that the award was designed and the initial language describing the award was developed. This would have avoided confusion both among the applicants and the review committee members. As well, connecting with other organizations that have established a similar or related award program would have proved helpful to set a foundation.

**What advice would you offer another organization interested in establishing a similar award?**

Connect with your senior administrators on their expectation of the award to ensure clear understanding of what they envision, ask for their input on the timeline and process, and work with them to identify continued resources needed such as funding and personnel to aid in the development of the award program as well as its ongoing implementation.

## **Appendix A: Cover sheet shared with project teams at the proposal and application stage**

This cover sheet is provided in advance to aid the project team lead in determining whether they qualify in the proposal stage. Should their project not have the characteristics as outlined, the project does not advance.

### **Critical Cover Sheet Information for 2024 PATC proposals**

Multidisciplinary project teams must consist of the following four essential characteristics to be considered for this award. These characteristics should be evident within the body of the application and must be highlighted in a separate cover sheet that contains the information described below:

#### **1. ASU researchers and non-academic partners share decision-making authority for all critical aspects of the project equitably:**

- a) Name and identify the ASU co-leaders for this project, specifying their respective roles in the project leadership, beginning with the lead researcher.
- b) Name and identify the co-leaders for this project from industry, government or civil society, including their respective roles in the project leadership.

#### **2. The project is application-oriented research that produces an academic output:**

- a) In a single paragraph, describe the critical societal challenges the project seeks to address and the impacts, outcomes, and measurable results achieved.
- b) In a single paragraph, please describe the critical new knowledge that was — or is currently being — developed during the project and the academic outputs achieved in terms of scholarly publications and other relevant research metrics.

#### **3. What constitutes excellence in this project?**

- a) Describe how one or more key decisions were made through a collaborative process throughout the project.
- b) Tell the story of the project conception and how the early planning unfolded.
- c) How were the research results prepared for publication, and what were the roles of the various collaborators?
- d) What difficulties were encountered in aligning the simultaneous objectives of public benefit and academic impact? How were they overcome?
- e) Using a timeline format, identify the academic and societal successes of the project to date and those that are expected in the future.



## Appendix B: Prequalification proposal - web form submission

Interested candidates must complete a web form for consideration to apply for one of the President's Awards. The fields include:

- Title of program or project

- First name

- Last name

- Phone number

- Email address

The email address must be a valid email address.

### Award category

Select the award category you think best fits your project or program.

- ☐ **Innovation: A solution that contributes to the university's commitment to higher education through initiatives, programs, projects, services and techniques.**
- ☐ **Social embeddedness: Unique models for mutually beneficial collaborations, community partnerships or resources.**
- ☐ **Sustainability: Principles, programs, services or solutions that serve as a catalyst or an example for other ASU units.**
- ☐ **Transdisciplinary Collaboration: Project or research team that addresses societally relevant issues through collaboration across disciplines or sectors.**

#### ▼ [Transdisciplinary Collaboration proposals](#)

Transdisciplinary Collaboration proposals **must follow** [the description and Critical Cover Sheet](#). If your project does not include the four essential characteristics as outlined, your project will not advance.

## *Appendix B: Prequalification proposal - web form submission*

- **Project description**

Describe in 750 words or less the qualities of the program or project that makes it worthy of the category you selected. Please summarize how your project aligns with the category you selected and its importance. Highlight any major development, implementations and outcomes. If your project is selected a full narrative will be requested.

750 word(s) remaining

- **Project timeline**

Identify the period when this program or project was initiated and implemented in 50 words or less. Example; Spring semester 2021 through Fall semester 2021.

200 word(s) remaining

- **Project outcomes**

Please describe the program's or project's successful outcomes in 750 words or less. Highlight any major development, implementations and outcomes. If your project is selected a full narrative will be requested.

750 word(s) remaining

**Submit**

## **Appendix C: President's Award Information – Application support packet**

Applicants that meet the awards criteria receive an official invitation to submit a full application, along with an awards packet detailing the second part of the application process. This is an example of the award packet prepared for the 2025 application cycle.

### **President's Awards Application Support Packet**

Congratulations! We're excited to share that your project has been selected to move forward in the President's Awards process. In this next stage, you're invited to submit a formal application that meets specific requirements outlined below.

### **What's Required in Your Application Submission?**

Please submit a narrative that clearly addresses the award criteria for your nominated category. Your narrative should compellingly describe your project's purpose, approach, and impact.

