



Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools

An Affiliate of the Council of Graduate Schools

MAGS Award for Excellence and Innovation in Graduate Education

The Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS) is pleased to announce the 2025 MAGS Award for Excellence and Innovation in Graduate Education. The award will be distributed to a MAGS member school in recognition of their outstanding contributions to graduate education.

Purpose of the Award

The purpose of the award is to encourage, recognize, and reward excellence and innovation in graduate education at either the graduate school or program level. Applications may relate to any facet of graduate education, including outreach, recruitment through selection and admission, retention, instruction, and degree attainment. In sum, we welcome all aspects of the graduate life cycle, e.g.:

- Recruiting, retaining, and ensuring the success of underrepresented minorities, underserved populations, or international students
- Development of programs, policies, and processes in response to extenuating situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic
- Programs, policies, and processes that support using technology to promote instructional best practices and/or increase educational access
- Initiatives or programs that promote graduate student mental and physical health and wellness
- Innovative and creative pathways to student success
- Creation of professional development opportunities to broaden the skill sets of graduate students
- Programmatic efforts to improve student retention and completion
- Innovative technology to communicate with and attract prospective applicants in new and effective ways
- Other significant efforts to promote excellence and innovation in graduate education

MAGS member institutions may submit *only* one application. Any internal institutional selection processes are the responsibility of the Dean of the Graduate School or comparable official.

Eligibility Requirements

This award recognizes specific excellence and innovation in graduate education, from admissions through degree completion. *Any current MAGS member institution or graduate program within a MAGS member institution is eligible for the award.*

Specific Guidelines: Application materials must include:

1. An application letter from the Graduate Dean or comparable official at the institution. The letter should describe the pertinent graduate education innovation (e.g., problem addressed, the rationale, and project details).

2. A document (1000 – 2000 words) that describes the pertinent graduate education innovation and explains why it is significant. The document should also provide a description of the intended measures of success and provide data relevant to those metrics.
3. All application materials must be sent the MAGS Award for Excellence and Innovation in Graduate Education Committee no later than **January 21, 2025, by uploading to the [Google Form](#)**
3. Submissions will be reviewed by members of the MAGS Award for Excellence and Innovation in Graduate Education Committee.
4. Selection will be based upon the following criteria:
 - *A well-articulated problem and impact statement*
 - *All steps involved and implemented in developing the strategies employed in the project are clearly stated*
 - *Assessment methodologies and metrics used or proposed to evaluate program success and student outcomes*
 - *A plan for sustaining Institutional support for the project initiatives is in place*
 - *Institutional changes that resulted and/or are expected to result from the project are clearly stated*
 - *Adaptability of the project methods by similar institutions.*
5. The 2025 MAGS Award consist of a Winner, first runner up, and a possible second runner up. Awards will be recognized publicly at the MAGS 2025 Annual Meeting, April 2-4, 2025.
6. Questions about the eligibility requirements or award guidelines should be directed to Maggie Nettesheim-Hoffmann, Chair of the MAGS Award for Excellence and Innovation in Graduate Education (excellence@mags-net.org).