



Empowering Organizations to Improve Results

2018

Application Guidance
Manual for the
Performance
Excellence Program



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Letter from the Director

What does the Southwest Alliance for Excellence do?

As the Southwest Alliance for Excellence (SWAE) embarks on its 29th year serving organizations we will continue to help organizations become more efficient and improve their results!

SWAE helps organizations of all sizes, sectors, and industries improve their results using the *Baldrige Excellence Framework – a systems approach to improving your organization’s performance*. The *Criteria for Performance Excellence* helps to simplify an organization’s efforts. It is designed to help identify what really matters to your organization, and focus efforts where they will count. Using the Criteria gives you a holistic assessment of where your organization is and where it needs to be. Use it to empower your organization to reach your goals, improve results, and become more competitive by aligning your strategy, processes, decisions, people, actions and results.

At first glance, the Criteria may seem a bit dense and daunting, but SWAE offers many resources to help you learn: The SWAE Performance Excellence Program, our workshops, examiner training, and our annual awards banquet are all first-rate avenues toward excellence.

I also would like to talk about *why* we do it: SWAE’s mission is to empower organizations in Arizona, Nevada and Utah to pursue performance excellence, improve outcomes and contribute to the economic strength of their community and state. We are dedicated to making our states better places to live and work.

Our ultimate stakeholders are the citizens of Arizona, Nevada and Utah – you and me. When our businesses, schools, hospitals, factories and government bodies focus on results, when they function at high performing levels, we all benefit.

SWAE believes, by integrating the principles of the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*, our organizations, communities and citizens will thrive. I am delighted that you are here to take advantage of this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Karen L. Shepard

Karen L. Shepard
Executive Director



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About the Southwest Alliance for Excellence

Our Vision

Be a recognized leader in advancing organizational excellence.

The Southwest Alliance for Excellence was established in 1990. Our goal is to improve the economic vitality of the region by promoting the understanding and use of the *Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence*.

Since 1990, hundreds of organizations have applied to and benefited from the SWAE Performance Excellence Program.

We are an independent, nonprofit corporation governed by a Board of Directors drawn from manufacturing, service, healthcare, education and government sectors. We function as a non-profit that provides cost-effective support to regional businesses and organizations. Our funding comes solely from membership, sponsorship and program revenue.

SWAE Workforce

Two staff, and more than 75 volunteers provide services to SWAE members and applicants, implementing all SWAE activities.

Board of Directors

The SWAE Board of Directors consists of distinguished leaders from all sectors of AZ, NV & UT economies, providing policy guidance and direction. The board is responsible for SWAE's governance and finance.

Members and Sponsors

The support of corporate and individual members and sponsors enables SWAE to deliver programs and services to companies in every industry sector. All companies, organizations and individuals involved with or interested in SWAE are welcome to apply for membership. Membership benefits include:

- Knowledge sharing on performance improvement topics through the SWAE newsletter
- Opportunities for education and learning through discounted training
- Discounted SWAE Performance Excellence Program application fees
- Demonstration of a commitment to excellence
- Acknowledgement in SWAE materials
- Networking and connecting with like-minded organizations and individuals

To become a SWAE member or sponsor, please visit the Members / Sponsors section of our website (<http://www.swae.org/mission/>) or call the SWAE office: (480)874-5815.

Our Mission

To empower organizations to pursue performance excellence, improve outcomes and contribute to the economic strength of their community and state.

Southwest Alliance for Excellence Performance Excellence Program

Modeled after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, SWAE fulfills its mission by providing in-depth, low-cost assessments of regional organizations using the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*. This process is the basis of the SWAE Performance Excellence Program.

Organizations that go through an assessment receive detailed feedback that may be used to improve processes and results. It's an effective way to energize employees, sharpen focus, look at your organization from a systems perspective and earn recognition for your business or organization.

The SWAE Performance Excellence Program is multi-tiered, offering five levels of review. An organization that is new to the Criteria can get its feet wet by starting with a Level 1 (Interest) application or a Process Level application. As the organization grows and develops, it may apply for a Level 2 (Commitment), Level 3 (Achievement) and Level 4 (Excellence) Award. Among other eligibility requirements, organizations that apply for a Baldrige National Quality Award must first receive a SWAE Pinnacle Award for Excellence.

