Non-monetary Awards for Public Sector Programs and Institutions: Survey of Selected International Experience

Joanna Watkins, Robert Beschel

This guide presents a range of non-monetary award programs to recognize performance improvements in government programs, initiatives, and agencies. Nine award programs are drawn from Canada, Ireland, Abu Dhabi, the Philippines, the United States and Jordan. Each of the programs are analyzed along the following dimensions: objectives, target applicants, award categories, selection criteria, participation, selection process, type of reward, year of establishment, and number of awards given per year. Individual program details along these dimensions are available in Annex 1. The first section presents the theoretical background on how non-monetary award programs function, their expected benefits, and guiding principles to harness the potential benefits of such a program. The second section highlights the findings from the analysis of the nine programs along the key dimensions.

Background

Awards have been widely used throughout the public and private sector from monarchies and republics, to academia and non-governmental organizations. An extensive literature exists on the theory behind both monetary and non-monetary awards and incentives in psychology, economics, and management, but there is relatively little empirical work on the effects of non-monetary awards programs in the public sector, not least because of the inherent difficulty in evaluating the impact of such programs. A small literature in administrative science is devoted to public service awards and this note draws on much of the work done to date. For a broader discussion of the different types of monetary (base pay and allowances) and other types of incentives to link rewards and performance used in the public sector see the World Bank’s Administrative and Civil Service Reform websites.

While more work has been done on the effects of monetary incentives, particularly in economics, there is a literature, in psychology, which focuses on the cognitive and emotional dimensions of how non-monetary awards operate. It is widely acknowledged that individuals are both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated to work. Non-monetary awards motivate individuals through their intrinsic value. Such awards demonstrate an accomplishment, promoting pride in one’s work. If publically acknowledged, the award is socially reinforced and has a signaling effect on talent. The expected benefits of

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2 See the World Bank’s Administrative and Civil Service Reform Websites: http://go.worldbank.org/SN4QD69WR0 and http://go.worldbank.org/FVGH39FQG0}
implementing a non-monetary awards program to an organization include the potential increase in productivity and innovation in exchange for a minor outlay of resources, the creation of loyalty to the institution, and the signaling of talent within an organization, thereby creating role models for others.

The perceived value of the reward is critical because no monetary price can be attached to it. In order to preserve its intrinsic and/or psychological value, a number of general principles should be adhered to which are intended to protect the fidelity of the selection process and the fairness and impartiality of the result. First, the fair and transparent selection of individuals is of critical importance. The discretionary nature of awards means that they are only considered serious when the selection process is seen to be fair and transparent. Second, it has been noted in the literature that as the number of awards increases, the marginal benefit of the awards program decreases. One of the main weaknesses of awards is the difficulty of award givers to commit themselves to keeping the number of awards scarce and therefore valuable. Variation and limitation of the types and frequency of awards is important. As illustrated by the Nobel Prize, the focus is on the uniqueness of the award. If given too frequently, the perception of the value of the award diminishes. Third, reward systems should reflect the commitments and values of an organization. And finally, the program must be supported by an effective communication plan.

A number of countries have established civil service honor selection bodies to manage public sector awards. In the UK this body is called the Ceremonial Secretariat (Box 1). Many have non-civil service representation in their honors selection bodies with members selected for their impartiality and independence. For example, the Council of the Order of Canada is chaired by the Chief Justice of Canada and includes five outside members. The

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3 Frey, 15.

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Box 1: UK Non-Monetary Awards

Suggested principles of an effective honors system in the UK include:

- **Excellence** – in achievement
- **Integrity** – in administration
- **Transparency** – in decision-making
- **Dignity** – in worth of the award
- **Clarity** – in understanding
- **Fairness** – to everyone

The UK public sector awards program has a long, reputable history, granting over 3,000 awards per year. A full time staff of roughly sixteen individuals comprises the Ceremonial Secretariat in the Cabinet Office. This secretariat manages the award process, supporting the multiple awards committees in the selection of individuals. A 2004 comprehensive review of the awards system in the UK underscored the need to communicate effectively with the public via websites such as the UK honors system home page (www.honours.gov.uk); the need to differentiate between service awards (e.g. public, community, voluntary) and distinction awards (e.g. excellence, achievement); and to collect systematic statistical information on the honors system to ensure diversity and transparency. The main findings of the 2004 report were to increase transparency, independence and governance, and to ensure diversity in nominations.

