



Nomination Categories

All Online Submissions are due December 31, 2017

Winners will be announced at the
STS Annual Meeting in Spring of 2018

Recognizing Outstanding Contributions in Tourism in the Southeast United States

Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi,
North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia & West Virginia

11 Nomination Categories (14 awards) Available to STS Members & Non-Members

- 1) **ESCAPE TO THE SOUTHEAST TRAVEL ATTRACTION OF THE YEAR** – Awarded to an attraction whose work has resulted in a year of notable accomplishment (i.e., development of new business markets, substantial growth in revenue or attendance, special outreach). Nominations should show concrete results; explanations can include descriptions of advertising/promotional campaigns, special celebrations or commemorations.
- 2) **TOURISM OFFICE OF THE YEAR (Two Awards)**
Category 1 Budget < \$2Million
Category 2 Budget > \$2Million
Evaluated on the overall performance of the organization and should show demonstrable accomplishments through effective tourism marketing (advertising, promotions, public relations, etc.). Nominations should show creativity in design, development and implementation of any projects cited. Nominations must provide documentation for the DMO revenue category in which they are entered. While nominations can include the history and growth of an organization, the emphasis must be on projects or programs developed and implemented from July 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017.
- 3) **STATE TOURISM OFFICE AWARD** – Nominations should show demonstrable team accomplishments throughout the tourism office, including effective tourism marketing (advertising, promotions, public relations, etc.), creativity in design and development, and implementation of new projects. While nominations can include the history and growth of an organization, the emphasis must be on programs (marketing, employee development, research, etc.) or projects developed or implemented from July 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017.
- 4) **GOVERNMENTAL TOURISM LEADERSHIP AWARD** – Honors an elected official (city, county, state or federal whose support or influence greatly enhanced the tourism industry. The nominations may include achievements or contributions over the nominee's entire career or a single accomplishment in the recent past.
- 5) **STS TOP 20 EVENT OR FESTIVAL OF THE YEAR**
If you submitted a 2017 event for a STS Top 20 Award, your event is eligible for the this category. Again, the event only had to be nominated; it did not have to win a Top 20 Award. Nominees include events such as festivals, themed events, community celebrations, holiday programs, home tours and craft festivals. The nominated events should show a high level of organization, event production and community involvement. Factors that can influence selection include attendance growth, innovative marketing and special promotional efforts. Nominees must provide documentation for attendance category in which they have chosen.

- 6) **BEACON AWARD** – Recognizes an individual who best exemplifies outstanding leadership in the pursuit of excellence and who has advanced the tourism industry. The winning nominee will have dedicated many years to tourism and nominations may include contributions over an entire career or for a recent, notable single accomplishment. Judging will consider accomplishments, innovation, performance, empowerment of others, integrity and respect. Self-nominations are acceptable.
- 7) **RISING STAR AWARD** – Recognizes extraordinary on-the-job performance by a person new to the travel and tourism industry. Nominees initial employment in the industry must have come between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2017. Nominations will be evaluated on leadership, enthusiasm for the industry, innovation, successful programs or events and other performance-related accomplishments. Extra consideration goes to nominees who are involved in the industry outside of their normal employment. The nominee should be an effective advocate for the goals of the industry to the public, the government and others in the industry. Should be recognized as building value for the industry among consumers and companies in the industry; success in solving problems central to the practice or well-being of the industry and show a reputation of leadership amongst industry peers while challenging the industry to greater achievement. Employers, supervisors or colleagues may nominate individuals.
- 8) **BEST MARKETING AWARD**
Category 1 Annual advertising/marketing budget < \$100,000
Category 2 Annual advertising/marketing budget of \$100,000 - \$499,999
Category 3 Annual advertising/marketing budget of \$500,000 or more
 Judged on research, creativity, demographic targets and strategy, nominations should have an explanation of how program was implemented and its level of success. What impact did it have on the market (nominations must include qualitative and quantitative data to support claims of success)? Did it achieve its objectives and goals? What impact did it have on future marketing? How did consumers receive it? Note: information entered here will be kept confidential to STS staff and judges and will not be shared publicly unless express consent is given. *If a category has less than three nominees within it, that category will fold into the next category above or below it.
- 9) **BEST NICHE MARKETING AWARD** – Judged on niche market viability and a distinct quality of unique, original and creative thought. Focus on selection of the winner will be based on strategy: Submissions should reference research, creativity, demographic targets, strategy and execution: Explanation of how it was implemented and its level of success. What impact did it have on the market? The successful nominated niche marketing plan will demonstrate excellence, both in design and form.
- 10) **PARTNERSHIP AWARD** – Recognizing effective partnerships within the tourism industry. Examples would include partnerships successfully impacting any of the following: Marketing, Advocacy, Education and Development. What impact did the partnership have on the market or event (nominations must include qualitative and quantitative data to support claims of success)? Did the partnership achieve its objectives and goals? How was this partnership formulated? Where did the idea originate? Successful nominations would have a note from both/all partners noting how the partnership impacted their business and/or goals as well as any plans for future collaborations.
- 11) **TOURISM FOR TOMORROW AWARD** – Recognizes the accomplishments of a destination, company or organization in the realm of sustainable tourism. Nominations should illustrate how the nominee promotes tourism development while safeguarding local culture and/or protecting the environment. The connection between development and tourism must be clear.

Awards Listed Below Are Not Open For Nomination

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD AWARD – Selected solely by the STS Chair.

DOROTHY HARDMAN SPIRIT OF STS - A special recognition to an individual who best expresses the genuine love and devotion Dorothy had for STS. The selection process is by a small, anonymous committee.