

People Helping People Awards Frequently Asked Questions 2026

Eligibility

Q: What are the eligibility requirements?

A: BECU members (including employee members) can nominate one or more eligible 501(c)(3) nonprofit(s) they support with their time, talents or money for the People Helping People Awards via the entry form. Member must be 18 years or older.

Nonprofit must be a registered 501(c)(3) and currently in operation. The organization must have a direct impact in the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and/or South Carolina; and works must be focused in one of the seven giving areas:

- **Advancing Education (Pre-K through College)**
- **Arts & Culture**
- **Creating Economic Opportunity**
- **Preserving Health and Promoting Wellness**
- **Preserving or Restoring the Environment**
- **Providing for Basic Human Needs**
- **Strengthening Local Communities**

Social service or community programs provided by religious or faith-based organizations are eligible when the following conditions are met: Registered US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization; programs have a formal mission statement and separate program budget; secular programs or services are offered to eligible participants without regard to their faith or willingness to participate in religious activities; and the group ensures BECU contributions do not fund religious activities such as worship or proselytization.

Ineligible organizations include: political organizations; religious or sectarian programs for inherently religious purposes (including but not limited to religious worship or proselytization); churches, synagogues, mosques, ministries, other houses of worship or religious organizations unless for specific social programs that meet the criteria identified above. BECU is unable to award funds that do not fall into the categories/sub-categories above, including, but not limited to: sport teams, animal rescue, and organizations unable to confirm the award will have a direct impact in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and South Carolina.

Q: I'm a small business member; can I still nominate a nonprofit?

A: Yes! We welcome nominations from any BECU member.

Q: Can I nominate a nonprofit that has received a People Helping People Award in the past?

A: Yes, although there is a 3-year waiting period for past recipients to receive another award. Example: If a nonprofit received an award in 2024, the organization is eligible to be nominated again in 2027.

BECU People Helping People Awards 2026
becu.org/awards

Q: Can I nominate my church's food bank?

A: It depends; you can nominate the food bank if it complies with the program's eligibility requirements.

The food bank must:

- Be associated with a registered US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- Have a formal mission statement and separate program budget
- Provide services without regard to faith or willingness to participate in religious activities
- Ensure BECU award funds do not fund religious activities such as worship or proselytization

Q: Can I nominate a nonprofit I created?

A: Yes, as long as you have a BECU membership and the nonprofit meets all of the eligibility criteria.

Q: My child is a wonderful volunteer, but they are not 18. Can they apply? If not, can I apply on behalf of my child?

A: In alignment with program criteria, nominators must be 18 years or older. As a parent/guardian, if you and your child are both involved with the same nonprofit, you are welcome to apply. Please note any award granted will be in the name of the nominator.

Q: I'm not a BECU member; can I apply anyway?

A: PHPA is the member-inspired pillar of BECU's philanthropic giving strategy. In order to nominate a nonprofit, you must be a BECU member. To learn more about membership visit www.becu.org/join. Please note, it takes 3-5 business days for membership applications to be processed. Voting for the People's Choice Award opens in October and is open to the public.

Q: I'm not a BECU member, but my nonprofit has a business account with BECU. Can I nominate them?

A: Since the nonprofit is a member, the organization could submit a nomination. Only BECU members are eligible to submit a nomination.

Q: The nonprofit I want to nominate filed for a 501(c)(3) number but haven't received one yet. Can I still nominate them?

A: Unfortunately, the organization must be a registered 501(c)(3) at the time of nomination or be fiscally sponsored by a "parent" organization that is a 501(c)(3). In the event a fiscally sponsored group is awarded a PHPA, the funds will be directed to the fiscal sponsor, and the sponsor is responsible for passing on any funds to the sponsored program.

Q: Can I nominate an organization that doesn't have their own EIN, but is fiscally sponsored by a "parent" nonprofit?

A: Yes, you will have the opportunity to specify this in the nomination form.

Q: *Can I nominate a nonprofit I work for?*

A: Yes, assuming you are a BECU member, you are welcome to nominate a nonprofit you work for. Employees of nonprofits are not eligible to win Member Volunteer of the Year.

Member Nominations

Q: *Can I nominate more than one nonprofit?*

A: Yes! Please fully complete the application for each 501(c)(3) you'd like considered for an award.

Q: *Can I tell my favorite nonprofit about this award program?*

A: Of course! Share info about this program with your favorite eligible nonprofits by sending them to www.becu.org/awards. Please note, all nominations must be the original work of the member nominator. Nominations containing responses clearly copied and pasted from the nonprofit's website or other communication materials will be disqualified. The number of nominations received for a nonprofit has no bearing on the likelihood to receive an award. The review process is based on the quality of the application.

