

National Business Incubation Association
2005 Incubation Awards

Nomination Materials

Nomination Deadline: Nov. 15, 2004

**Awards presented during
19th International Conference on Business Incubation
May 15-18, 2005 • Baltimore**

National Business Incubation Association 2005 Incubation Awards

Each year, the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA) honors business incubation programs and companies that exemplify the best of the industry. NBIA award winners remind us that excellence has many faces. Past winners have included a once-stagnant incubator that transformed into a model of business incubation success; a company that, without taking on debt or outside financing, achieved triple-digit average sales growth for five years; and an *Inc.* 500 company that achieved four-year revenue growth of more than \$20 million. NBIA will announce the 2005 winners during a celebratory awards luncheon on Monday, May 16, at the 19th International Conference on Business Incubation in Baltimore.

Who's eligible? NBIA member incubators and their current client and recent graduate companies are eligible to apply. The Incubator of the Year Award recognizes overall excellence in business incubation, and the Incubator Innovation Award recognizes an incubation program that has developed a particularly effective innovation that helps the incubator better serve clients or more effectively accomplish its mission. Nominate your companies for Outstanding Incubator Graduate and Outstanding Incubator Client awards. You don't have to choose a single favorite: Multiple applications are encouraged! (See each award's nomination materials for specific criteria.)

Why should I nominate my incubator or companies? In short, you can gain very positive exposure for your incubator and its client and graduate companies. You really can't lose. Submitting nominations shows that you are serious about your program and that you believe the incubator and its board, staff, clients and graduates are all winners. In addition, managers have told NBIA that the application process itself has proven useful in helping them identify and articulate program strengths and challenges.

What benefits result from winning an award? You'll receive a personalized plaque that declares your incubator is an award-winning program. Additionally, NBIA will highlight your program in the *NBIA Review* and will give you a special NBIA Award Winner logo to display on your Web site, on your stationery and on your marketing materials. NBIA will also create a news release for you to send to your media contacts and stakeholders to help you capitalize on winning. NBIA also includes all winners in an online Awards Showcase at www.nbia.org/awards_showcase/ so visitors worldwide can see your program's accomplishments. Each award also comes with a cash prize or travel stipend. As previous award winners attest, the benefits of winning are tangible, worthwhile and long lasting.

How do I submit nominations? The process is straightforward:

1. Download nomination materials from the NBIA Web site, www.nbia.org.
2. Submit a separate nomination for each award candidate. You may submit multiple nominations for the Incubator Innovation Award and the Outstanding Incubator Client and Outstanding Incubator Graduate awards. Answer all questions, paying attention to word-count limits and materials requested — nothing extra, please.
3. Provide seven (7) complete copies of each nomination, including all enclosures.
4. Enclose one "2005 Incubation Awards Transmittal Sheet" (included with these nomination materials) in the package of nominations from your incubator.
5. There is a processing fee of \$25 for each nomination. Enclose payment (check or credit card information) with nominations. Make checks payable to NBIA in U.S. funds.

Nominations must *arrive* in the NBIA office by Nov. 15, 2004.

Mail to: NBIA Incubation Awards, 20 E. Circle Drive, #37198, Athens, OH 45701 USA

Outstanding Incubator Client

Every incubator manager has clients he or she is particularly proud of. The NBIA Outstanding Incubator Client Award provides the opportunity to showcase these clients to the incubation industry worldwide as well as to the general public. One winner may be recognized from each of two categories: technology and manufacturing or service.

Eligible companies:

- ◆ Must be formal clients of an NBIA member incubator.
- ◆ Can be either in-house incubator clients or receive full incubation services through the incubator's affiliate (outreach) program. Companies that have participated only in a stand-alone program (microloan borrower, seminar open to public, etc.) are not eligible.

In a separate document, please provide all the following information about the nominee in the order requested. Please double-space text, and be careful not to exceed the maximum word count for each question. The weight judges will give each response is indicated for each section or question (total possible points = 105).

