



2025 APEX Awards Manual

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Overview

The REALTORS® Land Institute (RLI) announces its 9th Annual APEX Awards program, sponsored by The Land Report. The APEX Awards is a national production awards program that recognizes the excellence and performance of RLI members, as well as raises awareness of the breadth and depth of the land real estate industry. The awards provide annual recognition for Top Producers in their categories and specialties. Only RLI Members may apply.

Continued this year, to recognize even more of our outstanding members, RLI will be recognizing regional winners in each of the Broker-of-the-Year categories. The RLI regional map is included in this document.

Winners will be recognized at a special awards program at the 2026 National Land Conference on Monday, March 16, in San Antonio, TX. Top winners will receive national recognition including coverage in The Land Report Spring 2026 magazine and in a national PR-Newswire press release.

- Minimum of \$5 million basis of qualifying volume to apply. All who submit \$5 million of qualifying volume in closed land deals will be included in the RLI APEX Producers Club.
- The Top 20 overall producers will be recognized as the Top 20 National Producers.
- *National* and *Regional* Brokers of the Year will be recognized in each of the following categories:
 - Ag land Sales -Crops
 - Ag land Sales -Ranches
 - Recreational Land Sales
 - Timber Land Sales
 - Commercial Land Sales
 - Residential Land Sales
 - Auction Sales
 - Agribusiness Sales
- APEX Top National Producer Award
- Wrangler Award
- ALC to ALC Networking Award
- Entry fee is \$200 for each application and includes one non-transferable ticket to the awards ceremony at the National Land Conference.

Deadline for submissions is Midnight on Tuesday, January 20, 2026.

2025 RLI APEX Awards Rules and Regulations

I. Introduction – APEX Producers Club

The REALTORS® Land Institute (RLI), in its desire to recognize the top land real estate producers in the country and raise awareness of land real estate as a specialty, is pleased to announce the APEX Awards Producers Club Program.

II. Requirements for Application and Membership

1. Applicant must be a member in good standing of RLI, with dues paid in full for 2026.
2. Applicant must have an active real estate license.
3. Applicant must have produced new real estate brokerage business with a qualifying volume of \$5,000,000 or more (per the first page of the RLI APEX Awards Application) during 2025. Categories can be combined to reach the \$5 million qualifying volume threshold; **however, individual transactions may only be listed on the application once. No transaction may be listed under more than one category.**
4. Applicants must submit a properly executed and typed application to apex@rliland.com by no later than the deadline. All information must be completed including the preferred name for the award. Any award or certificate that needs to be remade due to a name correction that is not identified on the application will be done at the applicant's expense.
5. RLI will send confirmation of receipt when the application is received. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the entry has been received by the deadline date.
6. All applications must be signed by the Applicant and the Applicant's Principal Broker to certify that all information contained in the application is correct and accurate.
7. Any application received after the deadline will be automatically rejected.
8. Applicant shall submit the following:
 - a. **Properly executed** application, including Transaction History Worksheets for each category, **in original Excel format**. It is up to the applicant to ensure their application complies with the rules and is completed properly. **We encourage all**

applicants, especially those who have submitted applications in previous years, to read the rules and FAQs to ensure their spreadsheet is completed accurately.

- b. All applicants must complete Question 4. Disclosure on the excel application. If an applicant has had a real estate commission violation or felony conviction within 2024 or 2025, the applicant must disclose the violation and provide an explanation on a separate document and include the explanation with their application. Any information submitted will be kept confidential and will be used to determine whether the applicant will be allowed to participate in the 2025 APEX Awards program.
 - c. Signed Letter of Certification, including original signatures (electronic signatures will suffice) from Applicant and Applicant's Principal Broker. In the event an Applicant wishes to submit a transaction which closed or had an effective date during the time the Applicant was affiliated with a company other than the Applicant's current company, the applicant shall have his previous Designated REALTOR® or Managing Broker certify the transaction(s) by providing a signed letter of certification from the previous Managing Broker.
 - d. Applicant photo (high resolution jpeg electronic file)
 - e. An Application Fee of \$200, which entitles the applicant to one non-transferable APEX Awards Program Dinner ticket at NLC. This can be paid online at rliland.com or by calling 800-441-LAND (5263).
 - f. Applicant is required to make a copy of the application for his/her own records.
9. If an application needs further clarification or documentation, all information requested must be provided within 48 hours of the time of the request. If documentation is not provided within 48 hours, then the application will be rejected. **If clarification is not provided within 48 hours, then the judges will use their best guess to make a determination.**
10. Application fees will not be refunded or transferred.

