



2026 ACMP® Change Excellence Awards Criteria Guide

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About the ACMP Global Change Excellence Awards

The ACMP Global Change Excellence Awards recognize individuals and organizations that are advancing the discipline of change management through leadership, innovation, and measurable impact.

Grounded in the **ACMP Standard for Change Management**, these awards are evaluated through a structured, evidence-based review process conducted by a global panel of experienced practitioners.

This document outlines the **judging criteria and scoring approach** used to evaluate nominations across each award category.

For full program details, eligibility requirements, and nomination guidelines, [please click here.](#)

How Submissions Are Evaluated

All nominations are assessed using a standardized framework focused on four core dimensions:

- **Leadership & Vision**
- **People, Culture & Enablement**
- **Innovation & Advancement of Change Management**
- **Results, Impact & Evidence**

Each category includes weighted scoring criteria to ensure consistent and fair evaluation across all submissions.

Important Note for Applicants

Submissions should include **clear, evidence-based examples** of impact. Strong nominations go beyond description and demonstrate:

- Measurable outcomes
- Documented results
- Sustained or scalable impact

AWARD CATEGORIES

Change Management Organization of the Year:

Change Management Organization of the Year Award (1 Award to an Organization, ACMP Member or Non-Member)

DESCRIPTION: Recognizes an outstanding organization that has demonstrated visionary leadership, empowering change and driving organizational success through innovation and a deep commitment to change management principles. This award recognizes teams who champion change and leverage the value of change management to achieve transformative outcomes. Open to an ACMP member or non-member.

JUDGING CRITERIA: The criteria noted will be utilized to select a category winner that exemplifies as many of the attributes as possible from the field of applicants, to best embody the spirit of the award. A complete, well-supported nomination including case studies, testimonials, and documented results is required.

1. Leadership & Vision for Change

Tell us how change management is embedded as a core part of your organization.

- Examples of bold or forward-looking decisions that supported successful change
- How leadership champions and models change across the organization
- Efforts to elevate change management as a discipline within your organization

2. People, Culture, & Enablement

Show how your organization empowers and supports internal change management functions

- How change management roles are resourced, and supported by leadership
- How the organization builds change capability
- How your organization embraces the principles that change practitioners are bringing forward

3. Innovation & Advancement of Change Management

Highlight how your organization approaches change in new or impactful ways.

- Embracing [ACMP's Standard for Change Management®](#) and elevating it through innovative tools, methods, or frameworks
- Creative approaches to overcoming resistance or adapting to complexity

4. Results, Impact, & Evidence

Provide clear examples of how change management contributed to organizational success

- Measurable results, such as performance improvements, ROI, adoption, or efficiency
- Positive stakeholder and organizational impacts

Scoring Rubric

Category	Scoring Guidance	Weight	Score (1-5)
Leadership & Vision for Change	Assess how deeply change management is embedded, leadership modeling, and strategic positioning.	25	
People, Culture & Enablement	Assess structural enablement, capability building, and cultural reinforcement.	25	
Innovation & Advancing Change Management	Assess originality, elevation of ACMP Standard, and complexity management.	20	
Results, Impact & Evidence	Assess measurable performance improvement, ROI, adoption, and documented proof.	30	
TOTAL SCORE		100	

Score Guidance:

1. **Minimal** - Little to no evidence provided; impact is unclear, negligible, or not demonstrated.
2. **Developing** - Some evidence provided; partial alignment to criteria with limited or early-stage impact.
3. **Proficient** - Clear evidence provided; solid, measurable impact aligned to stated objectives.
4. **Advanced** - Strong, well-documented evidence; significant impact with clear outcomes and potential for scalability or broader application.
5. **Exceptional** - Best-in-class submission; comprehensive, clearly evidenced, and demonstrates transformational impact and advancement of the discipline.

Judges should consider:

- The depth of integration of change management across the organization (not isolated to individual projects)
- The visible and sustained role of leadership in championing and modeling change
- The maturity and scalability of change capabilities across functions or geographies

- The extent to which change management is treated as a strategic enabler, not just a support function
- The quality and credibility of evidence, including measurable outcomes and documented results

High scores require evidence that change management is embedded at an enterprise level and delivers sustained, measurable organizational impact—not just successful execution of individual initiatives.

