



Clean Air Excellence Awards Program

**Office of Air and Radiation
CAAAC New Members Meeting
December 7, 2023**

Program Overview

- The CAEA Program, established at the recommendation of the Clean Air Act Advisory Committee (CAAAC), periodically recognizes and honors outstanding innovative efforts to help make progress in achieving cleaner air.
- Award-winning entries must directly or indirectly reduce pollutant emissions, demonstrate innovation, offer sustainable outcomes, and provide a model for others to follow.
- Seven Award Categories: Clean Air Technology, Community Action, Education/Outreach, State/Tribal/Local Air Quality Policy Innovations, Transportation Efficiency Innovations, Gregg Cooke Visionary Program, and Thomas W. Zosel Outstanding Individual Achievement.
- Award ceremony has historically been held during a full CAAAC meeting.

Nomination & Selection Process

- Call for applications via Federal Register notice
- Agency and Partner Outreach (open period is typically 60-90 days)
- Screen and Review (EPA & CAAAC members) Applications
- OAR AA makes final decision on awardees
- Awardees are notified and celebrated

* Underscore indicates CAAAC member involvement

General Criteria

Entries are judged based on both general criteria and criteria specific to each individual category. The following general criteria are used to assess each entry:

- The entry directly or indirectly (i.e., by encouraging actions) reduces emissions of criteria pollutants, hazardous air pollutants, and/or greenhouse gases.
- The entry is innovative and unique.
- The entry provides a model for others to follow (i.e., it is replicable).
- The entry's positive outcomes are continuing/sustainable.

Although not required to win an award, the following general criteria will also be considered in the evaluation process:

- The entry has positive effects on environmental media other than air.
- The entry demonstrates effective collaboration and partnerships.
- The individual or organization submitting the entry has effectively measured/evaluated the outcomes of the project, program, or technology.

Award Categories

Clean Air Technology: The technology is commercially viable and can be widely applied, cost-effective relative to other air pollution control technologies that already exist and developed at the prototype stage or beyond.

Community Action: The project includes a diverse group of stakeholders, including community representation, that participate in the planning and implementation to bring about air quality improvements; clearly identifies all contributing parties, their roles, and level of effort provided to the project mission; leverages resources and provides for long term sustainability; concise plan and measures to evaluate progress to bring about solutions with air quality priorities; and demonstrates how it has significantly improved air quality in the community.

Education Outreach: The program educates target audience about the adverse effects of air pollution, increases awareness about the importance of clean air, and improves access to information (e.g., websites, listservs, social media, electronic bulletin boards, postcards, advertisements, etc.); successfully reaches the intended/targeted audience(s) and demonstrates actions taken to heighten awareness about clean air and quality of life; completed or substantially underway (i.e., active); includes partnership(s) with groups that represent at risk individuals including youth or elders, for example, local schools, community organizations and senior centers; and identifies all partners, how they support the project, and clearly identifies outputs/outcomes as a result of their goals and objectives.

Award Categories

State/Tribal/Local Air Quality Policy Innovations: The regulation or policy encourages actions that go beyond compliance with applicable laws and regulations; or provides flexibility to the regulated community, or the development process for the regulation or policy has included an innovative stakeholder (e.g., public, Tribal) involvement component; and the regulation or policy has been implemented.

Transportation Efficiency Innovations: The Transportation Efficiency Innovations Award applies to programs and projects that make transportation systems more efficient and reduce air pollution in the process. Project/program increases the number of available transportation options, improves transportation efficiency (e.g., fewer vehicle miles traveled or better fuel consumption), and/or reduces travel time and costs, with the result of improving air quality; and development of the project or program is completed or substantially underway.

Award Categories

Cooke Visionary Program: The Gregg Cooke Visionary Program Award recognizes the air quality project or program that most successfully blends aspects from two or more of the existing awards categories (i.e., Clean Air Technology, Community Action, Education/Outreach, Regulatory/Policy Innovations, and Transportation Efficiency Innovations).

Thomas W. Zosel Outstanding Individual Achievement: The Thomas W. Zosel Outstanding Individual Achievement Award recognizes up to one individual for outstanding achievement, demonstrated leadership, and a lasting commitment to promoting clean air and helping to achieve better air quality. In addition to meeting the general criteria, the candidate should be an innovative leader in his or her field and demonstrate a lifetime of achievement in promoting clean air. Candidates for this award must be nominated by a third party.

Next Steps

- We plan to kickoff the next CAEA two-year cycle in January
- We would welcome the CAAAC's input and involvement to help ensure a robust and diverse pool of applicants –
 - Ideas for outreach
 - Assistance in amplifying and sharing the announcement with colleagues and partners



Thank You!

To learn more about the program, visit
[https://www.epa.gov/caaac/clean-air-excellence-awards.](https://www.epa.gov/caaac/clean-air-excellence-awards)

For questions, and input on outreach please contact us at
[OAR_Clean_Air_Excellence_Awards@epa.gov.](mailto:OAR_Clean_Air_Excellence_Awards@epa.gov)