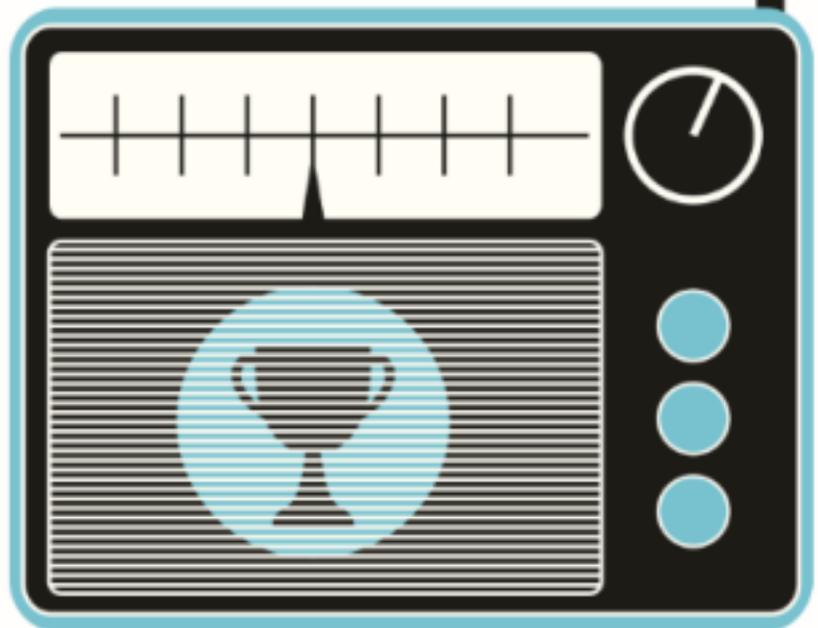


**CRABO REVIEW 2021**

**COMMUNITY  
RADIO  
AWARDS IN  
BROADCAST  
AND ONLINE  
REVIEW**

Report by:  
Luke Smith  
Director of  
Learning and Development



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Over the past ten years the NCRA/ANREC has awarded 200 awards to stations and programmers. Dozens of stations have taken home our gongs and celebrated the incredible breadth and depth of talent in our sector.

In 2021 the NCRA/ANREC staff was tasked with reviewing the awards to better understand the administrative burden of the awards, the station participation, the perceived value and ways we can improve. In this report we will evaluate the administration of the awards, the feedback received from participants and our membership on the awards and some of the statistics available from the awards.

Over the past five years we have heard heartfelt messages of what winning the awards have meant to people. For the team at the NCRA/ANREC recognizing the incredible efforts, and talent of our sector is a highlight of our year. This report will help direct our work to improve the awards moving forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luke Smith".

Luke Smith  
Director of Learning and Development

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# OVERVIEW OF THE AWARDS 2015 - 2019



The Community Radio Awards in Broadcast and Online has been a long standing tradition for our member stations. We would like to draw your attention to this piece of feedback we received which exemplifies this point:

*"I was a co-produced for a... award in with my friend, who has since seen that award open doors for him in the field... in his home country... So I absolutely think they act and provide value as a demonstration of quality for prospective employers in the commercial media sector, which is a natural connecting point to campus radio (in particular) and its role as a training ground for the next generation of media professionals. From a station perspective I also believe that the awards can be used to attract new volunteers and listeners as they act as an assurance of quality."*

For those participating in the awards there is the value and significance that winning a national award brings.

In 2015 the Membership Coordinator was tasked with taking over the Community Radio Awards. At that time, we still accepted paper award submissions, the submission form was a word document not tied to a database, and the NCRA/ANREC also accepted the recordings of the awards on physical CDs. That first year was overwhelming in the volume and the lack of administrative processes, this left very little time, and the staff were left responsible for judging awards into the late evening, the day before the Awards Gala.

In 2016 drastic steps were taken to automate the process. A single Google form was created, the guide was updated and the rules were revised. We additionally began work on creating a formalised list of potential judges. We also formalized the judging feedback process and introduced the 100 point 3-question feedback system for judges. We found that the volume of entrants in 2016 (147) was substantial, and copying over each entrant into a central form was too laborious.

In 2017 we saw the number of entrants climb 45% to 214 entrants. In 2017 we saw the need for more judges, which saw us start to reach out to Executive Directors in industry associations such as the heads of provincial music associations. Finding judges for spoken word, and radio specific categories remained a challenge. The way that the information was made available to judges in 2016 and 2017 was via a single form, the judges would enter the form, select the category, then the entrant, and then submit their feedback. The volume of responses in 2017 created a single form that was unwieldy and it became difficult for the form to function properly for the judges.

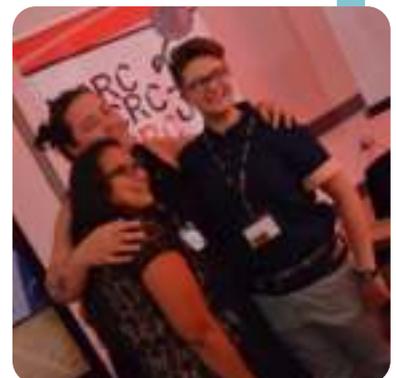
# OVERVIEW OF THE AWARDS

## 2015 - 2019

In 2018 and 2019 further administrative upgrades were made to try to streamline the process. Over those years we were able to settle on a core number of judges, this was supported by making a \$50 honorarium available. The honorarium also creates additional administration for the judge recruitment and engagement process. To respond to the issue of the forms being too big for judges the form was broken down into each award category. Essentially it went from one Judges form, to 23. The judging, the review and the award announcement process was all impacted by delays due to the increased volume of submissions at that time.