III. Award Categories

- 1. Top 20 National Producer – the Top 20 overall producers shall be recognized as the APEX Top 20 National Producers. Categories can be combined for this ranking.

2. Brokers of the Year – The top producer in each land category, based on their APEX Awards Qualifying Volume for each land category, shall be recognized as Broker of the Year. No two categories may be combined for the purpose of these awards, but a broker may receive an award in more than one category.
 - a. Regional Broker of the Year – the top producer in each of the 10 RLI regions with the highest qualifying volume in each of the land categories.
 - b. National Broker of the Year – the top producer out of all regions with the highest qualifying volume in each land category
 - c. Land Categories
 - i. Ag land Sales –Crops
 - ii. Ag land Sales –Ranches
 - iii. Recreational Land Sales
 - iv. Timber Land Sales
 - v. Commercial Land Sales (includes Industrial Land)
 - vi. Residential Land Sales
 - vii. Auction Sales
 - viii. Agribusiness Sales
 - d. **Each transaction may only be listed on the application once.** Each applicant is expected to use his/her best judgement in categorizing transactions.
 - e. It is the intent to recognize Regional Brokers of the Year and a National Broker of the Year in each of the land categories. *The judges may, at their discretion, opt not to recognize a Broker of the Year in a specific category due to a lack of applicants.*
3. APEX Top National Producer Award – The top producer based on their overall APEX Awards Qualifying Dollar Volume.
4. Wrangler Award – The award given to the Applicant who had the most sides of transactions, regardless of category, where the Applicant was the primary agent with 50% or more involvement.
5. ALC to ALC Networking Award – The award given to the Applicant(s) with the largest ALC to ALC transaction by sales volume.

IV. Rules for Calculating APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume Credit

1. For business to count for APEX Producers Club Volume, the effective credit date must be during the 2025 calendar year.
2. Full credit will be allowed in the calendar year of the closing of a transaction in which an installment commission is paid.
3. APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume credit shall be given only for an applicant acting in a transaction as a salesperson (as opposed to acting as a managing broker or company).
4. No APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume credit shall be allowed for *appraisals, referral fees, evaluations, consultations, or any transaction in which a fee is collected that is not contingent upon the actual closing of a real estate transaction.*
5. No APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume credit shall be allowed for any transaction for which the commission or brokerage fee is not reflected on a closing statement, valid listing agreement, or disclosure statement.
6. To be eligible for the APEX Producers Club, the Applicant's APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume must be majority land, i.e. for each transaction, the value of the land, including agricultural improvements, must account for at least 51% of the total sale for the transaction to be eligible.
- 7. If more than one individual within the Applicant's company actively participated in any sale, the APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume credit allowed shall be divided proportionately, regardless of how the commission fees were split (100% if acting alone, 50% if two agents, 33% if three agents, 25% if four agents, and so on). If anyone else is listed on your marketing materials, you are not allowed to claim 100%.**
8. APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume credit is not assignable or transferable. If more than one individual is involved in a transaction, and one or more of the individuals do not submit the transaction for APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume credit, the non-APEX Awards participants' credit is not assignable or transferable to the Applicant or anyone else. *In every submitted transaction, the APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume credit claimed by each Applicant shall only reflect the Applicant's proportionate percentage of the deal, as reflected in Rule 7 above.*
9. If an Applicant sells shares or ownership in a property (or in partnership, corporation, or co-tenancy owned property), through syndication, then the APEX Producers Club Qualifying Volume

credit shall be calculated by multiplying the percentage interest of the entity sold by the total sales price of the entity sold.

