2026 Pinnacle Award Criteria Rubric:

For each category, assign points within the specified point range based on the project's performance. Add up the points from all categories to determine the total score and then use the grading scale to assess the overall quality of the project (Distinguished, Proficient, Emerging, Not Met).

Alignment with Focus Areas (10 points):

- Clear alignment with one of the five focus areas (Leadership, Advocacy, SCA Member Professional Development, SCA Development and Training, Management)
- Strong connection to the chosen focus area

Direct Benefit to Association (20 points):

- Tangible benefits demonstrated for the association
- Alignment with the association's strategic goal/ends policy

Impact on Members (20 points):

- Measurable impact on members between January 2025 and March 2026
- Direct or indirect benefits to members' programs or professions

Innovation and Distinctiveness (20 points):

- Creative and original approaches demonstrated
- Unique solutions or initiatives

Addressed Need (10 points):

- Clear identification and addressing of a specific need or challenge within the association
- Relevance of the project to the identified need

Access, Opportunity and Belonging Integration (10 points):

- Access and Opportunity considerations in project execution
- Promotion of a sense of belonging within the association

Impact Data and Indicators (5 points):

- Quality and quantity of data provided to demonstrate project impact
- Clear indicators of success or progress

Significant Trends (5 points):

- Identify relevant or impactful trend data relevant to project execution
- Highlight and outline significance factors and/or outliers

Replicability (5 points):

- Description of how the project could be replicated in other associations
- Understanding of different association structures

Scalability (5 points):

- Scalability of the project's impact beyond the initial implementation
- Adaptability to meet changing or growing demands

Tips for Applying (Bonus Points):

- Readability (5 points)
- Originality (5 points)
- Examples and Definitions of Excellence (5 points)
- Boundary-Pushing, Risk-Taking, Innovation (5 points)
- Timeline and Roadmap (5 points)
- Short-term and Long-term Impact (5 points)
- Supplemental submission complimentary of written application (5 points)

Core application score: 110 points possible

Application Enhancement (Bonus points): Up to 35 points available

Total possible points: 145