NOTE: Often managers ask clients to prepare company nominations. While this approach is perfectly acceptable, managers should nonetheless review nominations to ensure the incubator's role in assisting clients is duly noted.

Basic Information

- √ Company's full name, address and Web site address
- √ Incubator's full name, address and Web site address
- √ Company category:
 - Technology:** companies (1) whose products or services are widely recognized as high technology, (2) that have created a high technology niche in their industries, and/or (3) that employ leading-edge technology that gives them a competitive edge in their industries
 - Manufacturing/Service:** light-manufacturing, heavy-manufacturing, construction, wholesale, distribution, mail-order, professional services, fine-arts and similar nontechnology firms
- √ Year company was founded
- √ Year company entered incubator
- √ A paragraph describing, in layman's terms, the company's product or service, and why it is significant in its market

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Outstanding Incubator Client (continued)

Client Company's Accomplishments and Incubator's Role (80 possible points)

1. **Company Accomplishments (500-word limit):** Provide a comprehensive description of what this company has accomplished and why it should be considered for this award. Rapid growth, overcoming significant obstacles, achievement of goals, awards or grants obtained, investments obtained, important clients, and development of a unique technology, product or service are only a few of the factors that could be relevant. (40 points)
2. **Business Development Help (350-word limit):** Provide a comprehensive description of specific business development services the incubator provides the company and how the incubator has helped the firm grow and professionalize operations. Examples could include help with or linkages to such services as marketing, personal skills development, debt and equity financing, professional services, legal services, cash flow management, regulatory compliance, intellectual property management, or mentors. List all relevant help. (30 points)
3. **Other Help (150-word limit):** Describe other office/building services the incubator makes available to the company, such as special equipment, flexible space, reception services, etc. (5 points)
4. **Extra Information:** You may supply up to four (4) informative documents such as a company brochure, company profile, annual report, packet of one to five (1-5) news clippings, award/recognition materials, etc. (5 points)

Statistics* (20 possible points)

1. In its first year in the incubator, what were the company's combined total revenues including all sources as reported on its tax form? In the most recent fiscal year? (Discuss any notable grants in Company Accomplishments, above.)
2. How many employees, including company owners, did the company have when it entered the incubator? In the most recent fiscal year?
3. What were the company's combined salaries and wages in its first year in the incubator? In the most recent fiscal year?

* *Please provide financial information in U.S. dollars*

Presentation (5 possible points)

Nominees can earn points for the appearance and clarity of their materials. Judges will base scores on how easily they can extract the requested information as well as on the general look and feel of the submissions.

Submit 7 complete copies of each nomination.

Outstanding Incubator Graduate

Incubator graduate companies are companies that have satisfied the incubator's graduation criteria and are now on their own. NBIA honors graduate companies that have flourished due to their incubated roots. Outstanding graduates demonstrate the ongoing success of an incubation program. One winner may be recognized from each of two categories: technology and manufacturing or service.

Eligible companies:

- ◆ Have met the specified graduation criteria of an NBIA member incubator.
- ◆ Have been either in-house incubator clients *or* companies that received full incubation services through the incubator's affiliate (outreach) program. Candidates may be anchor tenants that currently reside in the incubator but have ceased to use incubator business development services.
- ◆ Graduated from the incubation program after Dec. 31, 2000, and have not been purchased by a larger concern.

In a separate document, please provide all the following information about the nominee in the order requested. Please double-space text, and be careful not to exceed the maximum word count for each question. The weight judges will give each response is indicated for each section or question (total possible points = 105).

NOTE: Often managers ask graduates to prepare their nominations. While this approach is perfectly acceptable, managers should nonetheless review nominations to ensure the incubator's role in assisting companies is duly noted.