10. For Auctions, Applicants are allowed to claim both sides of auction transactions *in which the other side was unrepresented*. However, no credit shall be given for simply calling an auction - *all auction transactions must be agency-based*.

V. Spreadsheet Rules and Calculations

Common areas of confusion are bolded for your reference. Please pay attention to these sections and requirements. Examples are provided in each category on the spreadsheet. Please delete the examples before you finalize your spreadsheet.

1. Eligibility is only open to RLI members in good standing with membership dues paid for 2026.
2. (Column 1) - Transaction Number: Number to keep transactions in order.
3. (Column 2) - Closing Date: The date that title transferred in the sales transaction closing.
4. (Column 3) - Address Used for Marketing: Address or name/title used for marketing purposes (for example, "Big Bear Ranch"). If no address or name is available, a brief legal description is acceptable.
5. (Column 4) - Name of Seller/Buyer: The selling entity and buying entity in the sales transaction.
6. (Column 5) - Represented? **Who did you represent? Please use the dropdown** box to list if you represented the seller, buyer, or both, or if the seller [was] unrepresented, the buyer [was] unrepresented, or if the transaction was co-listed and [you] brought [the] buyer. PLEASE FILL THIS OUT ACCURATELY. **This is asking who you, personally, represented - NOT who your firm represented. If you represented the seller and someone else in your firm, but not on your team, represented the buyer, you should state you represented the seller, not both. This ensures consistency and helps the judges to clearly understand the transaction.**
7. (Column 6) - Number of Sides: If you represented EITHER the buyer OR the seller, enter 1. If you represented BOTH the buyer AND the seller, enter 2. If you represented buyer/seller AND the other side was unrepresented, you may enter 2.

8. (Column 7) - Who Represented the Other Side? What was the agent's name on the other side of the transaction? What brokerage did the agent belong to?
9. (Column 8) - Other Side ALC? Was the agent on the other side of the transaction an Accredited Land Consultant (ALC)? This information will be used to determine eligibility for the ALC-to-ALC Networking Award at the conference. You may be contacted for additional information.
- 10.(Column 9) - Number of Acres: How many acres were included in the transaction?
- 11.(Column 10) - Sales Price: The amount recorded on the deed. However, if the purchase price from a deed is not available for any reason, then the applicant may include the consideration of the transaction as supported by a written acknowledgement of sale between the parties and a related settlement statement.
- 12.(Column 11) - Percentage of Fee: If you represented EITHER the buyer OR the seller, enter 100%. You are claiming 100% of the side you represented in the transaction, whether it was the buyer or the seller. If you represented BOTH the buyer AND the seller, or represented one side with the other side unrepresented, enter 200%. In this instance, you are claiming 100% of the listing side and 100% of the buyers' side, for a total of 200% of the transaction. If you co-listed the property with another agent, inside or outside of your firm, and you brought the buyer yourself, enter 150%. In this instance, you are claiming 50% of the listing side since you shared it with another agent, and 100% of the buyers' side since you represented the buyer alone, for a total of 150%. **Only 100%, 150%, or 200% should be listed in this column.**

Essentially, every transaction has the potential to total 200% since **we consider each side, buyer and seller, to be 100% each.**

- 13.(Column 12) - Number of Agents on Your Side of the Deal:
Applies to the number of agents on your side of the deal with whom you worked the transaction and shared the commission. **If anyone else is listed on your marketing materials, you are not allowed to enter "1".** This only applies to the number of agents who worked on your side of the transaction. If the other side was represented by another agent, whether or not they work in your office, do not include them in this number or on your application. We only care about your work.

- 14.(Column 13) – Your Percentage of the Deal: **This number will auto-populate based on what you enter in Column 12, as the percentage you can claim is exactly proportional to the number of agents listed on your side in Column 12.** This is the corresponding percentage of the number of people involved in the transaction, NOT reflective of actual commission splits. If anyone else is listed on your marketing materials, you are not allowed to claim 100%. (100% if acting alone, 50% if two agents, 33% if three agents, 25% if four agents, and so on).
- 15.(Column 14) – Qualifying Volume: Should calculate automatically provided the rules have been followed. **Please do not enter an amount.** This total will automatically be transferred to the first page of the application and will be used to calculate winners for each award.