To participate in the SWAE Performance Excellence Program, organizations submit a self-assessment to the SWAE office based on questions posed in the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*. The length and breadth of this self-assessment depends on the award level sought. Please see page 14 for more details on requirements for each level.

A team of SWAE examiners then evaluates the self-assessment and conducts a site visit to gain a thorough understanding of the organization. Based on its findings, the team prepares a detailed Feedback Report that identifies the applicant's strengths and opportunities for improvement.



About the Southwest Alliance for Excellence

The Panel of Judges reviews the examiner team's work for integrity and completeness and determines the applicant's award level.

Code of Ethical Standards

Integrity is one of SWAE's core values. A strict Code of Ethical Conduct and Conflict of Interest Statement binds each examiner and judge. Neither examiners nor judges may participate in any evaluation, scoring or recognition decisions where there may be, or could appear to be, any personal, potential or perceived conflict of interest.

Applicant Eligibility

Any public or private organization located in the states of AZ, NV or UT may participate in the SWAE Performance Excellence Program.

Organizational Units

Business/organizational units or subsidiaries are eligible to submit an application. For purposes of the evaluation process, a subsidiary means an actual subsidiary, business unit, division, or district office. Eligible organizations must be recognizable as discrete entities, and must be easily distinguishable from a parent and other sub-units. They must function as business or operational entities, not as activities assembled to write an application.

Organizations must be self-sufficient enough to be examined in all seven Criteria categories. For example, an organizational unit with its own administrative, human resources and other support functions is eligible; but a unit that is entirely dependent upon the parent organization for the majority of these functions is ineligible.

The following organizational units are expressly allowed:

- Business units or larger
- Whole manufacturing plant
- Hospitals within systems; whole health care systems
- State government office/division/department
- Stand-alone sub-units of larger organizations
- School districts
- Individual schools
- Colleges within Universities; whole universities

Note: Meeting eligibility requirements for SWAE Level 4 awards does not necessarily convey eligibility as a national Baldrige Applicant.

Future Eligibility

If an organization receives the prestigious Pinnacle Award for Excellence (Level 4), the organization is ineligible to apply for another SWAE organization level Award for a period of three years. For example, a 2014 Pinnacle Award recipient would be eligible to reapply in 2018. There is no such restriction for Interest Recognition (Level 1), Commitment Awards (Level 2) or Achievement Awards (Level 3).

Eligibility Determination

In order to ensure fairness and consistency to all award applicants, an Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form is required for Organization Levels 2, 3 and 4 applicants and Process Level applicants. This form takes into account an organizational unit's structure, functions and performance. Potential applicants are encouraged to submit the Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form as early as possible. For more information on eligibility determination, see the Intent-to-Apply and Eligibility Form on pages 28-34.

Award Allocation

Awards are granted on the basis of fulfilling the Criteria requirements described for each level (see page 14 for a complete description of these requirements). There is no limit to the number of awards presented annually. However, if no candidate demonstrates the levels of performance excellence outlined on pages 11-13 ("SWAE Award Program Recognition Levels") and established by the Criteria, no award will be conveyed. In other words, there may be years when no recipients are named, particularly at the higher award levels.

Responsibilities of Award Recipients

Applicants receiving recognition and awards are encouraged to support the development of performance improvement for others participating in the SWAE Performance Excellence Program. Excellence Award recipients are expected to share nonproprietary information from their application material and participate in the Southwest Alliance for Excellence annual Awards Banquet, so others may learn from their success. A minimum of one "Best Practice" workshop or "Benchmark Tour" is generally held at the recipient's site.



Additional SWAE Programming

Education

Throughout the year, SWAE provides training opportunities to organizations that want to improve processes and results. All of these programs are available at low cost and open to the public.

For more information about any of SWAE's educational opportunities, visit the Workshops & Events page of the SWAE website: www.swae.org or call the SWAE office at (480)874-5815.

