



## Applications for the CMF Democracy Awards

The Congressional Management Foundation created a distinctive honors program – the Democracy Awards – to recognize non-legislative achievement and performance in congressional offices. One Republican and one Democratic office will be honored for each category in a 2019 ceremony. The categories are:

- **Constituent Service** – Recognizes offices for their outstanding practices or achievements acting as ombudsmen with the federal government or responding to constituent requests/inquiries.
- **Innovation** – Recognizes offices employing unique or innovative technology-enabled methods in their constituent interactions, communications, or office operations.
- **"Life in Congress" Workplace Environment** – Recognizes offices that have established both formal policies and informal cultures that enhance the work-life fit and professional development of their staffs.
- **Transparency and Accountability** – Recognizes offices that provide clear and relevant information on their work and performance, and publicly acknowledge metrics for that performance.
- **Lifetime Achievement** – Recognizes three individuals (two Members and one staffer) for their lifetime of work in the service of the Congress.

### Help Us Shine a Spotlight on Public Service & Excellence in Congress Nominate Your Office for a Democracy Award!

We encourage your office to review the nomination forms on the following pages and use them to prepare your application(s) for a Democracy Award.

You may self-nominate your office in one (or more) categories by using the online nomination forms found at <http://CongressFoundation.org/Democracy-Awards>.

While you're there, check out our inaugural 2018 finalists and winners who were recently honored at an awards ceremony on Capitol Hill!

If you have any questions or issues in submitting your nomination, please contact [CMF@CongressFoundation.org](mailto:CMF@CongressFoundation.org).



# Constituent Service Award

This award focuses on how the office interacts with and serves constituents, especially how it utilizes and leverages specific, methodical, and consistent processes for achieving measurable results in constituent service. This is independent of legislative work, and emphasis is on effectiveness not efficiency (e.g., use of, and adherence to, metrics for outcomes rather than simply measuring the time it takes to resolve a constituent case request or respond to an email). We expect to see that an office demonstrates excellence in constituent service through specific practices that are thoroughly integrated into the office's work. For example:

- Mail quality, workflow, and turnaround time
- Effectiveness in the office acting as ombudsman for constituents with federal agencies (casework)
- Responsiveness and effectiveness in constituent meetings, events, and field work
- Whether the office has implemented innovative processes or tools that have resulted in improved timeliness, cost savings, and constituent satisfaction
- Effective online, social media and/or in-person and/or telephone town hall meetings

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

*It may be necessary for CMF to learn more about your office's policies and processes in order to evaluate your nomination fully and assess your practices against those of other nominees. We will do this by interviewing select staffers and reviewing certain documents. We understand the sensitive nature of this information and would keep it completely confidential.*

*To be considered as a Finalist, CMF will require your office to provide the following: casework and mail reports for a three-month period; casework and mail manuals; district/state outreach reports (i.e., district/state events held, such as town hall meetings, job fairs, etc.; mobile office hours held). In addition, CMF may request short staff interviews with your Casework Director; at least one caseworker; and the Legislative Correspondent. Other interviews may be requested.*

*By completing the following application for a Democracy Award, you are indicating that your office is prepared to be interviewed by CMF and submit requested documents as part of the review process. If you have any questions or issues in submitting your nomination, please contact [CMF@CongressFoundation.org](mailto:CMF@CongressFoundation.org).*

## **Questions:**

1. Basic Information:
  - a. Senator/Representative Office You Wish to Nominate
  - b. First & Last Name of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - c. Title of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - d. Email of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - e. First & Last Name of Primary Contact (if different)
  - f. Title of Primary Contact
  - g. Email of Primary Contact
2. In your opinion, how is the constituent service your office provides different from that provided by other Senators/Representatives?
3. What policies and practices does your office have in place to ensure that excellent constituent service is a routine practice? This includes all aspects of service, including but not limited to: casework; legislative mail; academy nominations; and tour and flag requests.
4. Please provide brief, but specific, examples to illustrate your office's excellent constituent service.
5. Please provide any metrics which demonstrate your office's excellence in constituent service.
6. Please describe the role of the Senator or Representative in establishing and maintaining a high level of constituent service in your office.