VI. Review and Verification Process

The APEX Judges review every APEX application to confirm it meets the stated minimum criteria for inclusion in the APEX Producers Club. For applications that are in contention for a possible award, the APEX Judges will ask for verification of certain transactions included in the applicant's application. Due to time restraints, it is not possible to review and confirm every single transaction in every application.

As part of the verification process, applicants will be asked to provide details of the transaction on the APEX Verification Form, as well as providing the APEX Judges with a copy of the executed listing agreement or buyer's agreement, marketing materials used to market the transaction, and a copy of the settlement statement for the applicant's client in the transaction. This information is used to confirm the transaction occurred for the price stated and that the agent was involved in the transaction.

All information submitted for the verification process is kept in the strictest of confidence and is only shared with the APEX Judges for the purpose of verifying the transaction.

VII. Promotion of the APEX Producer Club Membership/Award

Members of the APEX Producers Club and Special Award Winners are encouraged to promote their membership/award on business cards, websites, letterheads, or other printed or online materials using the Award titles below. **APEX Producers Club Members and Special**

Award Winners are asked not to promote their awards until AFTER the APEX Awards Program at the 2026 National Land Conference.

- 2025 RLI APEX National Producers Club
- RLI APEX 2025 Top 20 National Producer
- RLI APEX 2025 Regional Broker of the Year - (Appropriate Category) Region # (List of States in Region)
- RLI APEX 2025 National Broker of the Year- (Appropriate Category)
- RLI APEX 2025 Top National Producer
- RLI APEX 2025 Wrangler Award
- ALC to ALC Networking Award - 2025



2025 APEX Awards Application – Letter of Certification

I, _____, **Applicant**, hereby affirm that I have read the Rules and Regulations of the 2025 RLI APEX Awards and hereby make application for the award(s).

In order for this application to be considered, I hereby represent that I, personally, handled from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, the real estate transactions described on the attached forms (which include the RLI APEX Awards Application Spreadsheet) and that said transactions qualify for APEX Awards as described in said Rules and Regulations. I understand that, should there be any misrepresentation in form and/or content of my application, other than typographical or mathematical mistakes, my application shall be automatically disqualified, and I may be reported to the RLI Ethics Committee for appropriate disciplinary action.

Date

Signature

Letter of Certification from Designated Broker

I, _____, **Applicant's Designated Broker**, affirm that I have read the Rules and Regulations of the 2025 RLI APEX Awards, and I have read and reviewed the Applicant's application and represent that it is true and correct and that the Applicant has met all of the qualifications for admission in the APEX Awards as set forth in said Rules and Regulations. I also affirm that all of the herein information is in accordance with our company records (except for information that is included in the attached Letter of Certifications for the Applicant's previous Designated Broker, if applicable), and that there were no cooperating agents except as shown herein either in or out of the office, and that a real estate commission was paid in accordance with said Rules and Regulations. I understand that, should there be any misrepresentation in form and/or content of the herein application, other than typographical or mathematical mistakes, the herein application shall be automatically disqualified, and the Applicant and I (if applicable) may be reported to the RLI Ethics Committee for appropriate disciplinary action.

Date

Signature of Designated Broker

Printed Name of Designated Broker



Letter of Certification from Previous Designated Broker

Applicant Name: _____

I, _____, **Applicant's previous Designated Broker**, affirm that I have read the Rules and Regulations of the 2025 RLI APEX Awards. I also affirm that all the herein information as forth in the RLI APEX Awards Application Spreadsheet, is in accordance with our company records, and that there were no cooperating agents except as shown herein either in or out of the office, and that a real estate commission was paid in accordance with said Rules and Regulations. I understand that, should there be any misrepresentation in form and/or content of the herein application, other than typographical or mathematical mistakes, the herein application shall be automatically disqualified, and the Applicant and I (if applicable) may be reported to the RLI Ethics Committee for appropriate disciplinary action.

Date

Signature of previous Designated Broker

Printed Name of Previous Designated Broker

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q: Why should I apply to the APEX Production Awards if I know I will not receive one of the top awards on the stage at NLC?

