

# SUGGESTIONS ON WRITING A SUCCESSFUL AWARD APPLICATION

Below are some suggestions from the assessors and awards committees on writing a successful application:

## 1. Preparation

- Be prepared to demonstrate that the nominee's work has had an impact beyond their own unit/discipline; and how the initiative/s can be/will be sustained even after the nominee have moved on to something else.
- An application is not a CV that lists achievements. It is a tightly woven narrative, supported by evidence and scholarly literature, that highlights the impact the nominee has made to student learning.
- Focus of any activity – planning, reflection, SoLT has to be on what change it made to the student experience and student learning.
- Take the evidence suggestions seriously.
- Follow the rubric and be succinct but somehow find room to add flair.

## 2. Select correct category

- Select the right category for the application. Seek feedback from as many colleagues as possible.
- For program nomination, ensure that the program is really excellent. Make it clear in the nomination that the program is not simply one of many excellent programs offered in Australia in the discipline/area.
- Make sure that the claims and evidence speak back to the category under which you are applying.
- Focus on the specific innovation and nomination, a citation is for something you do, not for your work as a whole. So be very specific!

## 3. Application Writing

- Take time to identify your "personal brand" and build a coherent narrative about your brand.
- Bring the assessor into your story so the assessors can see what the nominee's journey has been.
- Write coherently - develop a framework for the application before writing.
- Be clear about what the nominee is seeking to achieve; tell the assessors how the nominee do it and how you know it is successful. Focus of any activity - planning, reflection, SoLT has to be on what change it made to the student experience and student learning.
- Tell a great story-get some advice and assistance on how to tell a story. Create a sense of drama: what was missing, how did you know that, what did you do to fill that gap, why did you choose that what next.
- Proofread - consider the reader in terms of clarity, both in layout/design and use of language.

## 4. Selection Criteria

- Clarity of communication for a general audience is key.
- Pay careful attention to the assessment criteria and the suggested sequence in which to respond.
- Follow the instructions! The criteria are quite clear and specific. Make sure the nominee evidence the claims make against each criterion.

## 5. Provide evidence of the claims

- Follow the guidelines and consider carefully, in particular, the selection and presentation of evidence of impact on student experience and outcomes. Where it is possible to identify impact beyond 'student satisfaction' (e.g., student engagement, retention, performance, employment outcomes etc) then do include this evidence.
- Ensure the nominee collects comprehensive evidence of impact on student learning (quantitative, not just anecdotal). An area that many applications need to improve on.
- The critical importance of evaluation and presentation of evaluative data, both quantitative and qualitative. This also suggests that nominations should not be submitted until there is robust data available to support their claims.
- Be clear and provide evidence about the impact and reach of the initiative.

- Be specific about your contribution and provide multiple forms of evidence in response to the selected criteria.
- Start early and build up accurate and highly pertinent evidence to support your claims.
- Back up every statement with evidence that is verifiable as relating you.