Source: http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm2...
independence of these selection committees or bodies is critical to ensuring credibility in the entire process. No single individual should be able to easily control the award outcome and likewise, the application process should be open to all. Checks should exist to ensure the independence of the entire process.

**Analysis of Programs**

This section presents the results of the analysis of nine award programs drawn from Canada, Ireland, Abu Dhabi, the Philippines, the United States and Jordan. The stated objectives of the majority of award programs promote innovation, a focus on results, quality service delivery, and best practices within government. Several of the award programs target government programs at all levels of government for inclusion, while a few focus on initiatives at the state and local levels. In particular, the Galing Pook Awards Program in the Philippines targets local government units. Many of the programs listed various award categories, some of which are defined according to key policy areas (e.g. local fiscal management), sector (e.g. health, education), type of entity, and even management areas of importance (e.g. innovation in citizen engagement and dialogue, excellence in policy, and management excellence).

The award programs vary in the use of selection criteria. Many of the programs use a combination of the following: originality, creativity, efficiency & effectiveness, leadership, policy and strategy, processes, innovation, sustainability, and transferability. Most of the award programs are not compulsory, with the exception of Abu Dhabi and Jordan. The selection committees often consist of both civil servants and external reviewers. In the case of Abu Dhabi and the Philippines multiple screening processes are used, as well as on-site verification. Box 2 outlines the entire process from start to finish of the Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence Program (ADAEP), mapped according to the responsible party.

The type of reward offered to recipients often centers around

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5 In both awards programs all government departments are required to submit an application.
a high-level award ceremony attended by senior government officials and the media. In some cases, trophies and certificates are offered and winning programs are showcased in magazines, books, and websites with the intention of promoting good practices across government. For example, the winners of the State Information Resource Executives Recognition Awards are showcased on their website to disseminate state information technology best practices. Other forms of awards include plaques, personal letters of commendation, and merit certificates.

Most of the award programs were established from 1986 onward as annual programs, with the exception of a biannual program in Ireland. The number of awards distributed through these programs varies between 1 to 33 depending on the scope of the program, with the exception of the compulsory award programs across government.

Below is a brief synopsis of each award program along with resources for additional information.

**I. Canada**

**Public Service Award of Excellence**
The Public Service Award of Excellence (PSAE) recognizes employees who have demonstrated excellence in the achievement of results for Canadians and reflect the priorities of the Public Service, while demonstrating Key Leadership Competencies. The Award is open to individuals and teams at all levels. Up to 32 awards are presented to recipients from across Canada and abroad. The award is non-monetary and consists of an inscribed trophy. Recipients are invited to participate in the awards ceremony, which is held during National Public Service Week every year. More information is available here: [http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/arp/exc-eng.asp](http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/arp/exc-eng.asp)

**II. Philippines:**

**Galing Pook Awards**
The Galing Pook Awards were launched in 21 October 1993 as a pioneering program that searches and recognizes innovative practices by the local government units. Finalists with outstanding initiatives are carefully selected and winners are recognized in a very prestigious awards ceremony. The award is conferred by the President of the Republic of the Philippines. The awardees of the Galing Pook are chosen from a national search of local governance programs, evaluated through a multilevel rigorous screening process based on positive results and impact, promotion of people’s participation and empowerment, innovation, transferability and sustainability, and efficiency of program service delivery. More information is available here: [http://www.galingpook.org/main/](http://www.galingpook.org/main/)

**III. United States**

**Council of State Governments (CSG) Innovations Awards Program**
CSG’s Innovations Awards Program was established in 1986 to bring greater visibility to
exemplary state programs and policies and to facilitate the transfer of those successful experiences to other states. More information is available here: http://www.csg.org/programs/innovations.aspx