A: RLI uses the aggregate data from the APEX Awards program anecdotally and in presentations every year to show the breadth and depth of the land real estate industry. To adequately demonstrate that, we need as many RLI members as possible to participate as applicants. RLI also uses this data to see how specific categories of land trend over time and to compare the APEX data against the RLI National Land Survey data each year.

Obviously, not everyone can win one of the top awards. However, everyone who meets the minimum criteria of \$5M in land transactions in 2025 will be included in the APEX Producers Club and will receive a certificate highlighting your inclusion in the 2025 APEX Producers Club, a 2025 APEX logo, and a template press release to use locally. **Our goal in providing these tools and recognition is to help our members establish themselves as their area's local land expert since the applicant has been recognized by an outside entity (RLI) for their production/expertise in land sales. You don't have to say you are the best in your area - let us say it for you!**

2. Q: If I co-list a transaction with another agent, but I bring the buyer myself, how do I fill out the spreadsheet?

A: On Column 5, you should state that you represented "both" and in Column 6, you list 2. One Column 11, you should list 150% (50% of the listing side and 100% of the buyer side) and in Column 12, just list "1".

3. Q: What is the most common error you see on completed spreadsheets?

A: *Inconsistency in information on the spreadsheet, which leads to more questions. **If the rules are followed and the spreadsheet is filled out properly, there are no inconsistencies.*** For example, someone claims in Column 12 that there were two agents on their side of the deal, but then claims in Column 13 that they get 100% of the transaction. That cannot happen according to the rules. If there are two people on your side of the deal, you must claim 50% of the transaction.

4. Q: Why do you need to know who represented the other side?

A: We use this information for multiple purposes. One, we use it to help determine the annual ALC to ALC networking award. Two, we occasionally

use the information for outreach and recruiting of potential members. Three, it can help in verifying details of the transaction.

5. Q: How do you determine the number of people involved on your side of the transaction?

A: This includes all licensed agents working with you to represent your client (whether buyer or seller). It does not include unlicensed assistants or transaction coordinators. The judges will review marketing materials, listing agreements, buyer agreements, etc. to ensure the information presented in your application reflects what happened in the transaction. Any information shared with the judges will be kept strictly confidential.

6. Q: Why do you need to know the number of people on my side of the transaction?

A: The APEX Awards program is an individual recognition program. Someone who routinely works as part of a team can complete more transactions faster than someone who routinely works alone. To be fair to all applicants, we give volume credit equal to the number of people involved in the transaction.

7. Q: I have a transaction that could go under multiple categories. Can I enter it under each applicable category?

A: No. We understand that land can have multiple uses and transactions could potentially be listed under multiple categories. However, for the purposes of the APEX Awards program, transactions may only be included once. Listing transactions in more than one category inflates the totals and does not give an accurate representation of an applicant's actual production. Each applicant gets to decide which category best reflects the transaction; however, each transaction may only be entered once on the application form.

Example: 150 acres of farmland is sold at auction. The transaction should only be listed under the auction category. It cannot be listed under both the Ag Land - Crops category and the Auction category.

Example: 300 acres of mature timber that is currently being used for hunting. The applicant must decide if the transaction should be listed under Timberland or Recreational Land - it cannot be listed under both categories.

8. Q: Why is there a new disclosure requirement asking if the applicant has had a real estate commission violation or felony conviction in 2024 or 2025?

A: The APEX Awards are designed to showcase RLI's members as the top land producers in the country. The goal is to raise awareness of the land real estate industry as a whole and of RLI and its members specifically. With this goal in mind, it is important that RLI is aware of any potential violations that could harm the reputation and integrity of the APEX awards program or RLI.

9. Q: Will I automatically be disqualified if I disclose a real estate commission violation or felony conviction within the last two years?

A: No. There is no automatic disqualification if an applicant discloses a violation or felony. However, the applicant will be asked to share details about the incident. All details will be kept in the strictest of confidence and will only be shared with RLI's CEO and senior leadership team. Based on the details of the specific situation, they will determine whether the applicant will be allowed to participate in the current year's APEX Awards program.

RLI Regional Map

REALTORS® LAND INSTITUTE REGIONS

