APPLICATION PERIOD:
AUGUST 1, 2019 – OCTOBER 11, 2019

2020 STEPAHEAD AWARDS
NOMINATIONS GUIDE
STEP Ahead at a Glance

The Manufacturing Institute’s 2020 STEP Ahead Award nominations are now open and will close October 11.

The Manufacturing Institute, the education and workforce partner of the National Association of Manufacturers, launched the STEP Women’s Initiative to support women in science, technology, engineering and production careers and inspire more to join them. The Institute’s STEP Ahead Awards celebrate and recognize the accomplishments of outstanding female leadership in manufacturing and serves as a platform for companies to select leaders for national recognition.

STEP is dedicated to fostering a 21st century manufacturing workforce that gives women the recognition and support they deserve through a national gala and two-day professional development program. The Institute’s STEP Ahead Awards were created to inspire women to bridge the gap in manufacturing and focus attention on the widespread impact women have on shaping the industry, whether they are running the company, designing the next big product, or testing innovations on the shop floor. Recognizing women at all levels of manufacturing, from the factory floor to the c-suite, this national honor gives manufacturers an opportunity to showcase existing female talent and provide role models that can speak to the transformation of the industry.

Deadline for nomination submission is 11:59 p.m. EST October 11.

HOW TO NOMINATE

Using the online nomination form, fill out the application questions about your candidate based on the following criteria:

**Innovation and Leadership** (50 percent) demonstrating significant contributions to the company and/or her division.

**Mentorship and Community Impact** (50 percent) recognizing key contributions to the greater community, describe the nominee’s support efforts through mentoring others, advocating for manufacturing careers and/or volunteering.

*NEW 2020 Changes*

Based on industry feedback, we’ve implemented some new changes to the 2020 application process:

- A maximum of 10 applications may be submitted by a single company
- Companies are encouraged to have 1 point of contact for nominations. See best practices beginning on page 11 within guide for strategies to streamline internal processes.

ELIGIBILITY

There are two categories nominators may consider:

**STEP Ahead Honoree:** Nominee is currently employed in manufacturing at any level of the company, from the factory floor to the C-suite. A maximum of two (2) Honorees from a single company may be selected for this award.

**STEP Ahead Emerging Leader:** Rising female talent currently employed in the manufacturing industry that have made significant contributions and excelled early in their career. An Emerging Leader nominee must be between 18 and 30 years of age as of December 31, 2019. A maximum of one (1) Emerging Leader from a single company may be selected for this award.
Previous Honorees are not eligible, though Emerging Leader Alumnae may be nominated as an Honoree. Candidates outside of the U.S. are eligible as long as the nominee’s company has U.S. operations. For more information on nominee eligibility, visit the FAQ page.

Don’t miss the opportunity to recognize an outstanding female leader in manufacturing. Click here to nominate deserving women in manufacturing starting August 1!

2020 STEP Ahead Awards
Thursday, April 30, 2020
National Building Museum, Washington, D.C.

The Manufacturing Institute’s STEP Ahead Awards celebrate women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Production careers who exemplify leadership within their companies. In 2020, The Manufacturing Institute will honor 100 Honorees and 30 Emerging Leaders.

WHY RECOGNIZE WOMEN IN MANUFACTURING?

It’s the right thing to do: Women today account for less than one-third of manufacturers (29 percent) despite representing about half of all workers (47 percent). Yet, it’s manufacturing that set the stage for a decades-long march of women into the workforce. Women in previous generations showed the country what they could do through manufacturing, and it’s on us to inspire girls in the next generation to dream of what they can do through manufacturing, too.

It’s critical to solving the workforce crisis. Women represent one of the largest pools of untapped talent for manufacturers. Thus, closing manufacturing’s gender gap is key to closing the skills gap, too. Moreover, research shows that gender diversity benefits a manufacturing firm by improving its ability to innovate and grow.

WHAT CAN THESE WOMEN DO TO HELP CLOSE THE GENDER GAP?