National Association of State Information Resource Executives (NASIRE) Recognition Awards Program
NASIRE honors outstanding achievements in the field of information technology through its Recognition Awards Program. Emphasis is placed on recognizing those information technology initiatives which best assist government officials in innovatively executing their duties and providing cost-effective service to citizens. More information is available here: http://www.nascio.org/awards/#about

Excellence.gov Awards
The Excellence.Gov Awards Program was established by the American Council for Technology/Industry Advisory Council to recognize best practices in the federal government’s management and use of information technology. The program recognizes those federal programs – and their managers – who have achieved exceptional results in the management of IT to support the government’s mission and serve citizens. Since its establishment in 2002 over 150 federal e-government programs have been recipients of an Excellence.gov Award. For more information visit: http://www.actgov.org/EDUCATION/AWARDS/EXGOV/2010/Pages/default.aspx

IV. Ireland

Public Service Excellence Awards 2010
The Awards are held every two years to recognize and reward examples of excellence in the delivery of public services and/or administration, directly by public servants. Applications are invited from projects or initiatives that show one or more of the following: (a) Improvement to services delivered to the citizen and business customers, including through engagement with customers; (b) Innovation and creativity, through flexibility, teamwork, partnership and eGovernment; and / or (c) Increased effectiveness and efficiency, including better use of resources and shared services. More information is available here: http://www.onegov.ie/eng/Taoiseach's_Awards/

V. Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence in Government Performance
The Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence in Government performance is a rigorous and demanding process, designed to focus the efforts of all government departments and guide them towards achieving the highest standards of government performance. It is compulsory for all Government departments in Abu Dhabi to participate annually in all or some of the award categories. The Award promotes understanding of the requirements for excellence in government and competitiveness for improvement throughout the government service, and sharing of information and knowledge of successful improvement strategies. More information is available here:
VI. Jordan

King Abdullah II Awards for Excellence in Government

The King Abdullah II Award for Excellence in Government Performance and Transparency was established to enhance the role of the public sector in serving the Jordanian community with all its sectors and the investment community by promoting awareness of the concepts of comprehensive quality administration and distinguished performance, and to highlight the exceptional efforts of the public sector and present its accomplishments in the area of developing its systems and services. The King Abdullah II Award for Excellence in Government Performance and Transparency is considered the highest award of excellence for the public sector on the national level. The Award provides a reference guide and standards for measuring the level of progress and development of the performance of government departments and parties in the Kingdom, and which contribute to developing the government sector and raise the level of its performance. The Award helps promote the concepts of excellence, innovation, quality and transparency in all government departments and institutions. In addition to that, one of the objectives of the Award is to support development programs and strategic planning in government departments and parties. The Award is offered in three categories: best ministry; best independent public institution/department/authority; and best accomplishment. More information is available here: http://www.kaa.jo/Default.aspx?tabid=92

VII. International Awards

International Innovations Awards Programme

The International Innovations Awards Programme, sponsored by the Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management (CAPAM), promotes and supports new initiatives in government reform. The unique international programme provides countries with fresh and different perspectives on public service delivery - innovations which can be applied in varying environments. More information is available here: http://www.capam.org/awards/internationalinnovations/
## Annex 1: Non-Monetary Public Sector Awards