In 2018 we also began to work on streamlining the awards, and introducing new awards to better reflect the demand. For example, in 2017 there were over 20 submissions for the generic music award. The decision was made at the time to introduce five new music genre based awards in 2018 this increased the number of music submissions to 52, which climbed again to 68 in 2019 when we also introduced Hip/Hop & Rock/Indie as separate categories. We also combined the Special Programming, and Community Engagement awards into one, and we also amalgamated Sports Live Broadcast, and Sports Talk Show into 1 award. In both cases their 2017 submission totals were 7, 3 and 3 respectively. In 2018, those numbers increased to 12 and 10 respectively.

For 2019 we also simplified the submission form, the previous form has individual pages for all 20+ awards. The 2019 form (which was kept for 2020 and 2021) had three pages, the first where an entrant selected the award, and then a page for personal achievement awards, and a page for station achievement awards. This effectively amalgamated all of the submissions into one manageable database instead of being spread across 20+ forms and databases. By 2019 we had begun to recruit exiting staff members at stations who were moving outside of the sector be judges.



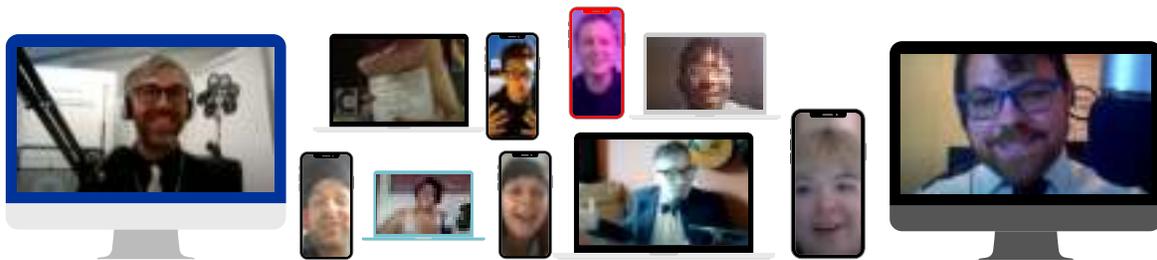
# THE PANDEMIC ERA AWARDS 2020 & 2021



The NCRA/ANREC launched the 2020 awards before the COVID-19 pandemic became evident. Starting in March of 2020 it became apparent that the pandemic would have an impact on our capacity to manage the awards, the availability of judges, and the eventual cancellation of our 2020 in-person Awards Gala scheduled for Whitehorse, Yukon.

The decision was made to move to an online conference we dubbed 39 Online to reflect the 39th NCRC that had been scheduled for that year. This took place in September of 2020, by which point the NCRA/ANREC office had been shut down most of the year. We were lucky that judges were still broadly available, and the push to September allowed us the flexibility to extend our timelines. 2020 saw the first year that our judging deficit did not result in multiple staff at the NCRA/ANREC taking on judging.

The 2020 online awards was the first time that the NCRA/ANREC staff took an unprecedented role in running the Radio Awards Gala. Historically, the NCRA/ANREC manage the administration of the awards, and the conference hosts arrange for the Awards Gala and the physical awards. The choice of award was left to the NCRA/ANREC, who adapted a Gala into an online Zoom call. Despite the monumental pressures during the Pandemic, the NCRA/ANREC staff were able to solicit announcement videos from across the country, and recorded videos from musicians. At this point in the pandemic, this form of virtual engagement was still novel.



The 2020 Awards Gala was hosted by the NCRA/ANREC staff from their office in Ottawa and was the first year that creators who had submitted to the awards were able to engage and participate in the awards process. Historically, the representatives from the station who were attending the Gala received the awards on behalf of the winners. 2020 marked a significant change as new digital tools allowed for entrants to participate in the Gala, and respond to winning. In 2021 we expanded on this idea of engaging the entrants.

# THE PANDEMIC ERA AWARDS 2020 & 2021

From 2015 onwards, we had acknowledged Honourable Mentions, essentially, in categories with more than five submissions, or in the case of a close judging decision, the top two or three were recognised with honourable mentions. In 2018 to 2020 this included creating certificates for the award winners, and also honourable mention certificates. This was an administrative task which took several hours at least, despite using a template. The decision was made to remove the honourable mentions and instead announce a list of Finalists for each award. By announcing the finalists in advance of the Gala, we could then increase the likelihood of them participating in the Gala to potentially receive their award.

The 2021 Awards Gala was more streamlined than the 2020 version. The NCRA/ANREC attempted to repeat the success of having stations announce the awards but had no volunteers for this task. One potential reason is that zoom fatigue and general exhaustion of virtual events drove down our participation in advance of, and during the awards. The NCRA/ANREC also simplified the process to a shared screen presentation, and had fewer transitions.



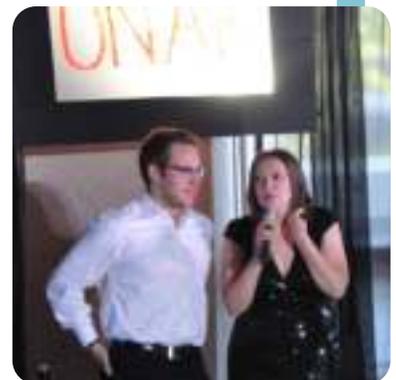
## THE PROCESS: APPLICATION FORMS / SOFTWARE

The 2021 application form is from 2019 and is a Google form with three pages. This centralizes all of the submissions into one database. The judges receive different forms. In 2019 a template form for each award category was created. In effect, judges will receive forms for the specific categories they review. This creates the same administrative burden that was identified for the submission process in 2018. The core issue is that there is substantial staff hours currently in the copying of submissions into the individual forms for the judges. In 2021 there were 173 submissions which would be copied into 20+ Judging Forms.