By telling the real stories of these women, we will demonstrate leadership and opportunities in a diversity of manufacturing careers and use them to inspire the next-generation of talent to pursue careers in the industry. The STEP Ahead Awards are also meant to empower Honorees to lead in their companies, communities, and networks on the importance of manufacturing and issues related to attracting, advancing, and retaining strong manufacturing talent.

HOW ARE HONOREES SELECTED?

Honorees are nominated by their peers or company officials. The deadline to nominate a female in manufacturing is October 11 11:59 p.m. EST. Nominators are asked to articulate how the nominee made significant achievements in manufacturing through their positive impact on a company and their ability to engage the next generation of female talent. Each nomination is reviewed by an external group of peers and rated on a numerical scale by multiple reviewers.

The STEP Ahead Awards recognize women and their achievements at all levels of a manufacturing organization, from the factory floor to the c-suite. Don’t miss the opportunity to recognize a deserving female in manufacturing by nominating beginning August 1!

HOW CAN I ATTEND THE STEP AHEAD AWARDS GALA?

The STEP Ahead Gala is a ticketed event that includes a semi-formal Reception and Dinner. If you are interested in attending, please reach out to AJ Jorgenson, AVP Strategic Engagement at ajorgenson@nam.org for ticketing and sponsorship information.
The Nomination Process
Nominating an outstanding female in manufacturing is as easy as one, two, three!

STEP 1: Create a Nominator Account
On the home page, hover your cursor over “Nominator” and select “Create Account.” From there you will be directed to a page similar to the below image. Please fill out the requested information to create an account.

*Companies are encouraged to have a single point of contact for nominations. As each company is allowed a maximum of 10 applicants, please reach out to the STEP team to find out if your company has a designated main point of contact before creating an account. Please see best practices on pages 11-16 for ideas on streamlining candidates within your company.

STEP 2: Add New Nominee
After logging in, you will be redirected to a welcome page. To submit a nomination application, click the pink button “Add New Nominee” at the bottom of the page to get started!

Select the “nominee type” for your application. Please ensure your nominee fits the criteria for Honoree or Emerging Leader. As a reminder, Emerging Leader is a category to identify rising talent and all applicants must be between the ages of 18 and 30 as of December 31, 2019.

There are three sections to fill out on the nomination application:
1. Nominee Information
2. Company Information
3. Essays
Under nominee information, please indicate your nominee’s regional company address NOT the corporate address. If your nominee is selected, this will ensure correct state and regional publications.

Under company information, an HR and Corporate communications contact are requested so that we may inform the regional and national partner as necessary.

The third section of the application requires you to complete four essay questions that must be between 150 and 250 words in length. Click here for samples of competitive application essays: Please note: each essay must meet the word count minimum/maximum criteria for a valid entry.

The questions are:

1. Please share a noteworthy contribution and/or technical accomplishment your nominee has achieved at her company, and why it is so impactful.
2. Please share a noteworthy contribution your nominee has achieved in her community, and why it is so impactful.
3. Please share how your nominee has been a leader by mentoring others and/or engaging the next generation of female talent.
4. Explain why should your nominee be chosen as a 2020 STEP Ahead Honoree or Emerging Leader.

You may save your progress and complete the application for later if you cannot complete the application in one setting. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click “Save for Later.” When you log back into the system using your nominator ID, your incomplete application will be listed toward the bottom of the Welcome page. Click “In Progress” to continue your application.

**STEP 3: Submit and Repeat!**

Once your entries are finalized, click “Submit” at the bottom of the page!

You will be redirected to a review page and will be asked to verify that the information as listed in the nomination form is correct. After reviewing your entries, check the box at the top of the page and then scroll to the bottom of the page to click “Submit.”

Once you submit, you will receive a confirmation email from STEPahead@nam.org to inform you that we have received your application. To submit another nomination application, repeat steps 1-3!

