

# 2020 Entry Form and Rules

## Annual Award for Communications Excellence Employee Ownership Month Poster Competition



Download digital entry forms at [esopassociation.org/awards/aace-program](https://esopassociation.org/awards/aace-program)

## Dear ESOP Association Corporate Members:

Welcome to the Annual Award for Communications Excellence (AACE) and the Employee Ownership Month (EOM) Poster competitions! We can't wait to see the creative communication efforts you have put in place in the past year—and neither can the rest of our members.

As you prepare your entries, I encourage you to take a look at the tips offered on page 2. These are intended to help you put your best foot forward so the judges can concentrate on the quality and quantity of the ESOP communications you shared in 2019, and not the details of your entry.

You also should be aware of a few changes we are implementing this year in an effort to make these competitions more streamlined and efficient. (See the box below.)

Good luck entering this year's competition, and be sure to come to the National Conference in May to partake in the Awards Ceremony, the visits to Capitol Hill, and the opportunities to learn even more about culture and communication.



James Bonham  
President & CEO  
The ESOP Association

### Changes for the 2020 AACE and EOM Poster Competitions

- 1) Due to space constraints, only winners and runners up will be displayed at the National Conference.** This is a change we had to make last year to improve the experience for all our attendees, and we need to make it again. The National Conference has become so successful—we draw so many attendees and offer so many sessions—that we have outgrown our space in the conference hotel. Making this change provides better traffic flow in multiple areas of the conference, and also enables us to house AACE and EOM Poster entries in a room that can be locked at night.
- 2) Judges will consider in their evaluation of entries the correct use of Association branded elements.** What is the correct way to use Association branding—such as The ESOP Association logo? Copy and scale it exactly as it appears in the original. Why is this so important? Under copyright law, if we as a community use these items inconsistently, we risk losing legal protection over them.
- 3) If you would like to have your AACE entry returned to you, please be prepared to pay the shipping charges.** For years we have paid the freight to return entries, but these competitions have become so popular that it has become too costly to continue this practice. As you prepare your entry, ask yourself if you need to include items that must be returned. If not, you may be able to let us dispose of it after the conference and save you the cost of shipping.

## AACE Rules and Guidelines

### Eligibility

All current Corporate Members of The ESOP Association may enter. Winners from the previous year may not enter that category the following year.

### Deadline

Entry forms and materials are due **Feb. 3, 2020**.

### Cost

There is no entry fee, but all companies must pay to ship their materials to and from The ESOP Association.

### Judging

Judging is conducted by a five-person panel consisting of members of The ESOP Association. Entries are judged on:

- How clearly and effectively they convey employee ownership and ESOP concepts to employee owners, customers, and the greater community.
- How well received and effective the communication efforts were among the intended audience(s). (Did the communication efforts help address a knowledge gap among employee owners? Did they

increase participation in some measurable way? Did they engage the community in a measurable way?)

- The amount of creativity and originality evident in the communication.
- The technical quality of the communication.
- How involved employee owners were in creating and executing the communication efforts.

Please note: This is a communication competition, and clear communication counts! The more clearly and concisely you explain your entry to the judges, the more highly it will be scored.

## Prizes

- Certificate with custom calligraphy.
- One complimentary registration to the National Conference in Washington, DC. (Registration includes admission to the Awards Ceremony in May.)
- Recognition at the Awards Ceremony, in the *ESOP Report*, and on TEA's web site.



## What to Send

Download a digital entry form at [www.ESOPAssociation.org/awards/aace-program](http://www.ESOPAssociation.org/awards/aace-program). Type in your information and save the form to your computer. E-mail the form to [media@ESOPAssociation.org](mailto:media@ESOPAssociation.org).

Typing your information and e-mailing your form are vital. Doing so helps us spot packages that are lost in shipping and helps us process your entry.

Your actual entry will include physical materials shipped to our offices. Prepare a separate binder for each category you enter. In this binder place information about your communication effort. Include relevant photos, text, and metrics about your project.

The first page in each entry should be a short description (up to 400 words) that provides context about your entry; it should address questions such as:

- What issue or problem was this communication intended to address? (For example, did new employees not understand how an ESOP works?)
- Who was this communication intended to reach? (Employee owners? Customers?)
- What challenges were present in addressing this issue? How were these challenges overcome?
- How were employee owners involved in identifying the problem and finding a solution?
- What were the results, if any, of the communication? Measurable results receive higher grades from the judges. (For example, did surveys show that after seeing new educational materials employee

owners' better understood key ESOP concepts?)

You also may submit a tri-fold display as a backdrop for your entry. This display may contain words and images that give the judges a sense of your company's employee ownership culture, or that illustrate specific aspects of one or more of your entries.

**Tri-fold displays must be no larger than 3' x 4' when open. Entries that exceed this size will not be displayed.**

If relevant, you may submit materials (shirts, bumper stickers, items given to employee owners, etc.) that illustrate your communication efforts.