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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Compulsory? (Y/N)</th>
<th>Selection Process</th>
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<th># of Awards (per yr)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Canada - Public Service Award of Excellence</td>
<td>Recognize employees who have demonstrated excellence in the achievement of results for Canadians and reflect the priorities of the Public Service, while demonstrating Key Leadership Competencies</td>
<td>Open to individuals and teams at all levels in the public service.</td>
<td>There are ten categories for the Award, each of which reflects an area of particular importance for the Public Service: 1. Outstanding Career 2. Management Excellence 3. Innovation 4. Excellence in Citizen-Focused Service Delivery 5. Employment Equity and Diversity 6. Official Languages 7. Excellence in Policy 8. Youth 9. Exemplary Contribution under Extraordinary Circumstances 10. The Joan Atkinson Award</td>
<td>Within each of the categories there are explicit selection criteria. The Selection Committee will also give particular attention to the candidates who will have acted in such a way as to support the Public Service Renewal Principles and Priorities, as well as their Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>The Selection Committee reviews nominations using the ten categories and gives particular attention to the candidates who will have acted in such a way as to support the Public Service Renewal Principles and Priorities, as well as their Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy.</td>
<td>The award is non-monetary and consists of an inscribed trophy. Recipients are invited to participate in the awards ceremony, which is held during National Public Service Week every year. The Office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (OCHRO) at Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) assumes the cost of the awards; the travel expenses for each award recipient to attend the ceremony are defrayed by his or her department.</td>
<td>Since 2005</td>
<td>Up to 33</td>
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<td>Philippines - Galing Pook Awards</td>
<td>Recognize innovative practices by the local government units.</td>
<td>Local Government Units</td>
<td>Award types: 1. Award for Continuing Excellence 2. Special Citation 3. Special Citation on Local Capacity Incentive Mechanisms for Good Governance 4. DBP Special Citation on Local Fiscal Management 5. Special Citation on Local Capacity Innovations for the Millennium Development Goals 6. Special Citation on Child Rights Responsive Local Governance 7. Special Citation on Gender Responsive Local Governance 8. Special Citation on Good Urban Local Governance 9. Special Citation on Local Initiatives for Population, Health and Development 10. Special Citation on Local Peace Building Initiatives 11. Special Citation on Productivity and Quality Responsive Local Governance</td>
<td>Positive Results: 30% Promotion of People’s Participation and Empowerment 30% Innovation 35% Transferability and Sustainability 15% Efficiency of Program Service Delivery 10%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Eligibility Screening: The GPF secretariat reviews whether the program submissions meet the eligibility criteria. First Level Screening: The National Selection Committee (NSC) goes over all applications to initially screen and identify programs with high potential. These programs will be turned over to the Regional Selection Committee (RSC) for a more in-depth assessment and review. Second Level Screening: The RSC evaluates and recommends programs for elevation to the next screening level. Third Level Screening: The NSC reviews the RSC recommendations and identifies the programs for site validation. Site Validation: Assigned NSC members and (as necessary) selected RSC members and GPF personnel validate program claims and clarify concerns raised in previous screening levels. Results of the validations serve as basis for the NSC to select the programs to be subjected to the final presentation. Panel Interview: The local chief executives (LCEs) and/or program officers of qualified entries present and defend their programs before the NSC members and their co-finalists.</td>
<td>The award is non-monetary and consists of an inscribed trophy. Recipients are carefully selected and winners are recognized in a very prestigious awards ceremony. The award is conferred by the President of the Republic of the Philippines.</td>
<td>Since 1993</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>US - Council of State Governments (CSG) Innovations Awards Program</td>
<td>Bring greater visibility to exemplary state programs and to facilitate the transfer of those successful experiences to other states.</td>
<td>Exemplary state programs</td>
<td>Infrastructure and Economic Development Government Operations and Technology Health &amp; Human Services Human Resources/Education Natural Resources Public Safety/Corrections</td>
<td>Newness - Will the program be between 9 months and 5 years old by the submission deadline? Creativity - Does the program represent a new and creative approach to solving a problem or issue? Effectiveness - Has the program achieved its goals and purposes to this point? Transferability - Could the program be easily transferred to other states? Significance - Does the program address significant regional issues or problems which are regional in scope?</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>CSG receives hundreds of applications for Innovations Awards every year. CSG policy experts review the applications and select the finalists. Regional panels of state officials evaluate the finalists and select two award-winners within each CSG region.</td>