As a reminder, the maximum number of nominations a company may put forward is 10 applications per company and there is a limit to the number of Honorees and/or Emerging Leaders that will be recognized. A maximum of two Honorees and one Emerging Leader may be selected from each company. Companies should make their best effort to ensure the application meets the selection criterion.

If you have any questions on the application site, please feel free to contact the STEP Ahead Team at STEPahead@nam.org.

Best of luck on your nomination application!
2020 STEP Ahead Nomination Form

Nominator Information

NAME:       EMAIL:
TITLE:       COMPANY:
COMPANY ADDRESS:     OFFICE PHONE NUMBER:

Nominee Type

Honoree: Nominee is currently employed in manufacturing at any level of the company, from the factory floor to the C-suite.

Emerging Leader: Rising female talent currently employed in the manufacturing industry who has already made significant contributions and excelled early in her career. **Must be between 18 and 30 years of age as of December 31, 2019.**

Nominee Information

NAME:       EMAIL:
TITLE:       NOMINEE’S COMPANY:
NOMINEE’S REGIONAL COMPANY ADDRESS:
OFFICE PHONE NUMBER:    RELATIONSHIP TO NOMINEE:
MY NOMINEE IS:
  a) Currently in production     b) Not currently in production, but has been in production
c) Not in a production role, and has never been in production

Short Answer Question: How does this person support the manufacturing industry? (50 words or less)

Company Information

*Please provide the HR contact for the nominee so we may notify her company of the nomination.*

HR CONTACT NAME:     HR CONTACT EMAIL:
CORPORATE COMMUNICATION:   CORPORATE COMMUNICATION EMAIL:

Essays

*For a competitive submission, essay questions should be at least 150 words and no more than 250 words in length.*

1. Please share a noteworthy contribution and/or technical accomplishment your nominee has achieved at her company and why it is so impactful. **Entries must be between 150 and 250 words maximum.**

2. Please share a noteworthy contribution your nominee has achieved in her community and why it is so impactful. **Entries must be between 150 and 250 words maximum.**

3. Please share how your nominee has been a leader by mentoring others and/or engaging the next generation of female talent. **Entries must be between 150 and 250 words maximum.**

4. Explain why your nominee should be chosen as a 2020 STEP Ahead Honoree or Emerging Leader. **Entries must be between 150 and 250 words maximum.**
**Timeline: What to Expect Next**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1, 2019</td>
<td>2020 STEP Ahead Nominations Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 11, 2019</td>
<td>2020 STEP Ahead Nominations Close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2, 2020</td>
<td>Nominators Are Notified of Application Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 6, 2020</td>
<td>Honorees, HR Contacts and Corporate Communications Contacts Are Notified of Application Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31, 2020</td>
<td>Honoree Acceptance Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 3, 2020</td>
<td>Media Kit Available</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2, 2020</td>
<td>National Press Release and Social Media Campaign</td>
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<td>March 8, 2020</td>
<td>International Women’s Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 29-30, 2020</td>
<td>STEP Ahead Leadership Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 30, 2020 (evening)</td>
<td>Awards Gala</td>
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Frequently Asked Questions

Q. When do nominations open and close?
A. Nominations open on August 1, 2019 and will close on Friday, October 11, 2019.

Q. How do I nominate someone for the 2019 STEP Ahead Awards?
A. You can nominate a female peer or colleague through the Manufacturing Institute’s website or by going directly to: https://mi.onlineapplications.net/applications/.

Q. Who can submit a nomination?
A. A nominee may only be nominated by a colleague or peer, such as: company leadership (CEO, Senior Leadership, Directors and Managers); company colleagues; peers outside a nominee’s company.

Companies are encouraged to have a single point of contact for nominations. Please reach out to the STEP team to find out if your company has a designated main point of contact before creating a nominator account. Please see best practices on pages 11-16 for ideas on streamlining candidates within your company.

Q. Can I nominate myself?
A. We don’t accept self-nominations, but you can ask someone else to nominate you.

Q. Can I nominate someone from outside of my own organization?
A. Yes, you may nominate someone outside of your company. However, please be aware that if your nominee is selected, The Manufacturing Institute will reach out to their company to confirm the accuracy of the nomination prior to sending out notifications of selection.