Basic Information

- √ Company's full name, address and Web site address
- √ Incubator's full name, address and Web site address
- √ Company category:
 - Technology:** companies (1) whose products or services are widely recognized as high technology, (2) that have created a high-tech niche in their industries, and/or (3) that employ leading-edge technology that gives them a competitive edge in their industries
 - Manufacturing/Service:** light-manufacturing, heavy-manufacturing, construction, wholesale, distribution, mail-order, professional services, fine-arts and similar nontechnology firms
- √ Year company was founded
- √ Year company entered incubator
- √ Year company graduated
- √ A paragraph describing, in layman's terms, the company's product or service, and why it is significant in its market.

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Outstanding Incubator Graduate (continued)

Graduate Company's Accomplishments and Incubator's Role (80 possible points)

1. **Company Accomplishments (500-word limit):** Provide a comprehensive description of what this company has accomplished and why it should be considered for this award. Rapid growth, overcoming significant obstacles, purchase of property, achievement of goals, awards or grants obtained, investments obtained, important clients, and development of a unique technology, product or service are only a few of the factors that could be relevant. Discuss the firm's accomplishments while in the incubator and what has happened since it graduated. (40 points)
2. **Business Development Help (350-word limit):** Provide a comprehensive description of specific business development services the incubator provided the company and how the incubator helped the firm grow and professionalize operations. Examples could include help with or linkages to such services as marketing, personal skills development, debt and equity financing, professional services, legal services, cash flow management, regulatory compliance, intellectual property management, or mentors. List all relevant help. (30 points)
3. **Other Help (150-word limit):** Describe other office/building services that the company utilized, such as special equipment, flexible space, reception services, etc. (5 points)
4. **Extra Information:** You may supply up to four (4) informative documents such as a company brochure, company profile, annual report, packet of one to five (1-5) news clippings, award/ recognition materials, etc. (5 points)

Statistics* (20 possible points)

1. In its first year in the incubator, what were the company's combined total revenues including all sources as reported on its tax form? In the year it graduated from the incubator? In the most recent fiscal year? Discuss any notable grants in Company Accomplishments, above.
2. How many employees, including company owners, did the company have when it entered the incubator? In the year it graduated from the incubator? In the most recent fiscal year?
3. What were the company's combined salaries and wages in its first year in the incubator? In the year it graduated from the incubator? In the most recent fiscal year?

* *Please provide financial information in U.S. dollars*

Presentation (5 points)

Nominees can earn points for the appearance and clarity of their materials. Judges will base scores on how easily they can extract the requested information as well as on the general look and feel of the submissions.

Submit 7 complete copies of each nomination.

Incubator Innovation Award

Business incubation started as an innovative way to foster small business growth and success. Today, as incubators evaluate and improve the ways they assist their clients and carry out their missions, innovation is embedded in the incubation process. An incubator's specific innovative activity may be an expansion of "normal" incubation services, or it may be a new way to implement an existing idea. (Incubator managers who feel their entire programs are innovative should submit a nomination for Incubator of the Year.)

NBIA's Incubator Innovation Award recognizes incubators that have developed and implemented innovative activities that help them better serve their clients or more effectively accomplish their missions. By showcasing these innovations, this award moves the entire industry forward as other incubators incorporate their own adaptations of the innovation. There are no category breakdowns for the innovation award; any incubator is likely to have honed an **innovative process or activity** that makes the incubation program more effective.

Eligible incubators:

- ◆ Are NBIA members. (This award recognizes an incubator's innovation. Client and graduate companies are not eligible.)
- ◆ Have implemented an **innovative project, program or activity** of short or long duration.
- ◆ Have implemented the innovation for at least one year at the time of the nomination, and have evaluated and demonstrated the innovation's success. In the case of short-term projects, incubators must have completed and evaluated the success of the innovative project as of the entry deadline.

In a separate document, please provide all the following information about the innovative program in the order requested. Please double-space text, and be careful not to exceed the maximum word count for each question. The weight judges will give each response is indicated at the end of each section or question (total possible points = 70).