<td>The winning programs are traditionally recognized in a ceremony during CSG’s Annual Meeting. In addition, the winners are showcased in CSG’s national magazine, Capitol Ideas.</td>
<td>Since 1986</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Name</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Target Applicants</td>
<td>Award Categories</td>
<td>Selection Criteria</td>
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<td>US - National Association of State Information Resource Executives (NASIRE) Recognition Awards Program</td>
<td>Honor outstanding information technology achievements in the public sector</td>
<td>State government IT initiatives</td>
<td>Award Categories: 1. Cross-Boundary Collaboration and Partnerships 2. Data, Information and Knowledge Management 3. Digital Government: Government to Business (G to B) 4. Digital Government: Government to Citizen (G to C) 5. Digital Government: Government to Government (G to G) 6. Enterprise IT Management Initiatives 7. Improving State Operations 8. Information Communications Technology (ICT) Innovations 9. Open Government Initiatives 10. Risk Management Initiatives</td>
<td>20% of total score - Contextual Principles - How well the nomination exemplifies best practices, supports the public policy goals of state leaders, represents an innovative use of existing technology or a use of new technology, assists government officials to efficiently execute their duties, provides cost-effective service to citizens and transfers to other agencies or units of government 20% of total score - Section C - Description of the Business Problem &amp; Solution 20% of total score - Section D - Significance of the Project 40% of total score - Section E - Benefit of the Project</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NASCIO’s Awards committee is comprised of judges from NASCIO’s state and corporate members. They score each application.</td>
<td>One Award Recipient in each category is announced at an Annual Conference. Award finalists and recipients are also publicized in press releases and letters to governors and other elected officials. To better share these state information technology best practices, all Recognition Award nominations are posted on the NASCIO website. To access the Best Practices Archive, visit <a href="http://www.nascio.org/awards/archive.cfm">www.nascio.org/awards/archive.cfm</a>.</td>
<td>bi-annual</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>US - Excellence.gov Awards</td>
<td>Recognize best practices in the federal government’s management and use of information technology assets. The Excellence.gov Awards program recognizes those federal programs -- and their managers -- who have achieved exceptional results in the management of IT to support the government’s mission and service citizens.</td>
<td>Federal programs -- and their managers</td>
<td>Award Categories: 1. Efficiency in Mission Delivery 2. Multiple Stakeholder Collaboration 3. Leveraging Technology and Innovation 4. Enhancing the Customer Experience</td>
<td>1. Lowering costs to deliver the mission; Improved utilization of agency resources; Reduced or eliminated time to deliver services; Improvements to process and methodology resulting in positive impact on mission delivery 2. Improvements and/or expansion of mission services beyond historical constituency; Increased transparency and improved governance between/among agencies and constituents; Innovation in acquisition to enable multi-sector (government-industry) workforce collaboration 3. Innovative application of technologies to deliver the mission; Green IT to lower carbon footprint of the mission; Security innovations in mission delivery 4. Enhance customer satisfaction and quality of experience during mission delivery; Enhance customer engagement for openness and transparency; Application of customer relationship management processes and/or system for mission delivery</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>The nominations are judged by a panel consisting of senior executives from government and industry using pre-defined evaluation criteria for each of the award categories.</td>
<td>Winners are recognized at an awards lunch in Washington, DC. Each finalist receives: Five complimentary seats to the awards lunch. Recognition at the awards lunch and in appropriate publications on the ACT/IAC web site, related publications, and in press releases. Invitation to display their program at the 2010 Management of Change Conference to be held in Philadelphia, PA May 23 – 25, 2010 and ONE complimentary registration to the conference. From among the finalists, five programs will be selected as Overall Winners and will be invited to be on a panel at the May 2010 IAC membership meeting.</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Ireland - Public Service Excellence Awards 2010</td>
<td>To showcase and celebrate public service projects that make a particular difference to the way the citizen can avail of services. The Awards promote innovation and excellence. The creative use of resources and the development of new efficiencies are typical hallmarks of successful entries.</td>
<td>Public Sector projects and initiatives</td>