The NCRA/ANREC has consulted with many stations on the administration of our awards. In 2018 we were in talks with CFUZ-FM in Penticton, BC about potentially incorporating their bespoke software solution. It was not available in time for the awards at that time, and it was made evident that the software would require upgrades to reflect the increased scale and scope of the national awards.

In 2021 we also spoke with CFUV-FM about their use of AirTable and the potential for modernizing the submission form, to allow for segmentation of the data which would facilitate us automating the process of creating category specific information for judges. It is the belief of CFUV-FM that the free version of AirTable has the capability to automate the submission process through to the judging process, effectively removing the administration overhead currently in place. CFUV-FM has created a proof of concept for the NCRA/ANREC.

A new upgrade to our software is needed to further reduce the administrative overhead. It is currently estimated that the submission process costs the association between \$500 and \$600 in staff time. It is important that the NCRA/ANREC introduce an upgrade in our data gathering for the awards to allow for segmentation and reporting.



## THE PROCESS: ELIGIBILITY SCREENING

In the prior section the process of moving data from the submission form, to the judging forms is outlined. Currently, each submission is reviewed at that stage for eligibility. This currently involves including an active link to an audio submission, and ensuring the information submitted is correct. The most common cause of disqualification is entrants submitting the exact same information and audio file for multiple awards. The practice of award spamming is prohibited, in 2021 for example one entrant had all five submissions disqualified.

In 2020 there were several staff hours allocated towards contacting potential disqualified candidates to change, or confirm their information. To cut back on the administration in 2021 the submissions which did not comply with the rules were automatically disqualified. This assisted in streamlining the review process.



## THE PROCESS: JUDGES RECRUITMENT



In 2015 when the current staff took over the awards there was a very small judging pool, only five names on the initial list.

We had better judges information beginning in 2017, at that time the association had 15 judges: 2 were former NCRA/ANREC staff, 3 were current staff, there was 1 Board member, and 2 former station staff members, and 1 current staff member at a non-participating station. In addition, we had 3 Executive Directors from provincial music associations, and two staff from partner organizations.

In 2018 we carried over most of the same judges however several declined, new judges were added from staff who had moved on from their roles at stations. There were 15 judges in 2018.

In 2019 when we saw the drastic increase in submissions to an all time high of 265 submissions. The 2019 group of judges were again a mix of industry professionals and former C/C station staff. But what became apparent in 2019 for the first time was disengaged judges. Of the 15 judges only 8 submitted their reviews. With nearly half the judges not responding or completing the reviews a substantial burden fell on the staff to review the submissions. In many cases the categories were reviewed by only one judge, and not the NCRA/ANREC's goal of three judges, with the scores averaged.

This continued to be a challenge in 2020, the pool of Judges was increased, we contacted at least 32, of which 17 agreed (53%) of then only 11 completed the task of reviewing the submissions. In essence, only 34% of the judges recruited agreed, and completed the task. In 2021 the pool of judges dropped to 12 as several judges declined to participate moving forward. The majority of them (10/12) completed the task, however, this still left the majority of categories being reviewed only once, and several categories being exclusively reviewed by NCRA/ANREC staff.

One initiative to encourage judges to complete the process was the introduction of the Judges Honorarium in 2017, in the first year only 5 judges accepted the funding, others contributed their honorarium to the student award, and the majority did not complete the process or declined the funding. In 2017, this incentive cost the association \$600, in 2018 the incentive cost \$350 as fewer judges accepted funding or completed the task. In 2019 the honorarium incentive was phased out. Managing the incentive, including identifying the process for payment increased the administrative task of judge recruitment and engagement.

## THE PROCESS: THE JUDGING PERIOD



What the recruitment section above effectively outlines is the challenge of our judging deficit. For the majority of the recent awards periods there have been fewer judges participating than minimum needed for our judging goals. The NCRA/ANREC has aimed to have each submission reviewed 3 times, with the scores averaged, and then ranked to indicate a winner. The Judging Deficit has made this impossible.

The number of judges who would be needed has to be drastically increased. We also limit the number of submissions being reviewed by a judge to 20 or fewer. The reason being that each submission includes a 10-minute submission, and the review process can be around 30 minutes per entry. For 20 entries, this reflects a time commitment of around 10 hours, which we believe is reasonable for a judge. The Judges are typically given 2 or 3 months to complete this, we have heard from judges that this is an appropriate time, as any less would impact their ability to volunteer.

In 2019 the NCRA/ANREC would have required at least 40 judges to ensure each submission is reviewed 3 times. This would be the equivalent of almost 400 hours of review. This demonstrates the substantial increase needed in our judging capacity.

Once the judges have completed their task the staff review the feedback. The current process involves calculating the score total from each judge, and then ranking to identify the winner. This score calculation process can take up to 30 minutes per award, with the entire task of reviewing the scores provided from judges taking between 8 and 10 hours to complete. This task costs the association around \$300 to \$500 in staff time.

This element is an area that can be automated moving forward. There are several software solutions which will calculate the totals and allow for ranking. We can expedite the finalization of the awards to a few hours with an upgrade.

In previous years we have allocated 2 weeks between the closing of the judging period, and the Awards Gala event date. The challenge in the past is when a substantial number of judges do not complete the task, this is a very short period of time for staff to finish the judging. In the past the two weeks have been insufficient time, and deadlines for the creation of physical awards have been impacted. The timeline should be reviewed if the submission and judging process is updated.

## THE PROCESS: THE PHYSICAL AWARDS

Up till 2020 the physical awards have been chosen by the station that hosts the conference. It was not paid for by the NCRA/ANREC until 2016. The guidance that the NCRA/ANREC staff has provided to hosting stations is that they should create an award that reflects the community that they are in. The awards have included reclaimed wood from local trees, sleeper beam nails at a train car station, and hand painted awards by local artists.