# Innovation Award

This award focuses on how an office uses technology to better facilitate the Members' roles as legislator, representative, and/or boss, including websites, social media, office productivity tools, and interactive communications tools. CMF will also research and document the related outcomes of these innovative practices. We would expect to see that an office demonstrates innovation through specific, technology-enabled practices that are thoroughly integrated into the office's work, not just the work of one or two staffers. For example:

- Constituent feedback and interaction
- Legislative research
- Managing committee work
- Member briefings/information-sharing
- Staff management and communication
- Member and staff mobility and effectiveness
- Workplace flexibility

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

*It may be necessary for CMF to learn more about your office's policies and processes in order to evaluate your nomination fully and assess your practices against those of other nominees. We will do this by interviewing select staffers and reviewing certain documents. We understand the sensitive nature of this information and would keep it completely confidential.*

*To be considered as a Finalist, CMF may require your office to provide the following: any staff manuals or other documentation that shows the office's emphasis on innovation; press stories, if they exist, discussing your office's innovative practices.*

*By completing the following application for a Democracy Award, you are indicating that your office is prepared to be interviewed by CMF and submit requested documents as part of the review process. If you have any questions or issues in submitting your nomination, please contact [CMF@CongressFoundation.org](mailto:CMF@CongressFoundation.org).*

## **Questions:**

1. Basic Information:
  - a. Senator/Representative Office You Wish to Nominate
  - b. First & Last Name of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - c. Title of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - d. Email of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - e. First & Last Name of Primary Contact (if different)
  - f. Title of Primary Contact
  - g. Email of Primary Contact
2. What policies and practices does your office have in place to ensure that innovation is a routine practice?
3. How is your office's use of technology more innovative than that of other Senators'/Representatives' offices?
4. Please provide brief, but specific, examples that illustrate how your office's innovative use of technology has produced positive representative, legislative, or workplace outcomes.
5. Please describe the role of the Senator or Representative in establishing and maintaining practices related to innovation in your office.

# “Life in Congress” Workplace Environment Award

This award focuses on how the office treats its employees. We will seek information describing how office management empowers employees; demonstrates flexibility in workplace rules; consistently uses core values to guide decisions, behaviors and communications; encourages staff professional development and achievement; and regularly engages in performance management practices. We would expect to see that an office has created policies and a culture through specific practices that are thoroughly integrated into the office’s work. For example:

- A performance management system that provides employees with continual feedback and metrics on performance
- Offering modern and creative work-flex policies (e.g., telework, job sharing, and flex work hours)
- A culture of staff professional development
- Thoughtful and effective employee recruitment and retention strategies
- Involvement of the Member of Congress in employee interactions and projects

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

*It may be necessary for CMF to learn more about your office’s policies and processes in order to evaluate your nomination fully and assess your practices against those of other nominees. We will do this by interviewing select staffers and reviewing certain documents. We understand the sensitive nature of this information and would keep it completely confidential.*

*To be considered as a Finalist, CMF may require your office to provide the following: employee handbooks; other manuals such as intern handbook or instructions based on staff position, if they exist (i.e., Staff Assistant Manual); staff retention rates since Member took office.*

*By completing the following application for a Democracy Award, you are indicating that your office is prepared to be interviewed by CMF and submit requested documents as part of the review process. If you have any questions or issues in submitting your nomination, please contact [CMF@CongressFoundation.org](mailto:CMF@CongressFoundation.org).*

## **Questions:**

1. Basic Information:
  - a. Senator/Representative Office You Wish to Nominate
  - b. First & Last Name of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - c. Title of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - d. Email of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - e. First & Last Name of Primary Contact (if different)
  - f. Title of Primary Contact
  - g. Email of Primary Contact
2. What policies and practices does your office have in place to promote a positive workplace environment?
3. In your opinion, how is the workplace culture in your office different from those of other Senators/Representatives?
4. Please provide brief, but specific, examples that illustrate that your office is an outstanding workplace.
5. Please describe the role of the Senator or Representative in establishing and maintaining a strong and positive workplace culture.