Q. Can a company nominate someone outside of the United States?
A. Yes, a company may nominate someone outside of the U.S. as long as that company has U.S. operations. Nomination applications outside of the U.S. must be submitted via PDF form and sent to STEPahead@nam.org.

Q. How much does it cost to submit an application?
A. There is no cost associated with submitting an application, however, if your nominee is selected we do ask that your company is willing to support her to participate in the Leadership Program and Awards ceremony held in Washington, D.C.
Q. Is there a limit to how many nominations I can submit?
A. A maximum of 10 applications per company may be submitted, however, please note there is a limit to the number of Honorees and/or Emerging Leaders that may be recognized from a single company. If selected, companies are allowed up to two (2) Honorees and one (1) Emerging Leader (women under the age of 30) to be recognized at the 2020 STEP Ahead Awards.

The STEP Ahead award is a competitive award, with a cap of 100 Honorees and 30 emerging leaders. Companies should make their best effort to ensure the application meets the selection criterion.

Q. How can I manage submitting only 10 nominations within a large manufacturing company?
A. Within the Nominations Guide we have included best practices from small, medium, and large size manufacturers for ideas to streamline a process to nominate candidates. These best practices include steps for implementation as well as a main point of contact to reach out to for more information.

Q. How do I know if my candidate is eligible for the 2020 STEP Ahead Awards?
A. The following denotes nominee eligibility:

- Previous Honorees are NOT eligible. Click here to see the list of previous Honorees.
- Previous Nominees ARE eligible.
- Previous Emerging Leaders ARE eligible to be nominated as an Honoree.
- Nominees must currently be employed in manufacturing.

There are two categories nominators may consider:

- **STEP Ahead Honoree:** Nominee is currently employed in manufacturing at any level of the company, from the factory floor to the c-suite.
- **STEP Ahead Emerging Leader:** Rising female talent currently employed in the manufacturing industry who has made significant contributions and excelled early in her career.

*An Emerging Leader nominee must be between 18 and 30 years of age as of December 31, 2019.*

Q. How many women will be honored?
A. 100 women will be recognized as Honorees. 30 women will be recognized as Emerging Leaders, and those nominated under this category must be between the ages of 18 and 30 as of December 31, 2019.
Q. Is it just an award ceremony?
A. The 100 Honorees and 30 Emerging Leaders gather in Washington, D.C. for professional development and celebration. Recipients of the STEP Ahead Award will be invited to attend a two-day professional development program that will occur in advance of the award ceremony.

STEP Ahead offers Honorees and Emerging Leaders a long-term network of colleagues for business and professional development and mobilizes women to act as a catalyst for change within their company and community.

Q. What does a competitive application look like?
A. Click here to review samples of competitive application essays.

Q. When will you announce the selected Honorees and Emerging Leaders for the 2020 STEP Ahead Awards?
A. We will notify nominators and nominees of their selection in early January 2020. An official public announcement of the selected 2020 Honorees and Emerging Leaders will be made in early March 2020.

Q. When and where are the 2020 STEP Ahead Awards?
A. The 2020 STEP Ahead Awards will take place from April 29 through April 30, 2020, with the Awards Dinner Gala on the night of April 30.

Q. What sponsorship opportunities are available for the 2020 STEP Ahead Awards?
A. The Manufacturing Institute offers program and dinner sponsorship opportunities to companies and organizations that place a priority on female talent and the need for attracting, advancing and retaining more women to the industry. Companies in interested in sponsoring the 2020 STEP Ahead Awards should contact AJ Jorgenson at ajorgenson@nam.org.

Q. I have a question that’s not listed on here. Who can I contact for more information?
A. Feel free to contact the STEP Ahead Team at STEPahead@nam.org or (202) 637-3426.
Time Commitment:
The company dedicates 20 hours of time in total. This time is spent over two months through four employees to complete the process. One HR employee manages the email distributions and initial reviews, and three plant presidents serve on the executive committee to review the nominations and choose the final applicants.