The NCRA/ANREC has repeatedly increased the allocated budget for the physical awards. The NCRA/ANREC now puts \$3,000 towards the awards as a whole, with the 2021 awards gala having \$1,000 allocated towards the physical awards. This has gone up from \$300 over the past three years. The increased cost reflects an increase in the number of awards, and a more accurate accounting of what physical awards cost. A projection on awards, and a clear outline for what the awards should be needs to be developed.

Here is some feedback we received:

*“I actually like finding regionally reflective awards. I do think the event needs to be organized by the NCRA though, from an operational consistency standpoint, but perhaps the NCRA can ask the host station for artist recommendations?”*



## THE PROCESS: THE AWARDS GALA



The Awards Gala is the physical presentation of the awards and has typically taken place at the conference. In the past, the Gala has been an opportunity for the host station to showcase local talent.

In 2020 we opened the door for the award entrants to participate virtually, this was repeated in 2021. This step helped to boost engagement and create a more dynamic event. This should be facilitated moving forward.

The NCRA/ANREC has had varying degrees of involvement with the Awards Gala. For example, in 2018 the Awards Gala in Fredericton, NB the final performance element was made available to the public. We received complaints from members who thought the event was a closed event to the participants. This confusion and change in the access to the space is something we have had to address moving forward. In 2019 the NCRA/ANREC worked more closely with the conference hosts, to ensure that the venue was accessible, a closed event, and that the costs were managed. This level of operational coordination was carried forward in advance for the 2022 conference.

The Awards Gala costs were first captured in the 2019, historically the gala costs have been covered by the host stations, in 2019 the venue costs was around \$5600, but those costs ballooned to closer to \$8,000 once the final costs for the venue staff was accounted for. The Awards Gala has not typically been a separate ticketed event. The costs have been captured under the general revenues of the conference. In 2019 the total costs for the Awards was around \$18,000, the Gala in 2022 has been budgeted for \$23,000+

### Post Gala Promotion

Following the Awards Gala there has been limited promotions by the NCRA/ANREC. In the past the list of winners have been provided to Broadcast Dialogue, which is a broadcast industry online news site. They have reported on the past few awards. In addition, the NCRA/ANREC has posted the winners to social media channels, and the newsletter.

With the goal of raising the profile of community radio, additional steps such as a national press release, and local press releases for winning stations could help boost our national profile, and the local profile of the station and programmers who win.

## ESTIMATE ON TOTAL CURRENT COST

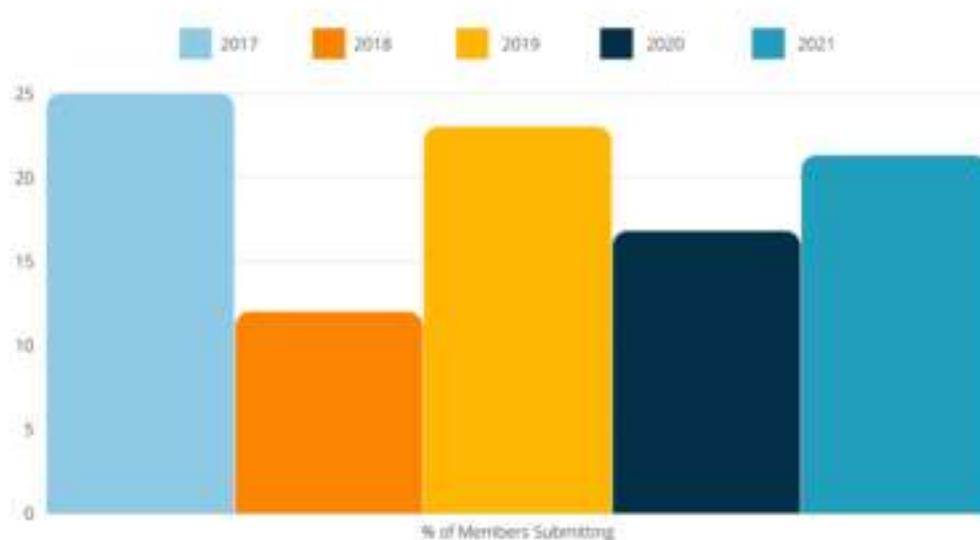
It is not easy to accurately measure all of the staff time currently allocated towards the Community Radio Awards. Additionally, there is limited accounting of the cost of operating and maintaining our awards site, and responding to questions etc outside of the main period for the awards.

The cost to the NCRA/ANREC for administering the awards in 2021 is estimated to be between \$2,000 and \$4,200 a year. When including the costs of the Awards Gala that increases to between \$20,000 to \$26,000 in costs.



## FIVE AND TEN YEAR TRENDS

The NCRA/ANREC has limited data from the past five years. We know that over that time a total of 41 different radio stations have won awards. It is likely that around 50 different stations in total applied over the past ten years. Over that time period, the number of stations participating is around 20 different stations each year. As you can see in the graph, as a percentage of our entire membership, participation has been hovering between 20% and 25%.

