



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
Tanggapang Pampanguluhan sa Operasyong Pangkomunikasyon
Malacañang, Manila

FOI – MC No. 1, S. 2021

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR**

FOR : **ALL AGENCIES, DEPARTMENTS, BUREAUS, OFFICES
AND INSTRUMENTALITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE
BRANCH INCLUDING GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND/OR-
CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS (GOCCS), STATE
UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES (SUCS), AND LOCAL
WATER DISTRICTS (LWDS)**

SUBJECT : **2021 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI) AWARDS**

WHEREAS, Executive Order (EO) No. 2, s. 2016, was issued by President Rodrigo R. Duterte on 23 July 2016 to operationalize the People's Constitutional Right to Information and the state policies to full public disclosure and transparency in the public service;

WHEREAS, the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO), by virtue of Memorandum Order (MO) No. 10, s. 2016, was designated as the lead agency in the implementation of EO No. 2, s. 2016, or the Freedom of Information (FOI) and electronic FOI (eFOI) Programs;

WHEREAS, Department Order No. 18, s. 2017, issued by the PCOO, created the Freedom of Information–Project Management Office (FOI-PMO) to exercise the mandate of MO No. 10, s. 2016;

WHEREAS, the FOI Awards was established in 2017 pursuant to FOI Memorandum Circular (MC) No. 6, s. 2017 to recognize the efforts of government agencies, individuals, and organizations that contributed to the development and progress of the FOI Program;

WHEREAS, as an annual activity of FOI-PMO, the screening and evaluation for the 2021 FOI Awards which will be conferred on the fourth week of November 2021, will start on 1 July 2021;

WHEREAS, to promote open, transparent, and accountable governance, the guidelines for the 2021 FOI Awards is hereby established:

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the foregoing, this Circular is issued to supplement FOI MC No. 06, s. 2017, FOI MC No. 03, s. 2018, FOI MC No. 02, s. 2019, and FOI MC No. 3, s. 2020 to provide additional guidelines for the 2021 FOI Awards.

Section 1. FOI Awards. The FOI Awards shall be conferred to government agencies, individuals, and organizations who have made significant contributions to the development and progress of the FOI program.

Section 2. Categories. The FOI Awards shall consist of the following categories:

Award	Recipient
FOI Champion for Department Award	National Government Agencies (NGAs)
FOI Champion for Agencies/Bureaus/Commissions/Councils Award	Attached agencies, bureaus, commissions, and councils of a department
FOI Champion for Government-Owned and/or -Controlled Corporations (GOCCs) Award	GOCCs
FOI Champion for State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) Award	SUCs
FOI Champion for Local Water Districts (LWDs)	LWDs
FOI Champion Hall of Fame	Agencies, individuals, or organizations in any category who have won for three (3) consecutive years.

The abovementioned awards will be conferred based on exemplifying performance and implementation of the awardees who have brought their respective offices honor and recognition through excellence and distinction in the pursuit of ensuring the constitutional mandate of the right to information.

The awards shall be given in each category by rank – first place (Champion), second place, and third place.

Section 3. FOI Recognition. The FOI Recognition is given to private entities or individuals or to non-government organizations/civil society organizations for their efforts and accomplishments that support the implementation of the FOI program.

The FOI Recognition shall be given to at least three (3) FOI Officers who have demonstrated an exceptional or significant contribution to the FOI Program's progress and development.

Section 4. Secretariat. The FOI Awards Secretariat shall be composed of the FOI-PMO headed by the Chief of Compliance Monitoring Division.

Section 5. Functions of the Secretariat. The following are the functions of the Secretariat:

1. Screen and assess qualified agencies at least three (3) months prior to the giving of awards based on the provided procedure under Section 7 and awards criteria under Section 8;
2. Receive and validate pertinent documents submitted and other means of verification;
3. Upon assessment of forms received or on its own evaluation of agencies, individuals, and/or organizations that should be awarded, shall submit a list to the FOI Awards Committee with at least three (3) names per category;
4. Record and document the meetings or deliberations of the FOI Awards Committee; and
5. Prepare and lead the FOI Awards Activities.