# Transparency and Accountability Award

This award focuses on how the office integrates and respects the concepts of transparency and accountability in government. We would expect to see that an office demonstrates accountability through regular, meaningful, and robust communications to constituents and stakeholders that are designed to keep them informed of the Member's activities and actions in Congress. For example:

- Fostering an internal culture among staff of collaborating and sharing information to facilitate openness
- Employing creative and diverse methods for communicating official activities to constituents
- Consistently updating the Member's website and social media platforms with relevant information related to the legislator's legislative and representational responsibilities
- Providing to constituents vote explanations, position statements, and opportunities to interact directly with the legislator
- General responsiveness to legitimate constituent inquiries
- Quality, amount, and variety (online, in-person, telephone) of town hall meetings

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

*It may be necessary for CMF to learn more about your office's policies and processes in order to evaluate your nomination fully and assess your practices against those of other nominees. We will do this by interviewing select staffers and reviewing certain documents. We understand the sensitive nature of this information and would keep it completely confidential.*

*To be considered as a Finalist, CMF may require your office to provide the following: any staff manuals or other documentation that shows the office's emphasis on transparency and accountability; a list of in-person and telephone town hall meetings held over the last 12 months; press stories, if they exist, discussing your office's transparency and accountability.)*

*By completing the following application for a Democracy Award, you are indicating that your office is prepared to be interviewed by CMF and submit requested documents as part of the review process. If you have any questions or issues in submitting your nomination, please contact [CMF@CongressFoundation.org](mailto:CMF@CongressFoundation.org).*

## **Questions:**

1. Basic Information:
  - a. Senator/Representative Office Being Nominated
  - b. First & Last Name of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - c. Title of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - d. Email of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - e. First & Last Name of Primary Contact (if different)
  - f. Title of Primary Contact
  - g. Email of Primary Contact
2. What policies and practices does your office have in place to promote transparency and accountability both in interactions with constituents and within the office?
3. How is the transparency and accountability offered and promoted by your office different from that in other Senators'/Representatives' offices?
4. Please provide brief, but specific, examples that illustrate how your office has gone beyond the norm in promoting transparency and accountability.
5. Please describe the role of the Senator or Representative in establishing and maintaining practices related to transparency and accountability.

# Lifetime Achievement Award

This award recognizes a Senator, Representative, or congressional staffer who has had a long, respected career in Congress and who has had a positive impact on the management and operations of part or all of the institution. We seek information about the individual's career on Capitol Hill and his or her contribution to Congress.

All current Senators, Representatives, and legislative branch staffers who have worked for Congress at least 20 years are eligible for this award. This includes staffers who work for personal, committee, leadership, and institutional offices (e.g., House Chief Administrative Office, Secretary of the Senate, Library of Congress, etc.). Former Members and staff will not be considered for this award unless they were employed by the institution at the time of their nomination.

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

*Congressional staff/offices may not nominate their own Representative or Senator, and individuals may not nominate themselves for the Lifetime Achievement Award. If you have any questions or issues in submitting this nomination, please contact [CMF@CongressFoundation.org](mailto:CMF@CongressFoundation.org).*

## **Questions:**

1. Basic Information:
  - a. First and Last Name of the Staffer, Senator, or Representative You Wish to Nominate
  - b. Title (if nominating a staffer)
  - c. Office/Organization (if nominating a staffer)
  - d. First & Last Name of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - e. Title of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - f. Email of Person Completing Nomination Form
  - g. First & Last Name of Primary Contact (if different)
  - h. Title of Primary Contact
  - i. Email of Primary Contact
2. How long has the nominee served Congress and in what capacity/capacities?
3. Why does the nominee deserve a lifetime achievement award?
4. Please provide brief, but specific, examples that illustrates the nominee's significant contribution to Congress or the American public.
5. If there are public documents or other tangible evidence of the nominee's contribution (e.g., articles, commendations, etc.), please provide links or other information that will enable CMF to obtain it.
6. Please provide the names and contact information for three references (in addition to the nominator) willing to be interviewed about the nominee's service and contribution.