Outcome:
The number of officially submitted applicants varies year to year based on how large the pool is and the quality of candidates. For the 2018 STEP Ahead Awards, Toyota submitted four Honoree applications and three Emerging Leader applications. The maximum per company was selected.
Best Practice Spotlight: STEP AHEAD

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Create a nomination review executive committee and/or confirm previous participants will again volunteer to be a part of the internal review process.

2. Develop an email communication on STEP Ahead Award nominations to send out to all plant presidents and HR department heads in manufacturing, along with other groups, directly linking to manufacturing. Indicate in the email the internal company nominations due date as one month prior to the official Manufacturing Institute deadline. The email will include a nomination form in a word document that mirrors The Manufacturing Institute nomination form.

3. Coordinate with all necessary departments to approve and review this email communication.

4. Nominations are returned to Toyota HR representative by the internal deadline.

5. Toyota HR representative reviews the nomination submissions and separates the candidates into the Emerging Leader and Honoree categories.

6. Toyota HR representative ensures all applications include all necessary information and the appropriate word count.

7. Toyota HR representative reviews and documents internal performance ratings of all submitted nominees.

8. Toyota HR representative distributes the nomination submissions and a matrix with performance scores to the internal executive committee, which includes three female plant presidents who are all STEP Ahead Award alumnae.

9. Toyota HR representative coordinates a meeting/conference call with the executive committee to discuss the nominations and come to a consensus on who they would like to officially nominate. The executive committee is asked to come to the meeting with their top three choices in each category.

10. Once the final candidates are chosen, the Toyota HR representative submits officially through the Institute’s nominations website as the sole point of contact for the Institute.

11. Toyota HR representative will send a pre-notification when the Institute sends out the notice on who did and did not get selected.

12. Toyota HR representative manages all STEP Ahead Award information, communications and sponsorship, as a sole contact for both the Institute and Toyota.
AGCO INTERNAL STEP AHEAD AWARDS NOMINATIONS PROCESS

Synopsis:
In order to put its best applicants forward, AGCO Corporation implemented a company-wide nomination process to select which female employees will be nominated for the STEP Ahead Award. The company created a nomination form on its internal system that mimics the official STEP Ahead nomination form. To spread the word, AGCO promoted the STEP Ahead Awards and its internal nomination form to its Global Women’s Network, posted articles with the link to the form on its intranet home page and distributed an email to all AGCO employees in early August with a request for nominations by September 16.

After receiving 52 nominations for 30 different women, two AGCO employees evaluated the nominations and reduced the list to 20 possible candidates. The two employees then organized the list by Emerging Leader and Honoree candidates and created a scorecard for evaluation. Emerging Leader candidates were ranked from 1-4 given the low volume of nominees. Honoree candidates were ranked on a scale of 1-10. Scores were consolidated, and the top Emerging Leader candidate and top four Honoree candidates were chosen for official entry.

Goal:
Streamline a process to nominate the best possible candidates for the STEP Ahead Awards.

Contact:
Lucinda Smith
Lucinda.Smith@agcocorp.com

Outcome:
AGCO officially nominated five women, and The Manufacturing Institute selected two.
Best Practice Spotlight: STEP AHEAD

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Promote the STEP Ahead Awards to the internal women’s network, affinity groups, etc.

2. Create an internal nomination form that mimics the official nomination form.

3. Post an article with a link to the nomination form on the home page of your intranet, or send via email. Request nominations before the national nominations are due, allowing time for evaluation and national nomination.

4. Evaluate the nominations and reduce the list to a smaller number of possible candidates.

5. Organize nominations into Emerging Leader and Honoree candidates.

6. Create scorecard for evaluation using a shared excel document. Use internal review to rate the nominations 1-10 in the four various categories, aligned to the national nominations. You may also use a different rate value, such as ranking the nominations, if given a low volume of nominees.