Q: *Can employees of the nonprofit I nominate assist with or write up the nomination?*

A: You're welcome to use them as a resource for statistical information while filling out the nomination, but the nomination must be the original work of the nominator (a BECU member). Additionally, nominations containing responses that are clearly copied and pasted from a nonprofit's website or other communication materials will be disqualified.

Q: *How do I know if my nonprofit is a registered 501(c)3?*

A: Check the organization's website or contact them and ask. You can also search nonprofits via the IRS Select Check Tool found here: <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Nonprofits/Exempt-Organizations-Select-Check>

Q: *I have a lot to say – will the word limit/character count be enforced?*

A: We are excited to hear about your nominated organization. The selection process is driven by volunteer labor and we have a lot of nominations to review! Enforcing a character count helps keep the work manageable. **Character counts include spaces and punctuation.**

Q: *Will I be notified of my progress throughout the process?*

A: You will receive a confirmation email after your submission is received. If selected to move forward as a semi-finalist, you and the nonprofit will be notified in mid-May, and finalists will be notified by the end of July.

Q: I have some great photos of me volunteering with my nonprofit. Can I send them to you?

A: Photos will not be considered as part of the nomination process, but members are encouraged to share their BECU experience through stories and photos [via our website](#).

Q: I don't use the internet; can you send me a paper application?

A: The award nomination process is only available electronically. Paper/hard copy applications are not available, but most public libraries offer free public internet access.

Q: The nonprofit I would like to nominate is not headquartered in your listed service areas but does serve and/or have an impact in those areas. Is it eligible?

A: Yes, as long as the organization meets eligibility criteria and their work directly impacts the listed service areas.

Q: I submitted my nomination(s). Now what?

A: If you haven't already, it's a good idea to let the nonprofit know you have nominated them. You can let them know organizations selected as semi-finalists will be notified in mid-May and will be asked to complete a supplementary application to provide additional information about their work. Semi-finalist notifications go out in mid-May.

Member Volunteer of the Year

Q: I have a friend who is amazing and should be Member Volunteer of the Year, but I'm not sure they will nominate themselves. Can I nominate them?

A: Because member nominators of finalist organizations are asked to appear in videos about the organizations they nominated, we require self-nomination for the Member Volunteer of the Year Award. The award funds are granted to the nonprofit organization nominated by the member.

Q: Can I still apply if I've been granted the Member Volunteer of the Year Award in the past?

A: An organization may only receive the Member Volunteer of the Year Award once in its lifetime. However, you may nominate a nonprofit for other award consideration if it has not been a recipient of a PHPA in the last three years and has not previously received any People Helping People award three times.

Nonprofit Application

Q: As an organization, we have no affiliation with BECU. Will that hinder our chances to receive this award?

A: No affiliation with BECU is required to receive a PHPA. As long as the organization meets the eligibility requirements, it is eligible to receive a People Helping People Award. Organizations that have received \$15,000 or more from BECU in any of the last three years do not qualify for People Helping People Awards consideration.

Q: What is expected of my organization, and what are my reporting requirements as a recipient of this award?

A: People Helping People Award grants are considered unrestricted funds. BECU does not have a formal process requiring reporting from recipients.

As a recipient, your organization would join the growing People Helping People community of nonprofits supported by BECU members. Many past recipients are invited to the annual People Helping People Award celebration to connect and share their stories. Nonprofit recipients are eligible for \$2,500 glidepath funding for the two years following their award. For more information on the PHPA event or glidepath funding, contact communityrelations@becu.org.

Recipients and Awards

Q: How will finalists be notified?

A: Nonprofit finalists and the members who nominated them will be contacted using the email addresses submitted during the nomination/application process.

Q: When will the winners be announced?

A: Winners will be announced in December 2026 at the People Helping People Awards celebration event and may be published on social media live from the event. Recipient information will be updated on www.becu.org/awards within one week following the event.

Q: If my nonprofit is selected as a recipient, does the money come to me (the member nominator) or directly to the nonprofit I nominated?

A: Award funds will be provided to the nonprofits by the end of December. Awards go directly to the nonprofit organization; there is not a monetary award for the member nominator.

Q: If I nominate a nonprofit and it receives an award, what do I (the member nominator) get?

A: You and a guest will be invited to attend the December PHPA event honoring all nonprofit recipients (event date TBD).

Q: If my nonprofit is selected as a finalist, what does that mean?

A: BECU will select 18 finalists, and those finalists will be guaranteed a minimum award of \$15,000. All members who nominated nonprofit finalists will be asked to speak on camera about their nonprofit. All finalist organizations will be asked to provide photography to be used for PHPA marketing, including People's Choice Award voting. All finalists will also be considered for the Choice Awards voting in October. Public voting for the People's Choice award will be posted online at www.becu.org/awards during the voting window. The final award amounts for each finalist will be revealed at the People Helping People Award celebration event in December.

Q: Where can I send additional questions?

A: If your question was not answered here, email any additional questions to communityrelations@becu.org.