<td>Applications are invited from projects or initiatives that show one or more of the following: Improvement to services delivered to the citizen and business customers, including through engagement with customers; Innovation and creativity, through flexibility, teamworking, partnership and governance; and / or Increased effectiveness and efficiency, including better use of resources and shared services.</td>
<td>A selection committee is established to agree on the specific assessment criteria.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>A selection committee is established to agree on the specific assessment criteria and evaluate all applications received. This committee will have an independent chair and will include members with experience of the Public Service.</td>
<td>Selected projects from among the Award winners have, traditionally, been showcased at international “Quality Conferences” as models of best practice. The Awards for 2010 will be presented by the Taoiseach at a special showcase conference and reception in Dublin Castle on Wednesday, 31st March, 2010.</td>
<td>bi-annual</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence in Government Performance</td>
<td>Help improve organization’s performance, practices, and capabilities and performance based on a proven model of excellence. Deliver ever-improving value to government customers and all other stakeholders. Facilitate and communicate and share best practice both nationally and internationally. Develop people competencies, knowledge, skills and attitudes. Raise the quality standards and reduce production costs via elimination of waste, thus achieving waste-free government.</td>
<td>All government departments</td>
<td>Firstly: The Excellent Government Department Secondly: Excellent Technical / Managerial project Thirldly: Excellent Employees</td>
<td>Leadership; Policy and Strategy; People; Partnerships and Resources; Processes; Customer Results; People Results; Society Results; Key Performance Results;</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>An in-depth award process is followed. Assessor teams are created and trained to review applications, conduct site visits, and produce a final report for the jury’s consideration.</td>
<td>Winners are invited to attend a high-level ceremony to honor the receipt of the award.</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Across government</td>
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<td>Jordan - King Abdullah II Awards for Excellence in Government</td>
<td>To enhance the role of the public sector in serving the Jordanian community with all its sectors and the investment community by promoting awareness of the concepts of comprehensive quality administration and distinguished performance, and to highlight the exceptional efforts of the public sector and present its accomplishments in the area of developing its systems and services.</td>
<td>Ministry/Institution</td>
<td>1. Best Ministry 2. Best Public Institution / Department 3. Best Accomplishment 4. Best Ministry / Public Institution Participating for the First Time 5. Best Public Institution / Department for the First Time 6. Distinguished Government Employee 7. Any other category the Board may assign such as Comprehensive Distinguished Performance.</td>
<td>Leadership, processes, people, knowledge, and finance</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>60% for the Assessment Process (Participation report including criteria answers and site visit assessment); 15% for the Mystery Shopper; 15% for the Customer Satisfaction Study 10% for the Employee Satisfaction Study:</td>
<td>Winning the Award constitutes a high level of accomplishment for the ministry / institution or government employee and a clear acknowledgement of distinguished, effective and efficient performance. In addition, it presents the winner as a role model among the civil community. Winners receive a trophy for the King Abdullah II Award for Excellence in Government Performance and Transparency, and a Certificate of Appreciation as an honor and recognition for their distinguished performance. The Award is presented at a special ceremony held under the Royal Patronage. The winners have the right to use the Award's logo provided by the Center, on their publications for one year. After the results are declared, each participating ministry / institution receives a feedback report outlining the main strengths and areas for improvement. This report helps the ministry / institution improve on their systems and performance.</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Across government</td>
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<td>CAPAM International Innovations Awards</td>
<td>To demonstrate excellence, innovation and quality service delivery in public administration.</td>
<td>The programme is open to CAPAM (Members of the Commonwealth members only)</td>
<td>Innovations in Public Service Management and Accountability Innovations in Government Services and Programmes Innovations in Citizen Engagement and Dialogue Innovative Use of Technology in the Public Service</td>
<td>Innovation Appropriateness to Context Effectiveness Long Term Significance Transferable Lessons Learned</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>A short list of semi-finalists is determined • Finalists for each awards category are selected • Finalists will present their innovations to an International Jury • The Jury will select winners for each awards category, and the overall gold medal winner</td>
<td>Finalists make a plenary session presentation at the CAPAM Biennial Conference.</td>
<td>2008</td>
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References


