



Sports Commission of the Year

Population: Under 500,000

Population: 500,000 and above

This award is given to the sports commission that can demonstrate its superior performance over the past year. Factors to be considered will include how the sports commission achieved its objectives of the past year (including economic impact, hotel occupancy, community engagement, corporate involvement, and benefits to civic organizations). Applicants will provide examples of how activities benefited their community by promoting the area as a sports destination regionally, nationally or internationally, as well as support from community leaders, strategic partners and others.

Submission Guidelines

The Sports ETA Awards Committee invites you to submit nominations for the 2026 Sports ETA Member Awards on behalf of your organization.

If you have any questions about the nomination process or specific award categories, please contact Sports ETA Member Services at info@SportsETA.org.

For your entry to be considered, please address each of the judging criteria and clearly label each section of your entry according to the judging criteria outlined below.

Judging will be based on the following:

- Section One: Written statement detailing sports commission mission, objectives and goals for current year. Organization may submit annual business plan to meet the criteria. (10 pts)
- Section Two: Measurable examples of how outlined goals were achieved through execution of sports commission activities (must have occurred in 2025). Examples of the impact that the sports commission activities have had on a direct impact on the local community (i.e. economic impact, hotel occupancy, etc.) level of community engagement (i.e. community interest/support, corporate involvement, etc.) and/or benefits to local civic organizations. (35 pts)
- Section Three: Evidence that your activities benefited the community/city by promoting your destination regionally, nationally or internationally. (15 pts)
- Section Four: Specific examples that set the standard for the quality of the event (s) that were produced or hosted by a sports commission. This can include branding, attendance, financial success, positive references and the sustainability of the event, if this is an annual event. (15 pts)
- Section Five: Include typed statements of support from community leaders, strategic partners and/or organizations affected by your activities. (15 pts)
- Section Six: Contributions to Sports ETA (i.e. board service, community participation, outreach, years of membership, etc.). (10 pts)



Sports Tourism Organization of the Year

Population: Under 500,000

Population: 500,000 and above

This will be awarded to the sports tourism organization that can demonstrate its superior performance over the past year. Factors to be considered will include the quality of sporting events supported by the organization based on community interest, size of events in relation to community size and the positive impact events on the community. Applicants will provide specific examples of how they supported those events (including volunteer recruitment, sponsorship referrals, marketing), how they were produced and staffed, and how their region benefited. Criteria will include evidence that the organization's activities benefited the community financially and otherwise.

Submission Guidelines

The Sports ETA Awards Committee invites you to submit nominations for the 2026 Sports ETA Member Awards on behalf of your organization.

Award recipients will be selected based on exemplary performance and merit. Winners will be announced at the *2026 Sports ETA Symposium* in Las Vegas, NV. Nominations and all supplemental materials are due by Wednesday, March 03, 2026, at 11:59 P.M. ET.

If you have any questions about the nomination process or specific award categories, don't hesitate to get in touch with Sports ETA Member Services at info@SportsETA.org.

For your entry to be considered, please address each of the judging criteria and clearly label each section of your entry according to the judging criteria outlined below.

Judging will be based on the following:

- Section One: Written statement detailing the organization's mission, objectives and goals for the current year. Organization may submit annual business plan to meet this criteria. (10 pts)
- Section Two: Quality of the sporting events (must have occurred in 2025) supported by your organization in your community based on: community interest, size of events in relation to community size, and the positive impact the event had on the community. (35 pts)
- Section Three: Specific examples of how your organization supported efforts of sports events and how city/local community received benefit. (i.e. volunteer recruitment, sponsorship referrals, marketing, etc.) Describe how sports events were produced (i.e. local organizing committee, local club or league, etc.), and describe how the group was formed and staffed. (15 pts)
- Section Four: Evidence that your activities benefited community/city financially via economic impact/direct spending, hotel room nights generated or otherwise. (15 pts)
- Section Five: Included typed statements of support from community leaders, strategic partners and/or organizations affected by your activities. (15 pts)
- Section Six: Contributions to Sports ETA (i.e. board service, community participation, outreach, years of membership, etc.). (10 pts)



Event Partnership of the Year

Population: Under 500,000

Population: 500,000 and above

Nominations may come from a destination, a rights holder, a venue partner, an industry partner or any combination from above. This award will be given to a destination, rights holder, venue and/or industry partners whose collaborative partnership on a sports event was exemplary to the benefit of all organizations, or who worked in innovative ways on an event to the benefit of each organization. Applicants will be asked to demonstrate specific examples of how they worked together to produce a noteworthy event, how they communicated leading up to, during and after the event, and innovative factors that led to a true partnership.

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For your entry to be considered, please address each of the judging criteria and clearly label each section of your entry according to the judging criteria outlined below.