Be sure to include the following:

1. Team Roster. List all individuals affiliated with the project. For each person, include: first and last name, title, affiliation and email address. Download the blank team roster template from the President's Awards Google Drive – For Invited Projects folder.
2. Abstract (200 words or fewer). Provide a concise summary. An example abstract can also be found in the President's Awards Google Drive – For Invited Projects folder.
3. Narrative/Application Document.
  - a. Limit: 5,000 words or less. Format: Up to 10 pages (single-spaced) or 20 pages (double-spaced). Font: Arial, 11 pt.
  - b. The word/page limit **includes**: Abstract and narrative aligned with award criteria.
  - c. The word/page limit **excludes**: Team roster, letter of recommendation (if required) and any addendum/supplemental materials.
  - d. Applications that exceed the word or page limits may be disqualified.
4. Award Criteria. Your narrative must follow the specific award criteria for your category. Criteria documents are available in your assigned folder. The criteria are also available on the President's Awards page. If you have questions about the criteria, the Program Manager will connect you with the program examiners for clarification.
5. Category-Specific Requirements.
  - a. **Social Embeddedness Award**: Letters of recommendation from community partners or leaders are optional but may strengthen your application. If included, please attach them in your addendum—they will not count toward the word or page limit.
  - b. **Transdisciplinary Collaboration Award**: Include the additional materials requested in the attached **cover letter**.
6. Supplemental Materials (Optional).
  - a. You may include digital photos, web page links, or other visuals that showcase your project as part of an addendum.

## **Submission Instructions**

Submit your final application as one PDF file. Alternatively, you may submit multiple documents in Word format. Email your materials to the Program Manager prior to the Friday, June 13 deadline.

## **Resources Available in the Google Drive**

Each qualified point of contact or team lead has been granted access to the President's Awards Google Drive – For Invited Projects folder. This folder (per category) includes:

- This support packet.
- Abstract examples.
- Previous award-winning submissions.
- A blank team roster template.
- Other helpful resources to support your application.

If you are unable to access the folder or need to request access for someone else, please contact the Program Manager.

**Note:** The examples of past award-winning submissions may reflect different criteria and formatting requirements than those used this year. Be sure to follow the current award criteria outlined in your assigned folder.

## **Need Help with Your Application?**

Yes, we're here to help! Look for a virtual Zoom support session with the Program Manager and representatives from the President's Office. Dates to be announced. Recordings will be made available afterward.

## **What Happens After You Submit?**

Once you submit your completed application by the Friday, June 13 deadline, your materials will be reviewed by a panel of **ASU faculty, staff, student leaders, and community partners**.

Using the award-specific criteria and a scoring rubric, this group—referred to as **examiners**—will evaluate all submissions and determine the winning team(s). It's possible that more than one project may be recognized in a category. Refer to the timeline included in your materials for details on when results will be announced.

## Timeline and assigned responsibilities

*Dates may be adjusted based on the number of submissions and the availability of academic and examiner schedules.*

Description	Important Dates	Responsibility
All interested groups must submit a prequalification web form	3/1/25 - 3/31/25	Soon after the deadline, the Senior Program Coordinator will send all pre-proposals to the examiners for a first round of reviews.
First round of reviews by examiners	4/1/25 - 4/25/25	The Senior Program Coordinator will schedule individual examiner meetings to discuss the submissions and come to a consensus on who will move forward.
First round of decisions	4/28/25 - 5/1/25	The Senior Program Coordinator will notify all groups. Those moving forward will receive an awards support packet detailing the next steps.
Working period for invited projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the awards support packet.</li> <li>Attend the virtual Zoom support session.</li> <li>Access resources in the Google Drive.</li> <li>Finalize your application to meet award criteria.</li> </ul>	5/1/25 - 6/13/25	The Senior Program Coordinator and representatives from University Office of Evaluation and Educational Effectiveness to provide tools and resources during this period.
<b>Deadline for application</b>	<b>Friday, 6/13/25 11:59 p.m.</b>	<b>Email your materials to the Program Manager</b>
Second round of reviews by examiners and final decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual review and scoring based on award criteria and rubric.</li> </ul> Host discussion and selection meetings	6/14/25 - 7/31/25  <b>For examiners: If you require additional time to complete your evaluations, please notify Patty Rosciano as soon as possible.</b>  Discussions/selection	The Senior Program Coordinator will compile and distribute all final submissions to examiners via the designated Google Drive folder. Each examiner will independently review and evaluate the submissions. A Project Evaluation Sheet will be provided as a worksheet for recording scores and comments.

*Appendix C: President's Award Information – Application support packet*

	meetings will be held throughout July.	Following the individual review period, the Senior Program Coordinator will coordinate a meeting with all examiners to discuss the evaluations, determine consensus scores, and select the award recipients.
Final notifications to recipients	Late July - Early August 2025.	The Senior Program Coordinator will notify all leads.
Obtain further information for those being honored  Recipients will receive an official invite to the President's Awards Ceremony.	August - November 2025	The Senior Program Coordinator will reach out to all recipients to collect details such as team rosters, updated abstracts, and other necessary information for the ceremony. This information will be used to properly recognize recipients during the event. Recipients will receive an official invitation along with any action items to complete before the ceremony date.
Attend the President's Awards Ceremony	December 2025 or January 2026, TBD	An event to honor the recipients. All examiners will be invited to attend.

**Questions?**

Please reach out to the Program Manager for support.

Thank you, and best of luck with your submission.