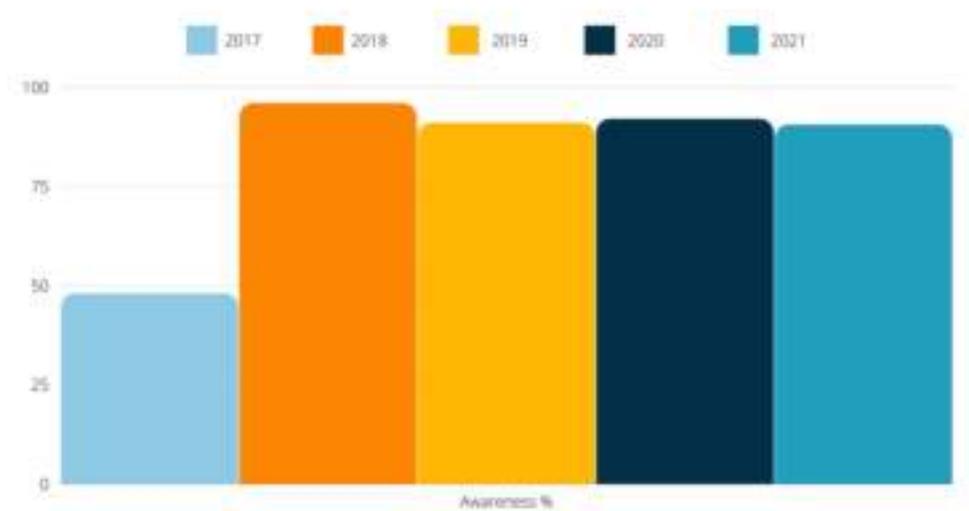


Looking over the past ten years, each year sees around ten to fifteen stations winning the awards. Looking at the bigger picture there are some stations that have dominated the awards. There are 5 campus stations that have collectively won 47% of all of the awards, with the remaining 53% spread out across the other 36 stations. The campus stations are led by CJSW-FM (15%) then CITR-FM (10%), CJSR-FM (10%), CFUV-FM (7%) and CKUT-FM (6%).

The perception that campus stations win a clean sweep of the awards has led to complaints raised regarding the awards in the past. In 2015 former NCRA/ANREC Board member Brian Cleveland began to track the award winners to assess if this is a structural issue. Over the past ten years, around half of the stations who apply have won an award. It is important to note that very often the large campus stations who dominate the awards, have applied for every single award. For example, in 2021 CJSR-FM won 3 of the awards; that station had submitted 45 different award submissions. This single station represented over 20% of all submissions in that year.

## FIVE AND TEN YEAR TRENDS

We can also look at our Membership Priority Survey to assess member participation in the awards. We can see that over the past few years, between 30% and 40% of members indicate they are using the awards. The pandemic era awards by contrast were all time lows of 15-25% of stations. Many stations noted to staff that increased work related to the pandemic impacted their ability to apply. The awareness of the awards is not an issue for our membership. Over the past four years awareness has been slowly declining from 96% to 91%. This would indicate that lack of participation is not driven by unawareness, but from other factors.



A part of the barrier to participation has been the capacity for stations to review programs, and create effective clips for submission. Community stations have typically had less staff, and generally focus their staffing on sales or marketing whereas the majority of campus stations have a Program Director, and many have additional staff such as Volunteer Directors or similar roles. We raise this in the context of the top 20 award winning stations were 17 campus stations, and 3 were community stations. In reviewing the past ten years, community stations appear to generally apply for fewer awards, and consequently win fewer awards.

Identifying incentives and support to encourage more community station participation will be key to increasing the diversity of award applicants, and by extension the award winners.

# THE RADIO LEGENDS

The Radio Legends are individuals who have been recognized for their lifetime contributions to the campus and community radio sector. The current list of living Radio Legends includes luminaries who helped to found the Community Radio Fund of Canada, the first Executive Directors of the NCRA/ANREC and others who were pivotal in protecting the role of C/C radio in legislation and regulations. There are currently 12 Radio Legends.

In 2018 the decision was made to move the recognition of the lifetime achievement award away from the discretion of judges to the group of Radio Legends. The challenge presented was that the judges both from within, and outside of the sector were not aware of the broader context or impact of the nominees.

The NCRA/ANREC staff now check station nominations for the Radio Legends for eligibility.

We have found that were around 3-5 people are nominated each year, the majority do not meet the eligibility criteria. Mainly, they do not indicate the impact over multiple stations which is required for consideration. On occasion the NCRA/ANREC Board, and staff have also provided the Radio Legends with names to be included in their deliberations. There are currently 11 names on the Radio Legend long-list.

The decision was made during the pandemic era Radio Awards to not recognize additional Radio Legends. The NCRA/ANREC staff provided recommendations to the Radio Legends. The decision was made in order to be able to offer the Radio Legend that are recognized the opportunity to be acknowledged in person. Recognizing the Radio Legends in person was identified as a key part of the recognition of their contribution to the sector.

The staff have indicated to the Radio Legends that there is no limit to the number of Radio Legends who are recognized each year. However, the final decision, and who to recognize has been deferred to the Radio Legends group who meet two to three times during the awards review process.



## THE MEMBER FEEDBACK



We solicited feedback from our membership directly in an email, and also in our newsletter. We also emailed every listed email address for those who had submitted to the 2021 Community Radio Awards in Broadcast and Online. Our survey had 7 responses. This is insufficient to assess any difference in the demographic data we gathered on respondents.

We asked in our survey what value people see in the awards, here were some of the responses (edited for length and clarity):

*“Personally speaking by winning an award, THIS award in particular shows RECOGNITION / APPROVAL from fellow broadcasters that YOUR WORK is seen & valued. That's what winning this award would mean to me.”*

*“Recognition for your work, reduce volunteer turnover, connection to other programmers doing similar work, larger listenership”*

*“It's a big acknowledgement of the work and dedication one puts into creating passionate radio programming that helps community outreach”*

*“To encourage volunteers that recognition for great programming exists, show that their peers are being nominated. Pride in your station.”*

We asked about our [www.awards.ncra.ca](http://www.awards.ncra.ca) website, there was little feedback on this part, other than a suggested update to make finding the past winners easier to find.