Judging will be based on the following:

- Section One: Please provide the event name, event location, event dates and the names of the organizations that partnered on the event. (10 pts)
- Section Two: Provide specific examples of how the partner organizations worked together to benefit both entities. (20 pts)
- Section Three: How did the partnership benefit the event and the host community itself? (20 pts)
- Section Four: How did the organizations communicate with each other leading up to, during and after the event? (20 pts)
- Section Five: How did participants in or attendees of the event benefit from the collaboration? (20 pts)
- Section Six: Describe how the partnership was innovative compared to other events. (10 pts)



Event or Program Impact of the Year

Population: Under 500,000

Population: 500,000 and above

The impact of an event can go beyond economic impact. While those factors are still important and will be considered in this award, the Event or Program Impact of the Year will go to a sports event or local initiative whose impact can be defined in other key measurable ways. Applicants for this award will demonstrate how their event had an impact in their communities or for their residents/participants beyond just the financials. Some examples of how those events or initiatives succeeded would be how they benefited underserved communities, events or initiatives that helped give residents outlets to improve their fitness in a measurable way, events or initiatives that were aimed at underserved communities, promoting adaptive sports and programs for disabled residents, events or initiatives dedicated to diversity, equity and inclusion, or events or initiatives that were dedicated to environmental sustainability.

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For your entry to be considered, please address each of the judging criteria and clearly label each section of your entry according to the judging criteria outlined below.

Judging will be based on the following:

Section One: Please provide the event or program name, location, and dates. (10 pts)

Section Two: Describe the event or program being nominated. (10 pts)

Section Three: What was the origin of the event or program, and how many people did it serve? (10 pts)

Section Four: Did the event or program have a positive economic impact on the community? If yes and it was measured, what was the estimated impact? (10 pts)

Section Five: In what areas besides financial impact did the event or program benefit the host community or participants? (30 pts)

Section Six: How did the event address any of the following areas? (Resident fitness or quality of life; services for disabled residents; underserved communities; socioeconomic inequality; diversity, equity and inclusion; environmental sustainability.) If those areas were not relevant, please explain in what additional areas the event or program benefited the community or participants. (30 pts)



Rising Star

Those just starting out in the sports events and tourism industry deserve to be recognized. This award will recognize an individual or individuals in the industry who have already made an impact in their communities, events, or business. Applicants must have been employed in a sports tourism capacity for less than five years to be considered for this award and must show how their actions have made a substantive impact over that time.

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Judging will be based on the following:

- Section One: Provide the name, employer, job title and work experience (job titles and years spent in the industry) of the nominee. (10 pts)
- Section Two: Provide an explanation for what this nominee has done that warrants consideration for this award. (30 pts)
- Section Three: Provide specific examples of how the nominee has made substantive impact in their organization or community, or for the industry as a whole. (30 pts)
- Section Four: What attributes does the nominee have that will make them successful in the industry in the years to come? (20 pts)
- Section Five: Is the nominee active in the Sports ETA Young Professionals Community? (5 pts)
- Section Six: Has the nominee sought STS certification? (5 pts)



Superior Service Award

This is an award for an industry partner individual or organization that has proven service to the sports events and tourism industry in a substantive way. Applicants must show how their work or efforts have provided a benefit to destinations, sports organizations and/or the industry as a whole through their products or their support of the industry. Factors that will be considered for this award include economic benefits to the industry and how the applicants worked in collaboration with other association membership categories.

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For your entry to be considered, please address each of the judging criteria and clearly label each section of your entry according to the judging criteria outlined below.

Judging will be based on the following:

- Section One: Written statement detailing your organization's mission, objectives and goals for the current year. Organization may submit annual business plan to meet this criteria. (10 pts)
- Section Two: Specific examples that show how you helped your organization achieve or exceed these goals. Examples of the impact that your organization's activities have had on the sports events and tourism industry (i.e. economic impact, hotel occupancy, growth in membership, etc.). (20 pts)
- Section Three: Describe how you made a positive impact during this calendar year (2025), either as part of your organization or individually. Nominees should exhibit exceptional qualities such as honesty, integrity, responsibility, compassion, and courage, and an exemplary commitment of time and energy serving others or towards the event(s). (20 pts)
- Section Four: Describe ways that you aided your organization to gain more exposure or engagement. Examples can include media or public relations, acquisition of new sponsors or financial partners, and gaining new partners. (20 pts)
- Section Five: Included typed statements of support from community leaders, strategic partners and/or organizations affected by your activities. Give examples on how the community was involved and/or show a rally of support or involvement. (15 pts)
- Section Six: Contributions to Sports ETA (i.e. board service, community participation, outreach, years of membership, etc.). (10 pts)