

Association of Northeast Extension Directors  
Exceptional Local Educator Award: 2025 Request for Nominations

*Due May 1, 2025*

**PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

**Association of Northeast Extension Directors' (NEED) Exceptional Local Educator Award (ELEA)** celebrates an Extension educator or agent who provides leadership for the delivery of an exceptional, locally responsive, and robustly evaluated program at the community level. A nominated individual may deliver the program alone or be a member of a program team.

This award is intended to parallel the ECOP Excellence in Extension award which often recognizes individuals with a large scholarship portfolio and statewide leadership responsibilities while overlooking the value of on the ground educators without such a portfolio. Nominations should not be submitted to both programs.

**WHAT IS A PROGRAM?** For the purposes of the ELEA, an Extension program is defined as a group or series of presentations, workshops, functions, demonstrations or other events and activities that form a comprehensive outreach, community coordination, or education curriculum, methodology or process that—along with associated resources—facilitate learning and/or behavioral change in audiences over time. For example, a conference developed and offered to address nutritional needs for teens would be a program activity rather than a program.

**WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING NOMINATIONS?** Each northeast LGU, 1890 and 1862, may endorse and submit one ELEA nomination per cycle. Only NEED representatives may endorse and submit nominations. Extension personnel are encouraged to make recommendations to their [NEED representative](#) by providing them a nomination package as outlined below. Self-nominations are encouraged. Nominations will be managed, reviewed, and recommended by the NEED Awards Review Committee.

**HOW IS THE WINNER CHOSEN? WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?** Nominations are managed, reviewed, and recommended by the NEED Awards Review Committee. Once the winner is chosen, both the nominator and nominated individual will be notified of their commendation over email. The winner will be honored on a region-wide webinar, during which they will present their program to NEED and guests from the northeast and beyond. This presentation will be recorded and posted to NEED's [website](#). The winner will also be awarded \$1,000 to support professional development.

## **NOMINATION FORMAT & DETAILS**

**COVER PAGE:** Nominators will use the template provided and will include the name and email of both the nominator and nominated individual; the title of the exceptional program; the institution submitting the nomination; and a program abstract (no more than 150 words).

**NOMINATION NARRATIVE:** The nomination narrative should make a strong case for the individual and program being delivered. Narratives must address the following five criteria, be written in 12 pt. font or larger, single spaced, **4000 words or less**:

- 1. ISSUE STATEMENT:** Briefly describe the community issue or need, the reason for the program, and what was done. This should be written as if it were being presented to the public.
- 2. NEEDS ASSESSMENT:** Clearly demonstrate how the nominated individual came to understand and validate the community issue or need. This section should include detailed reference to validating data and experiences, stakeholder input and engagement, research, and/or indicators. The best nominations will identify the program's audiences and clearly describe the processes used to obtain their input on and buy-in to the program.
- 3. PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH AND DELIVERY:** Explain the key components of the Extension program including important scholarship and/or resources produced with special emphasis on any collaborative components. For this award, scholarship is defined as "creative intellectual works that are validated by peers and communicated". For each program component, include why it was needed. Present any relevant partnerships.
- 4. EVALUATION AND IMPACTS:** Describe the evaluation methods used and the significant immediate-, mid-, and long-term impacts, outcomes and results achieved by the program. The best nominations will make the connection between identified needs and impacts achieved.
- 5. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:** Explain how the nominated individual has and/or will use program evaluation, stakeholder input, and ongoing needs assessment to improve the program and/or other programs. Identify lessons learned and how they will be used.

## **SUBMISSION INFORMATION AND DUE DATE**

Endorsed nominations must be submitted to NEED Executive Director, Ali Mitchell ([amitchell@northeastextension.org](mailto:amitchell@northeastextension.org)) by the LGU's NEED representative over email under the subject line "2025 NEED ELEA Nomination" by 11:59 PM ET on May 1, 2025. Only PDF electronic submissions will be accepted. Nomination packages that exceed the word limit or do not meet the definition of an Extension program as defined above will not be reviewed.

Questions may be directed to [amitchell@northeastextension.org](mailto:amitchell@northeastextension.org). Nominators will receive a "confirmed receipt" email within one week of submission. If confirmation is not received, the submission should be resent.