Basic Information

- √ Incubator name, address and Web site address
- √ Name of innovative program, project or activity
- √ Start and, if applicable, end date
- √ Mission: State the rationale for the innovation, i.e., what need(s) it was intended to meet, and how it impacts the incubator's overall mission
- √ Description: In **300** words or less, give a description of the innovation and discuss such aspects as how it was implemented, who carried it out, which clients it affects, how it helps the incubation program, modifications/improvements made since inception, and other relevant details.

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Incubator Innovation Award (continued)

Program Details (65 points)

1. **Program Impact (600-word limit):** Discuss how the innovation has impacted your clients or the incubation program itself. Explain what measures the staff uses to evaluate success, and give facts and figures to document outcomes. Also cite specific examples of whom the innovation has helped and in what ways. This could include stories of how it improved company or incubator growth, viability, financial resources, visibility, marketing, etc. (30 points)
2. **Creativity (400-word limit):** Describe what makes the innovation creative and why. Discuss the inspiration (or need) for the innovation, from where or whom the idea came and — if modeled on another program or activity — how the concept was modified to fit your incubation program's needs. Also, discuss any barriers to success the innovative activity overcame. (15 points)
3. **Financial Management (300-word limit):** Describe the expenses and revenues associated with this innovation and tell how it was financed. If it is an ongoing program, describe how it will be sustained financially. (15 points)
4. **Extra Information:** You may submit up to four (4) enclosures to help illustrate the innovation or its impact, such as an incubator brochure, newsletter, client information packet, annual report, packet of one to five (1-5) news clippings, award/recognition materials, etc. (5 points)

Presentation (5 points)

Nominees can earn points for the appearance and clarity of their materials. Judges will base scores on how easily they can extract the requested information as well as on the general look and feel of the submissions.

Submit 7 complete copies of each nomination.

Incubator of the Year

This prestigious award honors NBIA member incubation programs that exemplify the association's principles and practices of successful business incubation. One winner may be selected from each of two categories. One of these winners will be named the Randall M. Whaley Incubator of the Year, an award endowed by Friends of University City Science Center.

Eligible incubators:

- ◆ Hold an active NBIA membership
- ◆ Began serving clients before 2002
- ◆ Have not won an NBIA Incubator of the Year award after 1999
- ◆ Have on-site management
- ◆ Provide a full range of business development services
- ◆ Have a policy for graduating companies

In a separate document, please provide all of the following information about the incubation program in the order requested. Please double-space text and be careful not to exceed the maximum word count for each question. The weight judges will give each response is indicated for each section or question (total possible points = 125).

Basic Information

- √ Incubator name, address and Web site address
- √ Incubator category:
 - Category 1:** includes incubators that focus on clients that are widely recognized as high technology. Can include general technology incubators, biotechnology, information technology, software design, Internet, environmental technology, communications, etc.
 - Category 2:** includes incubators that serve a wide range of client types or serve clients in a nontechnology industry niche. Can include mixed-use incubators, arts, service, kitchen, manufacturing, etc.
- √ A paragraph describing the incubator's mission and up to three specific goals. Judges will evaluate the incubator's accomplishments in light of these factors.
- √ Year incubation program began accepting clients.
- √ Current gross square footage (exclude space permanently rented to anchor tenants who do not receive business incubation services).
- √ Incubator tax status [e.g. 501(c)(6), LLC, C-corporation, etc.]. If applicable, identify major stakeholders/sponsors.

