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**NATIONAL DIASPORA MERIT AWARD**

1.0 **Introduction**

The Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) was establishment for the purpose of encouraging the contribution and engagement of the Nigerians in Diaspora towards the development of Nigeria. The Nigerians in diaspora are doing great things wherever they are and at home (Nigeria). This must not go unnoticed so the Commission has come up with the National Diaspora Merit Award to recognize and appreciate the efforts of the Nigerians in the Diaspora in national development so as to inspire others. This is pursuant to the provisions of Paragraph 2.3.24 of the National Diaspora Policy titled “ Recognition and National Award” as adopted and approved by the Federal Executive Council on 28th April, 2021.

These success stories of the diaspora must be told and celebrated. The National Diaspora Merit Award ceremony is scheduled to take place next year.

2.0 **Objectives of the National Diaspora Merit Award:**

i. **T**he objectives of the National Diaspora Merit Award are :

i) To recognize and celebrate the Nigerians in Diaspora who have made contributions and impact the development of Nigeria

ii) To project them as Diaspora Champions and Role Models for others to emulate.

iii) To change the narratives of the image of Nigeria and Nigerians in Diaspora,

iv) To establish skill set of the Nigerians in the Diaspora who are active in different sectors of the Nigeria economy.

**3.0 Sectors of the Award:**

The categories of the National Diaspora Merit Award includes those who have excelled or contributed in the following development areas and others :

i) Agriculture

ii) Information Communication Technology (ICT)

iii) Science, Technology and Innovation

iv) Water Resources

v) Finance and Economics

vi) Youths and Sports

vii) Oil & Gas /Energy

 viii) Education

ix) Entertainment, Arts and Tourism

x) Hotel and Catering Management

xi) Housing and Real Estate

xii) Transportation

xiii) Fashion and Aesthetics

xiv) Philanthropy

xv) Leadership development.

**4.0 Eligibility criteria :**

The National Diaspora Merit Awardis open toall Nigerians in the Diaspora who have traceable and trackable records proving continuous and consistent impact in development of Nigeria for at least five (5) years in service to National development. These efforts could be in form of skills, technology transfer, cash and kind donations, philanthropic work, etc all aimed at development. These contributions by diaspora groups or diaspora individuals who must be of good character would be recognized.

**5.0 Modalities**:

A Committee has been set up and is calling for nominations of candidates to screen, to select and recommend to NiDCOM Management for recognition. The following are to be considered:

i) Nominees must be Nigerians living in the diaspora

ii) Nominees must be of good character

iii) Project and programs must be traceable and trackable

iv) Contribution of the nominees must be consistent over five years.

**6.0 Nomination Process:**

i. Submission of qualified candidates should be done at **nidcom.gov.ng/nomination**

ii. Call for Nomination starts today 25th July, 2021

iii. Closing date for submission of Candidates is 25th October, 2021

iv. The National Diaspora Merit Award Committee will collate the submitted nominees after closure of the portal on the 25th of October 2021.

v. The Committee would do the screening of nominees and selection of the Awardees within the time frame of three months 25th October, 2021 to 25th January, 2022. Thereafter it will submit its recommendations to the Management of NIDCOM for final confirmation and approval in January 2022.

7.0 **Award Ceremony :**

The first National Diaspora Merit Award would be conferred to the awardees next year.

It would consist of a Certificate of Merit and a plaque which should be collected in person at the Award Dinner.

8.0 **Conclusions**

The National Diaspora Merit Award would be an annual event.

9.0 Thank you.