Application Workshop

Application workshops provide tips and tools for beginning an organizational self-assessment and writing a SWAE application to the Criteria. In addition, attendees learn how award levels are determined and gain insight into site visits. These workshops are a great first step for organizations that are new to using the Criteria; they also provide advanced strategies for companies more familiar with the SWAE application process and the Criteria.

Baldrige 101 Workshop

The *Criteria for Performance Excellence* provides a seven-category framework for defining what is most important to an organization's success. This course is an introduction to the Criteria's framework, using that information, organizations can then identify and implement meaningful improvements.

Benchmarking Tours/Workshops

When an organization receives an Excellence Award, it opens its doors to the public for a series of best practice tours and workshops. These tours highlight the systems and methods that helped the organization achieve the award.

Throughout the year, we offer opportunities to get a sneak peek inside industry-leading companies and organizations that share their best practices with participants. Attendees tour the host organization while learning valuable information they can take back to their own workplaces.

Workshops

SWAE offers workshops to help organizations better understand methods of improvement through the use of the Baldrige Criteria, other quality methodologies and the Performance Excellence Program. We also host writing

Workshops to help applicants prepare to apply for the Process Level in addition to Baldrige 101 Workshops.

Custom Training

SWAE designs and delivers custom training sessions and presentations to interested organizations. Call the SWAE office at (480) 874-5815 or email kshepard@swae.org for details.

Examiner Training

Every year, SWAE trains a contingent of volunteer examiners in the *Criteria for Performance Excellence* to evaluate the businesses and organizations that apply to the SWAE Award Program. These examiners typically represent the best and brightest- professionals who want to challenge themselves while contributing to the region's economic development.

Serving on the SWAE Board of Examiners is a powerful personal and professional development experience. Starting with training and continuing through the applicant evaluation process, networking opportunities abound. In addition, examiners are exposed to the best practices of role model companies.

"I found the SWAE Examiner experience extremely valuable to my understanding and growth in Quality. The training and site visit offered me the opportunity to understand quality programs outside of my own industry." – Susie Duffy; HonorHealth

Employers have found that examiner training empowers employees to apply the Criteria at their own jobs, improving processes and results. In addition, applicants have discovered that having an examiner or two on the "inside" improves their own SWAE applications.

Every summer SWAE schedules examiner training sessions. For information about becoming an Examiner or signing up employees to serve as examiners, please visit the Examiner section on the Award Program page on SWAE's website or call the office: www.swae.org/performance-excellence-program/ (480) 874-5815.

This is a powerful learning experience and valuable professional development step for anyone. The Board of Examiners evaluates award applications, conducts site visits and prepares feedback reports.



Additional SWAE Programming

Benefits of participation include:

- Strong understanding of a global set of guidelines for running an effective organization
- Insider look at innovative approaches utilized by leading organizations
- Improved assessment, analytical, interviewing and writing skills
- Networking with colleagues and other professionals throughout the region
- Opportunity to attend Performance Excellence Award Banquet compliments of SWAE

SWAE Performance Excellence Program Awards Banquet

The SWAE Performance Excellence Program Awards Banquet is the platform SWAE uses to recognize organizations that complete the evaluation and feedback process. During the banquet, each SWAE applicant that has fulfilled the criteria requirements receives an award based on its level of achievement. For employees of organizations that participate in the application process, the banquet is a great celebration, confirming the organization's commitment to improving performance results.

SWAE Leadership Award

The Southwest Alliance for Excellence (SWAE) Leadership Award is an annual award recognizing an individual who exemplifies outstanding leadership in the pursuit of performance excellence and has furthered performance improvement beyond the boundaries of their organization. Recipients can represent any industry and any type or size organization in Arizona, Nevada, or Utah. They are dedicated to and demonstrate leadership behaviors and results consistent with the SWAE Core Values, community involvement, corporate citizenship and economic development. They must be willing to share their leadership practices as they relate to the SWAE Core Values and Leadership Behaviors.

Nominations for the SWAE Leadership Award are solicited from the public. Self-nominations are not permitted. The award recipient is selected by an outside, diverse committee.

Baldrige Express Self-evaluation Survey

When you take steps to better your organization, you need to know if your efforts are working. The Southwest Alliance for Excellence, in conjunction with the Alliance for Performance Excellence, offers a high-level diagnostic tool that can help. Called Baldrige Express, this online organizational survey is designed to help you gauge deployment of your improvement initiatives. A valuable set of feedback is provided to the organization upon completion.