Change for Good Award

Change for Good Award (1 Award to an Organization, ACMP Member or Non-Member)

DESCRIPTION: Recognizes an organization that pioneers innovative strategies to drive lasting, sustainable change for the betterment of society and/or the environment through inclusive and impactful change initiatives. Open to an ACMP member or non-member.

JUDGING CRITERIA: The criteria noted will be utilized to select a category winner that exemplifies as many of the attributes as possible from the field of applicants, to best embody the spirit of the award. A complete, well-supported nomination including case studies, testimonials, and documented results is required.

1. Leadership & Vision

Show how your organization leads purpose driven change for societal and/or environmental good.

- How the initiative aligns with an organizational vision, mission and long-term goal
- How, through the change initiative, the organization is showing leadership in how to achieve sustainable change for good
- How the change addresses both immediate needs and long-term societal or environmental challenges

2. People, Culture, & Enablement

Demonstrate how stakeholders across organizational levels, communities, or partnerships were meaningfully engaged and actively heard.

- How diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging were intentionally embedded in the change approach
- Innovative or inclusive strategies used to build collaboration, trust, and shared ownership

3. Innovation & Advancement of Change Management

Highlight what makes your approach new, repeatable, and influential.

- Creative or forward-thinking change management strategies, tools, or models used
- How technology, data, or new ways of working enhanced impact or effectiveness
- Potential for the initiative to scale or be adapted by other organizations, sectors, or communities
- How lessons learned, frameworks, or best practices have been shared to advance the field of change management

4. Results, Impact, & Evidence

Show evidence that the change improved experiences or outcomes for people affected the change and that the change has staying power.

- Clear, measurable outcomes demonstrating positive societal and/or environmental impact
- Evidence of adoption, behavior change, or sustained benefits over time
- Metrics such as ROI, environmental improvements, social outcomes, or stakeholder benefits

Scoring Rubric

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People, Culture & Enablement	Assess structural enablement, capability building, and cultural reinforcement.	25	
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4. **Advanced** - Strong, well-documented evidence; significant impact with clear outcomes and potential for scalability or broader application.
5. **Exceptional** - Best-in-class submission; comprehensive, clearly evidenced, and demonstrates transformational impact and advancement of the discipline.

Judges should consider:

- Impact must extend beyond internal business benefit
- Judges should prioritize **sustained, measurable social/environmental benefit** over aspirational intent
- Scalability and repeatability should positively influence innovation scoring

High scores require evidence of sustained, measurable societal and/or environmental impact that extends beyond the organization, with clear proof of adoption, longevity, and potential for broader influence or replication.

ACMP Volunteer of the Year

ACMP Volunteer of the Year Award (1 Award to an Individual, ACMP Members Only)

DESCRIPTION. Recognizes an outstanding ACMP member who has made exceptional volunteer contributions at the chapter and/or global level. Through leadership, collaboration, and a commitment to advancing the discipline of change management, this individual has significantly enhanced ACMP initiatives, strengthened the community, and exemplified the ACMP Code of Ethics.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Active ACMP member
- Minimum of two (2) years of volunteer service at the chapter and/or global level

JUDGING CRITERIA: The criteria noted will be utilized to select a category winner that exemplifies as many of the attributes as possible from the field of applicants, to best embody the spirit of the award. A complete, well-supported nomination including case studies, testimonials, and documented results is required.

1. Leadership & Vision for Change

Demonstrate how the volunteer has provided strong, values-based leadership in a volunteer role, inspiring others to contribute and grow.

- How the volunteer has championed initiatives aligned with ACMP’s mission and long-term vision
- Examples of taking initiative to launch, lead, or significantly enhance programs or strategic efforts
- How the volunteer has influenced positive direction or growth at the chapter and/or global level

2. People, Culture, & Enablement

Demonstrate how the volunteer has fostered collaboration, inclusivity, and a supportive volunteer culture.