The survey solicited feedback on the 10-minute clip and description requirements. Here is a short selection of the responses (edited for length and clarity):

*“YES! Why not simply submit the COMPLETE EPISODE? That way a judge can simply SCRUB THROUGH the episode & see what is TRULY being offered.”*

*“Maybe a little bit more specifics as in what information is most important in the description.”*

*“A 10 minute clip may not be appropriate for all categories. Some which do not involve clips (community engagement for example) should not require an audio clip. Furthermore a 10 minute clip might be excessive. If audio produced being submitted is for something like a 30 or 60 second promo / spot / informational campaign / etc, then there is no need for a full 10 minutes of that.”*

*“Sounds great, tougher for those that may not have the skills to make a montage show clip.”*

## THE MEMBER FEEDBACK



The requirement for a 10-minute clip was initially introduced by staff to limit the impact on judges. For example, asking judges to review 20 submissions with 10-minute clips is 3.5 hours, however, with an average of 28 minutes, a full length episode would be closer to 9.5 hours. The feedback from participants indicates that the 10-minute clip is not a substantial barrier to participation.

We invited the survey participants to provide ideas on how to improve our submission process. We were provided the following ideas to consider (edited for length and clarity):

*“The PROCESS is fine. Personally speaking I believe BROADCAST & PODCAST should be SEPARATE. Speaking for myself I don't believe a show that started out as BROADCAST should be up against a show that is a PODCAST that is then broadcast. Apples to apples.”*

*“Stations or radio programming should be allowed to submit at least two submissions in each category.”*

*“No major concerns with the existing one. I appreciate that the submission start and end dates have already been shared! Perhaps (re) establishing an annual open and close (eg the 1st of December every year until Feb 28th of every year) might be nice?”*

The NCRA/ANREC has begun to move towards a standing date for our opening and closing for the award submissions, this reflects the feedback. The feedback on differentiating our awards, and eligibility also came up in feedback on updating the awards.

## INTRODUCING A COST FOR SUBMISSIONS



One of the factors behind our review of the awards was to better understand the administrative cost of the program for the association, and to potentially evaluate introducing a cost.

We asked our participants about introducing a fee for submitting, here is a selection of the feedback (edited for length and clarity):

*“Hell no. no barriers”*

*“If it's a minimum amount, maybe, but we already create radio content voluntarily. On the other hand, if the awards ceremony was but back to being a live event, purchasing tickets would be find with me”*

*“I'd be fine with that, as long as the fee wasn't beyond the reach of all stations or as long as there included a provision for stations with limited funds to request an exemption from the fee.”*

*“I think a flat fee for all submissions would discourage smaller stations from applying. I think a certain number of submissions should be free and any submissions after that number should come with a flat fee.”*

*“I would not want to see this fall on the volunteers of a station and then also feel stations that have more disposal money in a budget could afford to submit more awards. This seems no win scenario in making the awards accessible to people to submit.”*

One idea that is being developed is potentially having a fee for submission above a certain number of submissions. For example, a station could submit 15 awards for free, but additional submissions would be charged. The feedback we received from participants was that \$20 to \$50 per submission would be reasonable. If we used 2021 as an example, only 3 stations would be required to pay, and it would only impact 36 submissions. It is unlikely that stations will submit as large a volume of submissions if there is a charge. Setting the charge at 15 submissions could potentially be an incentive for smaller stations to submit more submissions, and for the larger stations to cut back on their volume of submissions.

It is not common for stations to submit to every single award, with around 23 awards, setting an upper limit may drive stations to focus on selections which they believe are more likely to win the category. On a couple of occasions we have seen stations effectively spam the awards by submitting multiple times to the same award, often of varying quality and consistency with the award criteria. An upper limit could help to focus their efforts.

## FEEDBACK ON THE PHYSICAL AWARDS AND GALA



We invited the survey participants to provide us with direction on the physical awards and the gala. Regarding the awards a few participants noted liking a certificate that the winner or station could display. A couple of participants also noted that they liked the practice of having the host station choose an award that reflects the community, or commissioned a local artist or craftsman.

*“It doesn't have to be big or the same. I like letting the host NCRC station help connect with a local artist or? I also like having something that the station can hang up. In this way volunteers see the past winners and are motivated to reach the same level. Show success of the station.”*

We asked about a prize for the awards, the feedback broadly reflected that the recognition and physical award was sufficient. One person suggested a gift bag, which is something that could be explored.

As part of our efforts to offset the costs of the awards we asked the survey participants what they felt about soliciting sponsorships for the awards. Here is a selection of the responses (edited for length and clarity):

*“Too corporate. A sponsor for the EVENT. Then you will start to look like the JUNOs.”*

*“Depends on the company. No resource companies.”*

*“Sure, but local and Canadian companies.”*

*“I'd be fine with that, as long as the sponsoring companies didn't have a say in who won a particular award.”*

The NCRA/ANREC currently lists both awards, and entire Gala sponsorship in our sponsorship package for the National Community Radio Conference. This can be evaluated moving forward.

## UPDATING THE AWARDS



We invited our survey participants to let us know what awards they would suggest updating or removing. Here is a selection of their written responses (edited for length and clarity):

*“Some of the music show awards should be split based on genre (like how can you compare a jazz show with a blues show?).”*

*“I think some need additional clarity and modernization (documentary seems to be increasingly pulling winners from podcasts for example). Possible the same for current affairs and news? You may be able to merge categories that are receiving similar submissions and then update the category description and criteria to match for both the submitters and the judges. I think the music categories should also be reviewed. I understand they're based on CRTC subcategories which is how most stations themselves categorize programs but there is a world of difference between jazz and the blues and so on. Of course it would bloat the awards to separate them all out into individual categories but perhaps there's some way to accomplish this?”*

*“Best in Podcasting & Best in Documentary should be more clearly defined. A lot of podcasts created in our sector often are investigative / documentary in feel. Thus a lot of overlap between the two. MUSIC CATEGORIES. As an MD this might be biased. But as a sector that the majority of our stations programming is music vs spoken word it should also represent a wide range of music programming. The awards should not reflect CRTC music categories as we as an industry know how problematic these categories are for the genres within them and how they are lumped together...Hip Hop should be its own. While R&B / Soul could be together. Two wide of gap for all to be included.*