Section 6. FOI Awards Committee. The FOI Awards Committee shall evaluate and validate the potential awardees based on the criteria set herein, within thirty (30) days upon receipt of the list from the Secretariat.

The list submitted by the Secretariat shall be for the consideration of the Committee which may amend such list as necessary. The Committee shall choose the winners among the final list agreed upon by its members.

The Committee shall be composed of the following: a representative from the Office of the Executive Secretary, who shall also act as the Chairperson; a representative from the FOI-PMO; and one representative each from the academe, the business sector, and a Non-Government Organization/Civil Society Organization. Each of them shall have equal voting rights.

Section 7. Screening and Evaluation Process. The following shall be the process for screening and evaluation of the qualified nominees:

1. The Secretariat shall assess and screen all agencies under the Executive branch based on the following criteria: (a) submission of FOI Manual; (b) submission of 2020 FOI Reports; (c) onboarding the electronic FOI (eFOI) portal (www.foi.gov.ph); (d) posting of one-page FOI Manual in the agency's transparency seal; and (e) must have at least 80% response rate in processing FOI requests;
2. All qualified agencies for the first level screening will be notified by the FOI Awards Secretariat via electronic mail starting 16 July 2021;
3. All agencies who qualify for the first level screening shall be provided with a "Shortlist Form" by the FOI Awards Secretariat. This form shall also serve as the Nomination Form of the agency, to be accomplished and submitted on or before 31 August 2021 to qualify for the final screening. No late submission shall be allowed;
4. The FOI Awards Secretariat will validate the submissions and evaluate them based on the criteria provided under Section 8. Non-submission of the shortlist form does not automatically disqualify the agency, however, the Secretariat will merit the agency's score based on the available data/records of FOI-PMO;
5. Any non-government organization or individual may submit nominations **under the FOI Recognition** starting 1 September 2021 to 1 October 2021. A digital copy of the nomination form can be accessed through <bit.ly/2021FOIANF>;
6. The Secretariat, from the documents and forms received or from its own assessment, shall submit to the FOI Awards Committee the finalist of at least three (3) agencies/names/organizations per category which will be the basis of the assessment and selection by the members of the Committee.
7. The Secretariat shall also submit the shortlist of at least three (3) agencies/names/organizations that will be given the FOI Recognition.
8. Previous nominees who are not recipients of the award may be re-nominated under the same or another category.

Section 8. Evaluation Criteria. The following are the criteria for the granting of the 2021 FOI Awards:

Elements	Indicators	Points
Element 1: Leadership	<i>Indicator 1:</i> Level of commitment of agency leaders to institutionalize FOI within the agency.	8%

Element 2: Strategic and Policy Framework, Guidelines and Procedures	<i>Indicator 2:</i> Presence of whole-of-agency policy, strategy, guidelines, and procedures regarding FOI implementation	21%
Element 3: Structure, Systems, and Resources	<i>Indicator 3:</i> Presence and functioning of structures and systems to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of FOI implementation.	26%
Element 4: Monitoring	<i>Indicator 4:</i> Presence and functioning of monitoring systems for FOI implementation	10%
Element 5: Efficiency	<i>Indicator 5:</i> Timeliness in responding to FOI Requests	20%
Element 6: Quality	<i>Indicator 6:</i> eFOI Client Satisfaction Survey	5%
	<i>Indicator 7:</i> Institutionalized best practices	5%
	<i>Indicator 8:</i> Actively participated in all FOI events	5%
TOTAL		100%

Section 9. FOI Champion Hall of Fame. The FOI Champion Hall of Fame is a special category conferred to FOI Champions who have won for at least three (3) consecutive years in any category.

Recipients of this award in the previous year may still be recognized under the Hall of Fame in the 2021 FOI Awards if the agency was able to comply with at least 90% of the above-mentioned criteria. Otherwise, no recognition will be given under this category.

Section 10. Effectivity. This Memorandum Circular shall take effect immediately.


JOSE RUPERTO MARTIN M. ANDANAR
 Secretary and FOI Champion

Manila, Philippines, 14th day of June year 2021.