- How the volunteer has mentored, coached, or developed other volunteers or ACMP members
- How the volunteer’s efforts helped strengthen member engagement and community participation
- Consistent embodiment of ACMP’s Code of Ethics, including integrity, respect, and service

3. Innovation & Advancement of Change Management

Demonstrate how the volunteer has introduced innovative ideas, approaches, or solutions that improved programs or volunteer effectiveness.

- Contributed to advancing the discipline of change management through ACMP initiatives
- Addressed key challenges with creative and sustainable solutions
- Enhanced ACMP’s visibility, reputation, or professional influence

4. Results, Impact, & Evidence

Demonstrate how the volunteer has delivered measurable outcomes that created meaningful value for ACMP and its members.

- Contributed beyond the expectations of the volunteer role
- Created sustainable impact that continues beyond direct involvement

Scoring Rubric

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4. **Advanced** - Strong, well-documented evidence; significant impact with clear outcomes and potential for scalability or broader application.
5. **Exceptional** - Best-in-class submission; comprehensive, clearly evidenced, and demonstrates transformational impact and advancement of the discipline.

Judges should consider:

- Impact at chapter **and/or** global level
- Contributions beyond role expectations
- Clear alignment to ACMP Code of Ethics
- Sustainability of contributions

High scores require evidence that the nominee significantly strengthened ACMP, not simply participated actively.

Best Change Campaign Award

Best Change Campaign Award (1 award to an organization, ACMP Member or Non-Member)

DESCRIPTION. Recognizes an organization that has delivered an outstanding change management campaign in support of a specific change initiative. This award celebrates campaigns that are innovative, strategically aligned, creatively executed, and demonstrably effective.

The winning campaign will clearly demonstrate the thoughtful and disciplined application of the ACMP's [Standard for Change Management](#), resulting in meaningful organizational impact and measurable outcomes.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA. Open to member and non-member organizations, across all sectors and industries. Submissions must focus on a specific change initiative and the associated change management campaign

JUDGING CRITERIA: The criteria noted will be utilized to select a category winner that exemplifies as many of the attributes as possible from the field of applicants, to best embody the spirit of the award. A complete, well-supported nomination including case studies, testimonials, and documented results is required.

1. Leadership & Vision for Change

Demonstrate how the campaign positioned change management as a strategic enabler of organizational success.

- Was aligned to a clear vision and strategic objectives for the change initiative
- Secured visible sponsorship and leadership commitment to reinforce the change

2. People, Culture, & Enablement

Demonstrate how the campaign:

- Effectively engaged impacted stakeholders through targeted, audience-centered approaches
- Built awareness, understanding, and readiness for change
- Enabled people leaders and change agents to confidently support the initiative
- Fostered a culture of adoption, reinforcement, and sustained change

3. Innovation & Advancement of Change Management

Demonstrate how the campaign used creative, innovative, or non-traditional approaches (including tools, technologies, channels, or messaging strategies) to enhance impact and drive engagement and adoption.

- Tailored change strategies to address unique organizational challenges
- Advanced the practice of change management within the organization
- Reflected strong alignment with the ACMP's [Standard for Change Management](#)

4. Results, Impact, & Evidence

Demonstrate how the campaign achieved measurable adoption, utilization, and/or proficiency outcomes.

- Delivered tangible business results aligned to the initiative’s objectives
- Demonstrated clear return on investment, benefits realization, and long-term sustainment of adoption and future state behavior

Scoring Rubric

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5. **Exceptional** - Best-in-class submission; comprehensive, clearly evidenced, and demonstrates transformational impact and advancement of the discipline.

Judges should consider:

- Targeted stakeholder strategy
- Creativity in channels/tools/messaging
- Adoption and utilization metrics

A campaign cannot score in the highest range without evidence of measurable adoption or business outcomes.

