



2026 AEJMC Equity & Diversity Award

Application deadline: April 15, 2026

AEJMC is seeking nominations (applications and self-nominations are welcome) for the 2026 AEJMC Equity & Diversity Award, which recognizes journalism and mass communication academic units that are working toward, and have attained measurable success, in increasing equity and diversity among their faculty, staff and students. The unit must display progress and innovation in racial, gender, and ethnic equality and diversity during the previous three years.

The AEJMC Equity & Diversity Award has been presented each year since 2009, with the most recent recipient in 2025 being the College of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Nebraska–Lincoln. A full listing of the previous recipients is available on AEJMC’s website at <https://www.aejmc.org/home/scholarship/award-recipients/>

The 2026 AEJMC Equity & Diversity Award will be presented during AEJMC’s New Orleans Conference to be held Aug. 5-8. The AEJMC president also will travel to the winning academic unit during the 2026-2027 academic year to make an on-campus presentation of the award. The AEJMC Equity & Diversity Award Selection Committee will expect applications to address all the items listed as the committee will evaluate efforts over the past three years (2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-25) in these following areas:

Hiring and Recruitment: The academic unit illustrates efforts in recruiting, hiring and retaining qualified faculty from groups historically underrepresented in U.S. academia and/or from groups that reflect the communities that the unit serves. Evidence may include description of the unit’s protocols for recruitment, hiring and retention. Recent faculty hires that contribute to the unit’s diversity should be noted, and the percentage of diverse faculty in the unit as a whole should be calculated and included.

Status of Current Faculty: The academic unit illustrates equitable representation among full-time and part-time faculty that include groups historically underrepresented in U.S. academia and/or groups that reflect the communities that the unit serves. Evidence should include retention efforts, recent tenure and promotion rates, mentoring, and faculty participation in service/activities.

Climate: The academic unit illustrates a supportive climate. The unit strives to be free of discrimination. Evidence should include curriculum and programming, faculty/student perceptions, and decreasing number of grievances.

Institutionally Embedded Support: The academic unit offers formal support for equity and diversity initiatives. Evidence should include mentorship activities and graduate student support.

Other Initiatives to Foster Diversity: The academic unit has initiated other diversity efforts not listed above. Evidence should include specific details of such initiatives.

A unit's ACEJMC accreditation has no bearing on the evaluation process for this award. Applications may be submitted by any AEJMC or ASJMC member, by any faculty member within the nominated unit or by the head of the nominated unit. However, **ONLY ONE APPLICATION** may be submitted by a single university's communication or journalism/mass communication unit. If multiple applications from the same college or school are submitted, they will be returned to the college to determine which **SINGLE** application the university would like considered. The following application materials are required:

- (a) A cover letter or emailed text that includes contact person's name, phone numbers and email address; title and address of nominated unit and institution; and name and title of unit's head.
- (b) A completed EDA Demographics Form for each of the **THREE** previous years being considered for the 2026 Award (2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025) that provides a description of the unit's faculty and students, its degrees conferred, and other information. The form is available on the AEJMC website at:
https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/AEJMC/680a77cf-ee3c-4567-8d73-3a959793d95b/UploadedImages/EDA_DemForm2026.pdf
- (c) A narrative, which describes the diversity, equity and inclusion efforts of the academic unit. While the Demographics Form only addresses certain types of diversity, this narrative provides a chance to tell the story of other efforts toward inclusive excellence (i.e., programming and initiatives to address those who are disabled or support for those in the LGBTQ+ community). The narrative might include goals, actions, steps and outcomes toward achieving a work environment that promotes diversity, equity and inclusion.
- (d) A statement of institutional context that addresses any recent changes (i.e., new laws, policies, course name changes) that might impact efforts in the areas of equity and diversity.
- (e) A letter from the unit head supporting the nomination.
- (f) At least three additional letters of support/recommendation. (NOTE: No letters should be submitted by those in any way connected to the unit's accreditation process.)

Applications may include additional materials, such as description of specific institutional policies or legislation outlining diversity opportunities or barriers, and documentation of other awards received. No accreditation-related documents (i.e., accreditation self-study excerpts) should be submitted. The full application should not exceed 30 pages (excluding letters of recommendation/support).

Complete applications MUST BE COLLATED into ONE DIGITAL FILE AS A PDF FILE and sent only once as an email attachment to AEJMC at the FOLLOWING ADDRESS: lillian@aejmc.org Mention "AEJMC EDA" in the subject line of the email submission. Only emailed applications will be accepted. Applications that are incomplete (i.e., without completed data charts for the three years under consideration) will not be considered. **Important:** Applications remain active

and eligible for three years; BUT reconsidered academic units MUST SUBMIT updated data charts for the three years under consideration. Previous Equity & Diversity Award recipients may apply again after 10 years of receiving the award.

The application deadline is 5 p.m. EDT, April 15. Late applications will be included in next year's competition. Please address any questions to Ingrid Sturgis, isturgis@howard.edu. The committee reserves the right not to present an award in any given year.