SPONSORSHIP MARKETING AWARDS 2026

PRIX DE LA COMMANDITE 2026

Tips to Writing a Winning Case Submission

What is the Sponsorship Marketing Awards?

The Sponsorship Marketing Awards (SMAs) celebrate the brands, properties and agencies turning sponsorship into real business impact. This is where the best work in Canadian sponsorship gets its due: the partnerships that moved audiences, the activations that earned their place, and the strategies that delivered results a logo on a banner never could.

The SMAs are open to any company or organization using sponsorship marketing to further its goals in Canada. Entries are accepted in English or French (accompanied by an English translation).

Award Categories

Program Award Categories

- Arts, Music & Culture
- Best New Initiative
- Best New Innovation
- DE&I
- Festivals, Fairs, and Annual Events
- Multicultural
- Olympic / FIFA World Cup
- Professional Sports — $500K and Below
- Professional Sports — $501K and Above
- Purpose-Led & Social Cause
- Regional
- Sustained Success
- Talent / Ambassador

Recognition Award Categories

- Agency of the Year
- Property of the Year

- Hall of Fame, Individual

Criteria

There are three different criteria documents based on the case that you will be submitting, please follow the format indicated on the corresponding criteria document.

- 2026 SMA Category Criteria
- 2026 SMA Criteria for Agency / Property of the Year
- 2026 SMA Hall of Fame Criteria

Tips from the Judging Committee

- It's all about story telling
- Create a compelling case that takes the judges on a clear business journey from your initiative's inception right through to its incredible results.
- Clearly identify your business objectives:
    - What challenge or business need was your organization trying to achieve through the use of sponsorship?
    - Once your business objectives were clearly identified, how did you choose and action the sponsorship your organization chose?
    - Sponsorship Marketing is Marketing when done well! So, using partnerships and their assets to increase sales, drive purchase intent, enhance brand awareness and/or sentiment, etc. are some potential goals.
    - Any objective that states that "we want to be recognized as the top brand in terms of awareness for the team/show/property" is not using sponsorship to its fullest potential. It should do the above – help drive the broader overall business objectives and ideally not just awareness unless it's a new Brand.
- Wherever possible, use supplemental visuals to enhance your story. Videos are best, followed by photos.
- Be able to **clearly** articulate the ***Brand Activation to Rights Fee Ratio***
- While it is great to show what assets you have bought the rights to, a better partnership scenario comes when an organization is able to convince the sponsorship property/team/league to spend their own marketing dollars to enhance the program and drive home your joint marketing message. Were you able to get the rights seller to buy into spending their own money to co-promote the initiative?
- Where possible, showcase your integrated marketing plan across all mediums: Retail, Media (Traditional, Digital, Social, Out of Home, other), Public Relations, etc.
- Ensure that your case is clearly written (grammar, etc.)

Good luck!!!

Deadline

July 31, 2026, at 11:59 PM ET

SUBMIT NOW