7. Assign a single person to consolidate scores. The top Emerging Leader candidate and top Honoree candidates are then chosen for official entry. Please note, only two Emerging Leaders and two Honorees are able to be selected for the national award.

8. Refine selected nominations and officially submit using a single point of contact as the nominator. This person should be able to liaise with the communications/public affairs and human resources team at the company.

BEHLEN INTERNAL STEP AHEAD AWARDS NOMINATIONS PROCESS

Synopsis:
Behlen Mfg. Co., a medium-sized manufacturer in steel fabrication, has participated in The Manufacturing Institute’s STEP Ahead Awards every year to recognize and increase the visibility of its women leaders. The company’s STEP Ahead alumnae have continued to meet each year to select a worthy candidate to nominate for the award.

Goal:
Streamline a process to nominate the best possible candidates for the STEP Ahead Awards.

Contact:
Heather Macholan
heather.macholan@behlenmfg.com

Time Commitment:
The STEP Ahead alumnae group, which consists of five individuals, spends two to three hours discussing the nominee list and meeting with leadership. The writing and approval of the nomination application takes up to one month.

Outcome:
The Behlen leadership team sees the value of employing retention and recruitment strategies by participating in the STEP Ahead Awards. They see it as an opportunity to mitigate the gender gap in manufacturing and inspire young women to get involved in the industry. Behlen uses its STEP Ahead alumnae to participate in Manufacturing Month to run tours and speak with young girls interested in STEM careers.
Best Practice Spotlight: STEP AHEAD

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

1. When The Manufacturing Institute’s STEP Ahead Award nominations open, a notice is sent out to Behlen STEP Ahead alumnae two weeks in advance of meeting as a reminder to prepare and bring a list of women to discuss as potential nominees. They review the criteria and the nominations application before meeting to understand what the Institute is looking for in the award winners.

2. The Behlen alumnae group meets for one to two hours to discuss worthy candidates to nominate. The group examines the pros and cons of each person and comes to an agreement on one person to nominate.

3. The selected individual is presented to the leadership team for approval.

4. Once approved, the STEP Ahead alumnae will set a meeting to interview the nominee with questions that resemble the STEP Ahead Awards application. This process will take approximately one week to formulate the questions and schedule the interview.

5. An internal communications staff member will help write the nomination. Behlen employees have one month to write, edit and show the written nomination to the leadership team before submitting.

6. If selected, the nominee is notified. The rest of the company will be notified after the public announcement in March.
Meet the STEP Ahead Team

Carolyn Lee
Executive Director
Carolyn Lee is Executive Director of The Manufacturing Institute, the education and workforce partner of the National Association of Manufacturers, the nation’s largest industrial trade association.

In her role, Ms. Lee leads the Institute in its goal of supporting the manufacturing workforce of today and growing the manufacturing workforce of tomorrow. The Institute does so through a variety of programs designed to excite, educate and empower—with a particular focus in four key areas: women, veterans, youth and lifelong learning.

AJ Jorgenson
Assistant Vice President, Strategic Engagement
AJ Jorgenson is the AVP, Strategic Engagement at The Manufacturing Institute, the non-profit affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM). In her role, Jorgenson develops and executes all strategic operations for the Institute’s largest initiative, STEP Ahead. She ensures that the Institute is the authority on the attraction, qualification, and development of world class manufacturing talent.

Serena Wong
Manager, Women’s Engagement
Serving as Manager of Women’s Engagement at The Manufacturing Institute, Serena provides programmatic support on the Institute’s women’s regional initiative, STEP Forward, and helps to execute these programs across the country.

As a graduate of the STEM field, Serena is committed to the Institute’s efforts in changing public perception of manufacturing in the U.S. through youth engagement and recognition of women’s contributions to the industry.
2020 STEP AHEAD AWARDS
NOMINATIONS OPEN AUGUST 1 – OCTOBER 11, 2019
WWW.THEMANUFACTURINGINSTITUTE.ORG/NOMINATE