## Packing and Shipping

Entries must fit in two boxes—one for your display, one for your binder(s) and supporting materials.

No box should weigh more than 20 pounds.

If you submit an entry for the poster competition (see below), ship it in the box with your tri-fold display.

If you submit CDs, DVDS, or thumb drives, clearly mark the category to which they belong.

## Tips for Entering

**Tri-fold Displays.** Each year, companies tell us they wish they had spent *more* time on their entry, and *less* time on their tri-fold display.

The display is “nice to have,” while the material in your binder is a “need to have.” Many companies have won an AACE without submitting *any* tri-fold display.

**Less Is More, Part I.** Some entries are packed with so many items—shirts, cups, etc.—they will not fit on the display table. Instead of putting everything you can in your entry box, ask yourself: “What is the smallest amount of material I can include and still tell my story? What does each item prove about our ESOP?”

**Less Is More, Part II.** AACE judges take time off work to come to Washington, DC, for the judging, and they have to finish in the time allotted.

They want to look through your material and give it all due consideration. But, in some cases, the judges must review and evaluate many entries in a single category—all in about an hour. That means judges have only a few minutes to decide if your entry merits further review, or should be put aside.

So put your best foot forward—concisely. Tell the judges in a few, clearly organized pages, why your entry is so fabulous.

**Type Your Entry.** The digital entry form for these competitions automatically generates labels that help us process your entry and ensure it is returned to you.

*Do not write out your entry by hand!* Doing so makes it harder to process and return your entry.

**Learn from the Past.** See the judges' comments for past entries at [www.ESOPAssociation.org/awards/aace-program](http://www.ESOPAssociation.org/awards/aace-program).

# Entry Categories

There are seven entry categories. Each category is split into two divisions, based on company size. (*Division A is for companies with 250 or fewer employees; Division B is for companies with more than 250 employees.*)

Each division typically has one winner and one runner up. However, the judges may refrain from naming a runner up if no clear second choice emerges.

The categories are:

## Category 1: Videos

This award recognizes excellence in the use of original video to explain or promote the ESOP concept to employees or the public.

**Requirements:** Videos must be uploaded to YouTube or some other public site and be no more than five minutes long. Only one entry is allowed per company. Submit a short description of your video in the appropriate field in the entry form. **No binder needs to be submitted in this category.**

## Category 2: Printed Materials

This award recognizes excellence in using original, printed materials to explain or promote the company's ESOP to employee owners, customers, or the community. Consider entering a variety of printed materials, such as brochures, newsletters, books, and the like. The quality and quantity of your entries are factors the judges will consider. Only materials printed and distributed in 2019 will be considered.

Note: Entries in the Employee Ownership Month Poster competition are not considered in this category.

## Category 3: Intranets

This award recognizes company intranets that excel at educating employee owners about the company ESOP, and excel at spurring employee owners to engage in the company's ownership culture.

**Requirements:** Provide a link to your intranet (with a password, if needed), or print outs of your intranet pages. In the interest of security, it is acceptable to black out private information on the print outs.

## Category 4: Employee Ownership Marketing

This award recognizes excellence in advertising and marketing the benefits of employee ownership to customers, the community, and the public. Materials must reference the company's ESOP or employee ownership.

All forms of media are eligible for this award. Examples include brochures, marketing videos, advertisements, signage on company vehicles, banners, posts on social media, and company web pages.

Note: Company web sites that score highest are those that prominently show the company is employee owned and clearly explain why being employee owned



Please submit each entry in its own binder.

benefits both employee owners and those outside the company. (For example, by showing that employee owned firms provide better customer service, are empowered to solve customers' problems, etc.)

## Category 5: One Special Event

This award recognizes excellence in organizing and executing a **single** significant ownership event, such as a special celebration, ESOP community service day, etc. While events from any time of year are eligible, many companies find that their Employee Ownership Month events are excellent options for this category. If your organization offered multiple outstanding events, you should enter Category 6.

## Category 6: Series of Special Events

This award recognizes excellence in organizing and executing a series of ownership events. As with Category 5, Employee Ownership Month events typically are excellent options for this category, but any series of events from anytime throughout the year is eligible.

## Category 7: Total Communications

This award recognizes overall excellence in a company's efforts to educate the public and employee owners about a company's ESOP and ownership culture.

Note: Materials submitted in other categories automatically are considered in this category. You also may submit additional materials specifically for this category, in a separate binder.

The materials you submit for this category may be in any medium, including print, digital, websites and intranets, images, words, audio, video, etc.

Examples of potential items to submit include: orientation information on ownership culture for new hires; training on culture and behavioral expectations; materials explaining ESOP benefits; advertisements; documentation of special events and meetings; materials explaining the company stock, finances, and valuation; press releases; and the like.

## Questions?

Contact Patrick Mirza, ESOP Association Communications Director, at [Patrick@esopassociation.org](mailto:Patrick@esopassociation.org).

# Employee Ownership Month Poster Competition

## Eligibility

Any current Corporate Member may enter.