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Incubator of the Year (continued)

Incubator Accomplishments* (115 points)

1. Business Development Services (**750**-word limit): Provide a comprehensive description of business services the incubator offers its client companies, including how the program assesses companies' needs, who delivers the services and how services are disseminated. Describe any innovative systems, fee arrangements, partnerships or other strategies that enhance the overall service program. (25 points)
2. Program Results (**750**-word limit): Describe the program's most significant accomplishments. Be sure to demonstrate their relevance to the incubator's mission and each of its described goals. (For example, if the incubator has a goal of creating jobs, how many has it created and how do you verify that? If the program aims to commercialize technology, how many companies and patents can it claim?) Address the incubator's role in the community and how it has made a positive impact by maximizing the success of emerging companies. Be sure to include any barriers the incubator had to overcome to achieve these results. Indicate whether it has maintained a management information system and collected statistics and other information necessary for ongoing program evaluation. Where appropriate, provide statistics to support your statements; you may also provide qualitative measures. (25 points)
3. Financial Stability (**500**-word limit): Describe the incubator's finances, indicating sources of revenue and the percentage each represents. Indicate any challenges to financial stability the incubator has faced and how it has dealt with them. If appropriate, include information on how development was financed as well as how current operations are financed. Be sure to include any innovative approaches to generating revenue. The goal in this section is to demonstrate that the incubator is a dynamic model of a sustainable, efficient business operation. (20 points)
4. Success Stories (**500**-word limit): Provide up to two significant company case studies that exemplify how effective your incubation program has been. Where appropriate, provide statistics to support your statements (company revenues, new products to market, employees, third-party investments, etc.). Place particular emphasis on how the interaction between the incubator and the companies led to those successes. (15 points)
5. Best Practices (**500**-word limit): Describe how your management and board have incorporated incubation best practices. (For a copy of NBIA's document *Principles and Best Practices of Business Incubation*, see www.nbia.org/resource_center/best_practices/index.php or email cjames@nbia.org) (15 points)
6. Other Help (**150**-word limit): Describe other office/building services the incubation program makes available to its clients, such as special equipment, flexible space, Internet access, etc. (5 points)
7. Other Documents: Submit your (1) client company roster and (2) most recent fiscal year income statement in U.S. dollars (a one-page summary of major groupings is sufficient). If there are expenses, revenues or grants/subsidies that do not show up in your income statement, please submit notes to explain. (5 points)
8. Extra Information: You may submit up to four (4) other informative documents, such as an incubator brochure, newsletter, client information packet, annual report, packet of one to five (1-5) news clippings, award/recognition materials, etc. (5 points)

* Please provide financial information in U.S. dollars

Presentation (10 points)

Nominees can earn points for the appearance and clarity of their materials. Judges will base scores on how easily they can extract the requested information as well as on the general look and feel of the submissions.

Submit 7 complete copies of each nomination.

2005 Incubation Awards Transmittal Sheet

You MUST return this form with your nomination materials package.

Incubator Contact Information:

Incubator Name _____

NBIA Member ID Number _____ Web site address _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip/Country _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Main Contact (must be NBIA member) _____

E-mail _____

Nominations Submitted (*check all that apply*)

I am nominating my incubator for: _____ Incubator of the Year _____ Incubator Innovation Award

I am nominating _____ graduate(s) for Outstanding Incubator Graduate
(include completed Company Contact Form with nominations)

I am nominating _____ client(s) for Outstanding Incubator Client
(include completed Company Contact Form with nominations)

Total nominations submitted _____ x \$25 = _____ Amount Due

Payment Method:

_____ Check payable in U.S. funds to NBIA

_____ Visa _____ MasterCard _____ American Express

Card Number _____ Expiration _____

Name on Card _____ Signature _____

Mail nominations to NBIA Incubation Awards at
20 E. Circle Drive, #37198, Athens, OH 45701 USA

Nominations must *arrive* in the NBIA office by Nov. 15, 2004.

Questions? Contact Carol James, membership manager, (740) 593-4331 or cjames@nbia.org.

Company Contact Form

(for use with client and graduate nominations)

_____ **Client** _____ **Graduate**

Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip/Country _____

Web site address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Main Contact _____

E-mail _____

_____ **Client** _____ **Graduate**

Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip/Country _____

Web site address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Main Contact _____

E-mail _____

_____ **Client** _____ **Graduate**

Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip/Country _____

Web site address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Main Contact _____

E-mail _____

Make copies of this form as necessary to provide information on all companies nominated.