*Pop should be in with Rock/Indie. Electronic/Dance on its own.*

*Volunteer of the Year: better defined definitions for judging based off of past year of volunteering not lifetime volunteering.”*

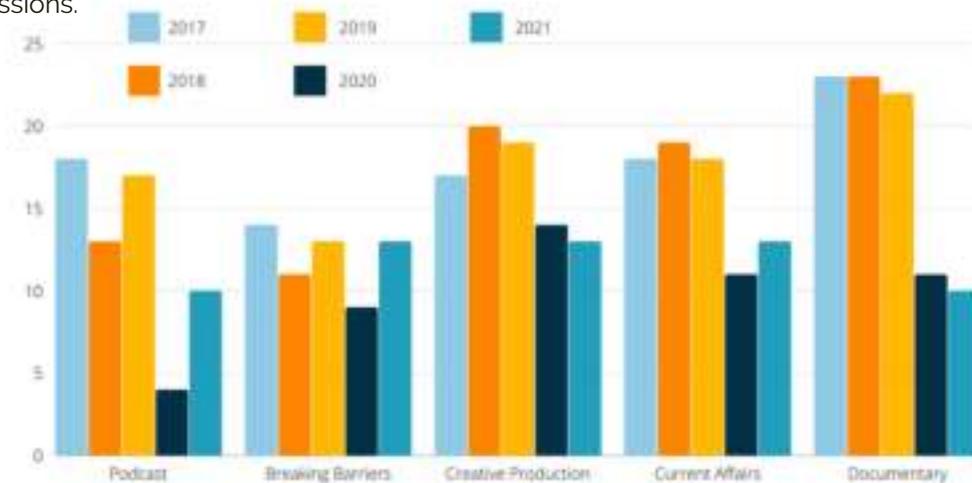
We also invited the survey participants to suggest new awards, here are some of their suggestions:

- Open-format music show award
- Experimental/ambient/drone/avant-garde award (for music set as 36)
- Loud music
- Metal/Punk/Hardcore award
- Experimental or Ambient program
- Reggae/Dancehall/Ska

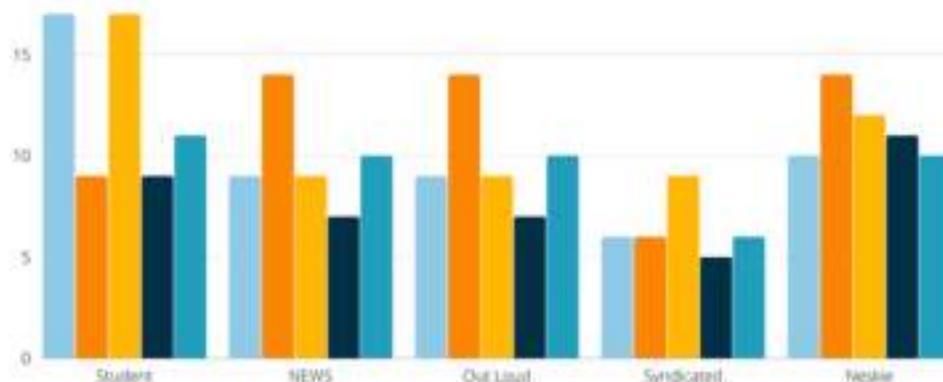
# UPDATING THE AWARDS

We are able to see how many people submitted to each of our awards over the past five years. There are many that have been hovering between 10 and 20 submissions each year, you can see some of them in this graph (Podcast, Breaking Barriers, Creative Production, Current Affairs, Documentary). There are some awards that have struggled to reach the total of ten submissions such as Out Loud, News, or Student.

There are some awards that frequently have very few submissions. For example, Syndicated has been averaging around 6 submissions a year, Sports has also recently struggled to draw submissions.

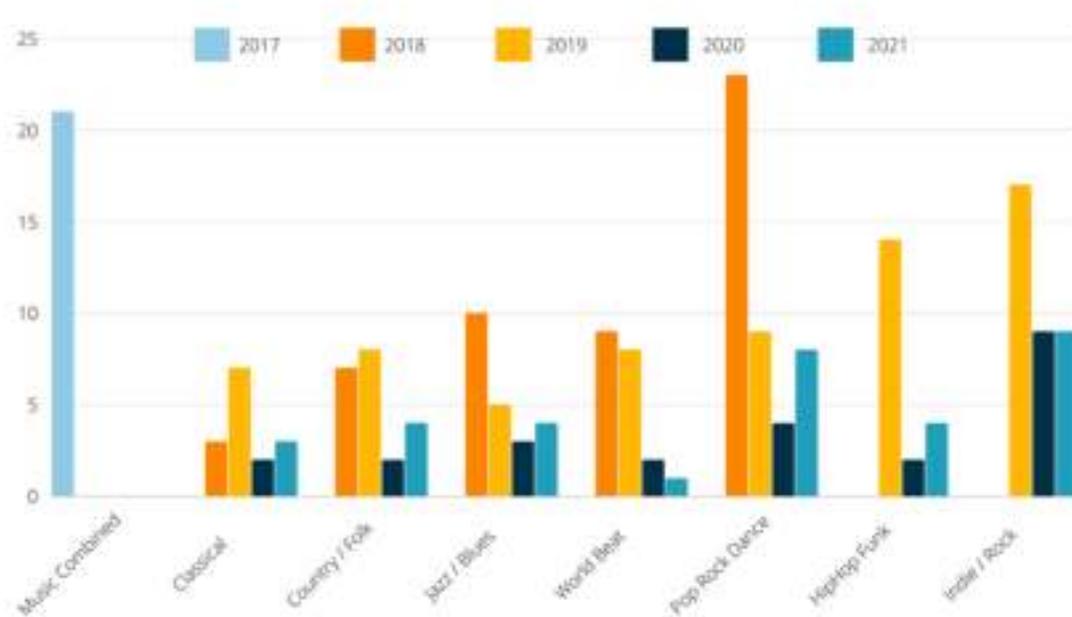


There is pressure from stations and our survey participants to introduce more music awards. Over the past four years, the majority of our Music categories have struggled to receive sufficient submissions. In 2021 we cancelled the World Beat award as there was only one submission. The challenge posed by further splitting the awards to genres is that more of them will be cancelled if there are insufficient submissions.