## Deadline

All entry forms and materials must be received by **Feb. 3, 2020**.

## Cost

There is no entry fee, but participants pay shipping to enter their materials. Materials will not be returned.

## Judging

The five-person panel of ESOP Association members that judges the AACE competition also selects the winner of the poster competition. The winner will be announced at the National Conference Awards Ceremony in May in Washington, D.C.

Entries will be judged based on:

- How clearly, powerfully, and effectively they convey employee ownership and the ESOP concept.
- The degree to which employee owners were involved in creating and executing the poster design.
- The technical quality of the communication.
- Creativity and originality.

## Prizes

The Corporate Member that wins the Employee Ownership Month Poster competition will:

- Receive one non-transferable registration to the 2020 National Conference.
- Have the company name appear on the poster and promotion for the poster.
- Receive a certificate at the Awards Ceremony.
- Receive publicity in the *ESOP Report* and on the web site.

## Rules

All poster entries must:

- Include The ESOP Association logo, available at: [www.esopassociation.org/membership/esop-logo-policy](http://www.esopassociation.org/membership/esop-logo-policy).
- Be 18 x 24 inches in size and mounted on foamcore.
- Include a low resolution jpeg.

(This is used to display your entry in a video loop at the Annual Conference.)

- Use words and images to communicate the concept of employee ownership.
- Be available via a digital file with a resolution of at least 300 DPI.
- Have a sheet of paper taped to the back of the poster and listing company name, contact name, and phone number.

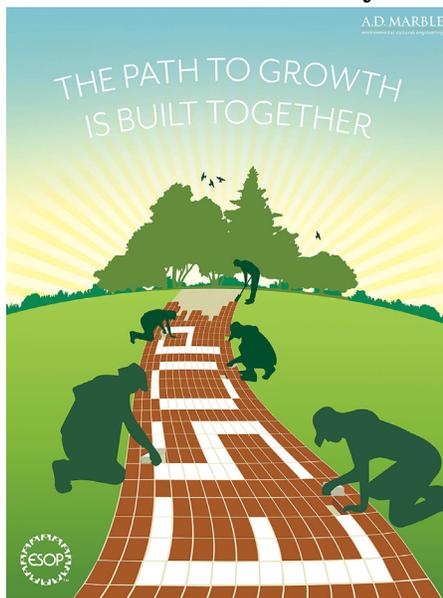
## Guidelines

Poster entries:

- Should include on the poster the name and/or logo of the submitting company.
- May be vertical or horizontal.
- May be screened on a product sold by TEA celebrating Employee Ownership Month.

By submitting an entry, you agree that:

- All images in the poster are fairly purchased and do not violate copyright or trademark laws.
- TEA has the right to display entries at any TEA event, online, and in any TEA publication or promotion.
- If your entry is selected as the winner, you will provide TEA with a digital file of the poster, with a resolution of at least 300 DPI.
- You are responsible for creating and shipping your entry.
- Your original entry will not be returned.



Top, the 2018 Employee Ownership Month Poster from A.D. Marble. Right, the 2019 poster from Moody's Co-Worker Owned.



## Form for Submitting AACE and EOM Poster Contest Entries

Save this form to your computer, open it in the Adobe Acrobat Reader, type your information, and save the form. Attach the form to an e-mail and send to [media@esopassociation.org](mailto:media@esopassociation.org). Use the subject line: AACE or EOF Poster.

Company \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Shipping Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter  Select a Chapter

I am submitting #  boxes  Return my AACE materials to me; I will pay for shipping.

### AACE Entry Section

Company Size:

- A (250 or fewer employees)  
 B (More than 250 employees)

Categories entered:

- 1 Videos  
YouTube URL: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Fill out description on next page.)
- 2 Printed Material
- 3 Intranet  
URL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Password: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Employee Ownership Marketing  
URL (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
Password (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 One Special Event
- 6 Series of Special Events
- 7 Total Communications

Mail materials to:

The ESOP Association  
Attn: AACE/EOM Poster Competitions  
1200 18th Street NW, Suite 1125  
Washington, DC 20036-2506

Print the label(s) on the following pages and tape them to the outside of EACH box you ship to The ESOP Association. This will help us process your entry.

### Employee Ownership Month Poster Contest

I am submitting a poster entry. (Please attach a small jpeg of entry when e-mailing this form.)

List the name(s) of the employee owner(s) who were involved in designing this poster

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

By submitting my entry, I agree that:

- All images or art in the poster are fairly purchased and do not violate any copyright or trademark laws.
- The ESOP Association (TEA) has the right to display all entries at any TEA event, online, and in any TEA publication or promotion.
- TEA will, at its sole discretion, select the printer for the winning poster entry.
- If my entry is chosen as the winner, I will provide TEA with a digital file of the poster, with a resolution of at least 300 DPI.
- I am responsible for all costs associated with creating the design and shipping it to TEA.
- My poster entry will not be returned.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature  
(Please type your name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date