



## 2022 National Gold Medal Questions & Judging Criteria

---

Provided in this document are the 2022 National Gold Medal application questions with their assigned point value and maximum word count.

This document provides judging criteria to assist the National Gold Medal Judges in assessing the agency's response to the application questions. It is intended as a guide; judges may apply their own experiences and knowledge in their assessment.

Agencies may use this document as a guide in framing their responses however, they are encouraged to remember their community is unique in its enabling legislation, resources, constituents, and challenges. The National Gold Medal Award seeks to identify those agencies who judge they are excellent in managing and delivering high quality parks and recreation services.

PLEASE NOTE: There is an additional question and slight changes to the 2022 Gold Medal questions including word count and points from 2021. Be sure to note the total word count and point value for each question.

- 1. Recognizing each public park and recreation agency is unique in its purpose, mission, culture, financing, enabling legislation, etc., what does your agency do well in managing its resources to meet its stated goals?**

TOTAL WORDS 300 / MAXIMUM POINTS 12

This question is for the agency to explain in broad terms what they do really well. Why do they believe they are a national leader in managing their agency? This is question is **not** about the magnitude of their resources but how well they fulfill their mission and serve their community using whatever resources they have. The response should be linked to their enabling legislation, their master plan and their mission. Enabling legislation of an agency gives it the authority and responsibility to carry what they were created to do. How well do they execute, demonstrate, and measure advancement towards their mission? The response is intended to tie what the agency was created to do and how efficient and effective they are at achieving their mission.

- 2. Based upon your response to question 1, what is your agency assessing or measuring and how are you measuring what you say you are doing well? Cite 3 examples of assessments or measurements and provide data.**

TOTAL WORDS 240 / EACH EXAMPLE WORTH UP TO 3 POINTS / MAXIMUM POINTS 9

In question 1 you are to state why your agency is a leader in managing its resources to meet its goals using the resources it has. This question asks the agency to specifically explain how they are assessing or measuring their performance in the areas where they feel they excel. Provide three (3) examples of what the agency is measuring and data that supports the performance.

- 3. Cite 3 examples of internally-focused initiatives, actions, or programs your agency has undertaken in the last 3 years that demonstrate how it connect(s) with your decision makers, commissions/boards, business community, partners and/or coalitions. Describe how you measure the outcome(s) of these efforts.**

TOTAL WORDS 240 / EACH EXAMPLE WORTH UP TO 3 POINTS / MAXIMUM POINTS 9

The intent of this question is for the agency to identify internally-focused actions they are taking or undertaken in the last 3 years to connect with their decision makers, commissions/boards, business community, partners and/or coalitions. Did these efforts results in pooling resources, new agreements, new partners, etc.? Whatever the initiative, action or program that was undertaken, has the agency identify desired outcome(s) and how are they being measured?

- 4. Cite 3 examples of externally-focused initiatives, actions, or programs your agency has undertaken in the last 3 years that demonstrate its relationship with members of your community and customers. Describe how you measure the outcome(s) of these efforts.**

TOTAL WORDS 240 / EACH EXAMPLE WORTH UP TO 3 POINTS / MAXIMUM POINTS 9

The intent of this question is to identify how the agency is communicating or connecting with members of its community and customers to build relationships. Whatever the initiative, action or program undertaken, has the agency identify desired outcome(s) and how are they being measured?

- 5. Park & recreation agencies are increasingly being called upon to demonstrate the results of their services and practices to decision-makers and the general public. Cite 3 results, impacts, or outcomes achieved in the last 3 years that your agency has measured; background about the outcome(s); and how the results were achieved.**

TOTAL WORDS 300 / EACH EXAMPLE WORTH UP TO 3 POINTS / MAXIMUM POINTS 9

Park and recreation agencies are constantly being questioned about their value and the impact they are having in their community. The intent of this question is to determine if the agency has identified and demonstrated their benefits to the community and/or decision makers with measurable outcomes. The agency should describe why these desired outcome(s) and how progress is measured and communicated.

- 6. Park & recreation agencies focus on creativity and innovation. Cite 3 innovations implemented by your agency within the last 3 years that have had a significant impact on service delivery, customer satisfaction, partnerships, financial condition, fiscal sustainability and/or internal operations.**

TOTAL WORDS 300 / EACH EXAMPLE WORTH UP TO 3 POINTS / MAXIMUM POINTS 9

One of the strengths of the parks and recreation profession is it is constantly reinventing itself and adapting to change. Change may be forced upon the agency internally or externally. How has the agency reinvented / adapted by creating new innovations, delivery methods, partnerships, etc? The intent of this question is to identify any new innovations that the agency has created over the last three years that has had a significant impact.

- 7. What initiatives or actions has your agency undertaken in the last 3 years to ensure all members of the community have fair and just access to quality parks and recreation?**

MAXIMUM WORDS 150 / TOTAL POINTS 3

The intent of this question is to ensure that everyone in the community has fair and just access to parks and recreation opportunities. This includes all community members regardless of age, gender identity, religious beliefs, heritage, economic circumstance or mental or physical ability.

Is there an equitable delivery of parks, facilities and recreation programs throughout the community and has the agency identified the barriers that need addressing to ensure equity? The agency can submit it has identified inequities as long as it reports how it is now addressing them.

- 8. What initiatives or actions has your agency undertaken in the last 3 years to advance that advance health equity, improve individual and community-level health outcomes and quality of life? Cite efforts undertaken for personnel and /or members of the community that activate and inspire health and wellness.**

MAXIMUM WORDS 150 / TOTAL POINTS 3

Park and recreation agencies play a vital role in meeting the evolving health needs of their communities. Health and wellness can include programs that provide access to healthy foods; physical activity; social connections; nature; substance abuse prevention; mental health; and improve air and water quality. Initiatives mentioned should address efforts for personnel and community members.

- 9. What initiatives or actions has your agency undertaken in the last 3 years to address the impact of climate change through environmental stewardship, sustainability practices, and environmental programming? Cite efforts undertaken.**

MAXIMUM WORDS 150 / TOTAL POINTS 3

Conservation is more than dealing with climate change, preservation of open space, or offering environmental education programs. Conservation can include efforts such as habitat conservation, agriculture, easements, transportation, urban forests, air quality, traffic reduction, recycling, energy efficiencies, landscape design, and partnerships.

**10. What challenge(s) has your agency experienced in the last 3 years and what action(s) has your agency undertaken to address these challenge(s)? Cite agency's role in identifying and addressing the challenge(s), the steps/actions undertaken, and the measured effectiveness of the effort(s).**

MAXIMUM WORDS 300 / MAXIMUM POINTS 9

There is no specific answer to question 10 as each agency and community is different which means the challenge(s) an agency faces will be unique. What to look for with this question are three parts: identification of the challenge; the impact to the agency; and how the agency responded. The challenges may be manmade, weather, unprecedented growth, government changes, civil or political unrest. These ideas are not intended to be inclusive but are provided as possibilities.

TOTAL WORDS: 2370

TOTAL POINTS: 75

**Definitions:**

**Undertaken** implies action has begun, launched, started, attempted

**Outcomes** are specific, measurable statements that communicate the goal has been met; they describe specific changes in conditions, behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, or skills expected to occur as a result of your actions.

**Community** is meant to be the agency's service area.

The National Gold Medal Award Program is governed and managed by the [American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration](#) in partnership with the [National Recreation and Park Association](#) and proudly sponsored by [Musco Lighting](#)