## UPDATING THE AWARDS

The Music awards when considered as a group increased from 21 to an all-time high of 68 in 2018 after two years of splitting out more Music categories, however during the pandemic there have only been 24 and 33 music submissions respectively. This depressed submission rate may be a consequence of the pandemic. The Music awards reflect on average 19% of all of our award submissions.

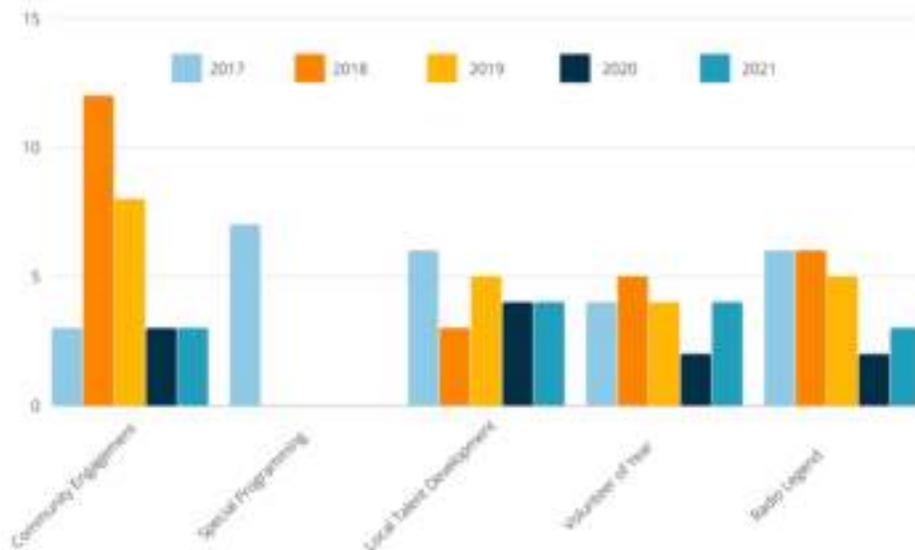


If genre based Music awards are introduced, a minimum threshold of submissions would need to be established. The increased administrative impact, and judging obligation for scantily populated award categories would not be sufficient.

# UPDATING THE AWARDS

We can see over the past five years what the top ten awards are (% of average total):

1. Music 18.9%
2. Documentary 8.7%
3. Creative Production 8.3%
4. Current Affairs 7.9%
5. Student Program 6.3%
6. Breaking Barriers 6.1%
7. Womens Hands 6%
8. Podcasting 6%
9. Neskie Manuel 5.8%
10. News 4.9%



When considering what awards to remove we can see which are getting the fewest submissions. Here are the bottom five awards by percentage of total submissions.

1. Sports Live 0.5% (DISCONTINUED)
2. Classical Music 1.4%
3. World Beat 1.8%
4. Jazz & Blues 1.8%
5. Hip/Hop & Funk 1.8%

# RECOMMENDATIONS



1. Create promotional material which showcases the value to stations and the programmers of winning.
2. Upgrade the Awards submission software for better segmentation and reporting.
3. Record the hours of staff taken on Community Radio Awards
4. Update the guidelines to make clear the rules such as anti-spamming and outlining the automatic disqualification for submissions that do not comply.
5. Upgrade the judging process and form.
6. Add additional explanation and clarity for the judging criteria
7. Recruit additional judges, with a goal of 30 judges.
8. Recruit judges from within the NCRA/ANREC membership
9. Explore additional recognition opportunities or supports for the judges.
10. Finalize a standing time-table for awards submissions, and the judging period.
11. Explore software solutions to automate tabulating the judging feedback and scores.
12. Make a budget, and guidance for conference hosting stations for the physical awards.
13. Raise revenues through sponsorships at the Gala to offset the Gala costs.
14. Make virtual participation of the Awards Gala possible.
15. Release a list of Finalists not later than 20 days prior to the Awards Gala.
16. Issue a national press release for the CRABO winners
17. Issue joint local press releases with stations who have won CRABO awards.
18. Provide an estimated staffing cost as part of the annual report on the awards.
19. Launch a targeted campaign to encourage Community stations to apply to the awards.
20. Consult with a focus group of Community Stations to identify incentives to apply.
21. Raise the participation rate for stations above the pandemic era lows.
22. Issue a call for volunteers to create Sample Clips, as a service to support submissions.
23. Outline guidance on the Radio Legend Award, and how the decisions are made.
24. Update the language in the spoken word awards to improve clarity, in particular, provide a clear delineation between the Documentary and Podcast awards.
25. Review the [www.awards.ncra.ca](http://www.awards.ncra.ca) to make current winners more prominent.
26. Issue updated guidelines for awards that do not require the ten-minute clip, such as Creative Production, or the station level awards.
27. Introduce a fee for submitting to the awards above a floor of 15 submissions.
28. Put the cost of submitting above the floor at \$50
29. Provide clear guidelines to members about the introduction of the fee.
30. Explore the potential creating of a gift bag for winners.
31. Introduce genre based awards for the Music category
32. Introduce a general variety Music award.
33. Introduce a process for removing awards that have limited participation. If an award receives 2% of submissions or fewer for two sequential awards, they should be considered for cancelation, with the exception for station level awards.