Trailblazer in Change Management Award

Trailblazer in Change Management Award (1 award to an individual, ACMP Members Only)

Description

Recognizes an individual who is blazing a trail in the field of change management — whether early in their career or an experienced practitioner. This award celebrates those who are charting new paths in how change management is practiced, embedded, or advanced within their organization or the broader profession.

Through bold thinking, innovative approaches, and a commitment to excellence, the recipient demonstrates meaningful impact and is shaping the future of change management.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: Open to ACMP members nominees only. Open to professionals at any career stage and nominees may work in any sector, industry, or geography.

JUDGING CRITERIA: The criteria noted will be utilized to select a category winner that exemplifies as many of the attributes as possible from the field of applicants, to best embody the spirit of the award. A complete, well-supported nomination including case studies, testimonials, and documented results is required. Self-nominations must include letters of support or industry recognition of work.

1. Leadership & Vision for Change

Demonstrate how the individual has shown courage and initiative in challenging the status quo or introducing new approaches:

- Articulated and championed a compelling vision for advancing change management in an organization or the profession
- Influenced leaders, stakeholders, or peers to elevate the role and value of change management
- Demonstrated leadership potential or established leadership impact in shaping the future of change practice

2. People, Culture, & Enablement

Demonstrate how the individual has fostered a culture that embraces change, agility, and continuous improvement:

- Built change capability in others through coaching, mentoring, training, or community-building
- Strengthened collaboration and cross-functional partnership to enable successful change
- Earned recognition from peers or stakeholders for professionalism, integrity, and commitment to excellence

3. Innovation & Advancement of Change Management

Demonstrate how the individual has applied change management in new or unconventional ways to solve complex challenges

- Introduced innovative tools, frameworks, methodologies, or techniques that enhanced change outcomes
- Advanced the discipline by contributing new thinking, practices, or insights
- Created scalable, sustainable approaches that move change management forward within an organization or the broader field

4. Results, Impact, & Evidence

Demonstrate how the individual has delivered measurable business, organizational, or stakeholder impact through the change management approach.

- Improved the experience of change and change management for stakeholders of the initiatives supported
- Achieved outcomes that demonstrate meaningful progress, transformation, or performance improvement
- Produced results that extend beyond a single project and influence longer-term capability or maturity

Scoring Rubric

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5. **Exceptional** - Best-in-class submission; comprehensive, clearly evidenced, and demonstrates transformational impact and advancement of the discipline.

Judges should consider:

- Advancement of the discipline (not just strong execution)
- Scalability or influence beyond a single initiative
- Clear impact evidence appropriate to career stage

For early-career nominees, judges may weigh demonstrated trajectory and influence relative to opportunity.

Scoring Methodology

Each nomination will be evaluated using a standardized scoring approach to ensure consistency, fairness, and alignment with ACMP's criteria.

For each nominee, judges will:

1. Assign a score of **1–5** for each evaluation category based on the defined scoring guidance.
2. Multiply each category score by its assigned **weight**.
3. Sum all weighted category scores to calculate a **total raw score**.
4. **Divide the total raw score by 5** to determine the **final score out of 100**.
5. Provide brief qualitative comments to support scoring decisions.
6. Disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Note: A submission receiving the highest score (5) in all categories will result in a final score of **100**.

Scoring Formula

Final Score = (Sum of [Category Score × Category Weight]) ÷ 5

Judge Calibration Process

Prior to the start of judging, judges will meet to:

- Review at least one sample submission together before independent scoring.
- Align on what constitutes 'Exceptional' vs. 'Strong' evidence.
- Prioritize measurable outcomes over narrative quality.
- Avoid score inflation; exceptional requires documented impact.
- Disclose conflicts of interest prior to scoring.

Shortlisting Protocol

1. Judges score independently.
2. Scores are averaged across judges.
3. Top 3–5 submissions advance to finalist discussion.
4. Panel discusses score variances and differentiators.
5. Final ranking determined by consensus or adjusted scoring.

Tie-Breaker Protocol

1. Higher scores for Results, Impact & Evidence prevail.
2. If still tied, compare Innovation scores.
3. If still tied, conduct confidential re-vote.
4. In rare cases, recommend co-winners.