

Innovation Award

District Nine, Altrusa International

Purpose:

Inspire clubs to explore innovative methods of showcasing the Altrusa brand drivers of Flexibility, Inclusion and Clarity into their programs, operations, projects, fundraising or other club activities.

Categories: There are three categories for the innovation award. Your submissions can be from one of the following or a combination of 2 or 3.-

1. **Flexibility** - Clubs need to think outside the box to actively look for ways for our club to be flexible and accommodate the busy lives of their members. Flexibility should be planned and designed by the club leadership while maintaining the continuity our bylaws and policies give us.
2. **Inclusion** - Inclusion inspires members. Inclusion means we welcome our community to Altrusa, making members feel comfortable and included. Members need to know everyone's thoughts are equally important. This gives everyone buy-in; where members are engaged and their voices are heard.
3. **Clarity and Transparency** - Clarity and transparency helps attain members for the right reason and keep them engaged and participating. Clarity is obtained by learning about Altrusa, our clubs and about our community. With this education comes the understanding that Altrusa has built leaders for over a century and will continue to build community leaders. Clarity gives our clubs authenticity.

Application: a written narrative describing how the club was innovative in promoting flexibility, inclusion and/or clarity. This could include brand identity, unique marketing campaigns, collaboration, management operations, leadership and programs. Supplemental information through images, video, social media are welcome, but not required.

Please include detailed information on your experience and how this innovation impacted your club.

Send the completed document to the Membership Brand Team anytime through the club year. Project ideas will be shared with other District Nine Clubs at the close of the club year.

EXAMPLE:

Altrusa club of Texas, Inc.

Innovation Award submission for the 2021-2022 club year

Brand driver or club issue being addressed: CLARITY.

At the beginning of the club year retreat, our club realized that although we were flexible and inclusive, we needed to improve our clarity about Altrusa within our own club. Too few of our members knew the basics of our club and why we do many of the things we do. We felt that if the members understood WHY we do the things we do, they would be more willing to become involved.

We established an ad hoc committee to address Clarity in our club. We first assessed the membership to determine what things they would like to know more about by sending an anonymous survey through survey monkey. We limited the questions to 5, single answer questions so the survey would take just a few seconds to complete. Our questions were:

What would you like to know more about (check all that apply)?

1. Why we have rules to follow in our meetings? I feel that I don't know what the rules are.
2. Why we care about District or International – what they do for us?
3. How can get the community learn more about us? I'm always asked "what is Altrusa?"
4. Why do we have to pay dues to do community service? What do they do?
5. What is expected of me? I hate feeling guilty about not being able to participate.

From the answers, the committee determined the order of topics to address. The top concern was why there is a District and International structure and why we pay them dues. We then contacted the Governor to get assistance in getting this question answered.

With the assistance of the District Board, a webinar was held for our club that went deep into the history of International and the District system, what they do and how they support us. Members were strongly encouraged to participate in Conference. An anonymous post survey of the members showed that it was very helpful for them to understand our structure and what it does.

The committee then went down the list of items and made plans to present the appropriate information to the members. The most difficult was getting the community to know more about us, but we tackled that last. Because of our innovative program to improve the clarity within our club, by the time we tackled that tough question, we had a much more cohesive club that worked much better together than before.

We plan on incorporating this survey into our club planning each year to tackle each of our brand drivers.