



AWARDS FOR
EXCELLENCE

WINNING STRATEGIES

Below are some tips and winning strategies that will give your submission the best chance to succeed.

Make Sure Your Project Is Eligible.

Private sector projects must be in stabilized operation and financially viable. All projects must be fully complete. Meaning all construction has been completed and the project is occupied. If you still are not sure whether your project is eligible, email columbus@uli.org for further clarification.

There Is No “Completion Date” Requirement for the Excellence in Development Award.

There is no official cutoff date for project completion in the Awards for Excellence program. It’s a balancing act: on one hand, the jury appreciates projects that exhibit a strong financial track record—an advantage that a five-year-old project would have over a newly completed one. On the other hand, the jury rewards those projects that are innovative and create new models for the industry—something a ten-year-old project may not do.

Good Images Are Critical.

Images that accurately represent the character and use of your project are instrumental in the jury’s decision-making process. Be sure that your images include people using the space and give the jury a sense of the project in relation to its surroundings. All images must be high resolution (ideally at a minimum of 300 dpi at 8x11) because they may be used in a variety of communications channels. All images should be in electronic format (JPEG or TIFF) and include photographer credits.

Focus on the Project Description.

The project description should be direct and succinct. Focus on what sets your project apart from others, and most important, describe the impact—economic, social, and environmental—the space has had on its surrounding area. Be sure to provide project metrics wherever possible; concrete numbers help the jury make its decision.

Pick One Person to Serve as the Primary Contact.

Decide who will devote focused attention to completing the submission, and include that contact’s name, title, telephone number, and email address on the intent to apply and application. You may wish to use the team members who developed the project to help draft responses to the application questions. However, the application will be most effective if one person coordinates and processes all information. If your project is selected as a finalist, this person will be ULI’s main point of contact for the site visit and award ceremony.

Keep It Simple.

It may be tempting to create a custom application package, but no jury member will see it. Each submission—application, attached literature, and project images—is presented to the jury in an identical manner to ensure objectivity. All extraneous material and packaging will be disregarded. Keep the focus on presenting the project information and images in a clear, concise manner.