Best Practice Sharing

SWAE provides a venue where businesses and organizations can learn from the performance improvement strategies of their role model peers:

- Benchmarking tours and workshops are presented by SWAE Award recipients to share the strategies and processes that brought them to this level of accomplishment.
- During the annual SWAE Performance Excellence Program Awards Banquet, recipients of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the SWAE Excellence Award share the lessons they have learned on their journeys to performance excellence.

SWAE Learning Events

Refer to the Events and Workshops schedule at <http://www.swae.org/events-workshops/>, or turn to the previous page to see descriptions of other learning opportunities like:

- Baldrige 101 Workshop
- Application Writing Workshop
- Benchmarking Tours/Workshops
- Lean Six Sigma
- Using Baldrige Express
- Networking opportunities and events

Or, call SWAE to schedule a customized learning event at your site: (480) 874-5815.

For more information about any of SWAE's programs, please visit our website or call the SWAE office: www.swae.org, (480) 874-5815.



2018 SWAE Performance Excellence Program

2018 AWARD Cycle

	2018
Intent to Apply deadline	Received by May 4, 2018
Application Deadline	Received by July 9, 2018
Examiner team conducts application assessment and scoring	July 12 – September 9
Site Visit Schedule Level 1	On-going*
Process Level Level 2 Level 3 Level 4	September 24 - 28 or October 1 - 5
Panel of Judges convenes	Mid-November
Feedback Reports distributed	Level 1 - On-going Process Level and Organization Levels 2-4 - Mid-December
SWAE Performance Excellence Program Awards Banquet	Late January or early February 2019

**Level 1 applications are accepted at any time during the year.*

SWAE Steps to Excellence

	Level 1 Interest	Level 2 Commitment	Level 3 Achievement	Level 4 Excellence
Org. Profile	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application Focus	Org. Profile	Basic Item Requirements	Overall Item Requirements	Multiple Item Requirements
Max. Length	5 Pages	5 + 15	5 + 35	5 + 50
Questions To Answer	37 Questions	37 + 17	37 + 106	37 + 252
Site Visit	N/A - Replaced with Coaching	1-2 Days	2-3 Days	3-5 Days
Feedback Focus	Seven Categories	Basic - Overall Requirements	Overall - Multiple Requirements	Multiple Requirements
Award	Interest Recognition	Commitment Award	Achievement or Commitment Award	Pinnacle, Pioneer or Category Award for Excellence or Achievement Award

Southwest Alliance for Excellence (SWAE)	www.swae.org	lshepard@swae.org	480.874.5815
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2018 SWAE Performance Excellence Program

In keeping with SWAE’s philosophy of encouraging involvement and participation in the process, the Board of Directors strives to maintain affordable program fees.

SWAE Members receive discounts on application fees. Turn to page 2 for benefits of SWAE membership.

Application Fee

The Application Fee is required for all award levels. For Process Level and Levels 2, 3 & 4, (50%) should be included with the Intent to Apply Form and the remaining 50% when the application is submitted to SWAE. The fee is related to workforce size and application level. SWAE Members receive a discount on this fee. For Level 1 and Process Level submit the entire fee with the appropriate completed application. Use the table below to determine your Application Fee.

**Please note there is an additional administrative fee per application for Levels 2- 4.*

Site Visit Cost

All applicants (with the exception of Level 1) participate in a site visit from a team of SWAE examiners (see pages 9-10 & 16-17 for details). The applicants will be invoiced for the actual expenses of the Site Visit following completion of the Site Visit. A deposit may be requested prior to the Site Visit.

Application Fee Table

Application	Number of Employees	Application Fee (Non-member)	Application Fee (Member)
Interest (Level 1)	1-500	\$1200	\$1000
	501-1500	\$1500	\$1200
	More than 1500	\$2000	\$1600
Commitment (Level 2*)	1-500	\$2400	\$2000
	501-1500	\$3600	\$3200
	More than 1500	\$4600	\$4200
Achievement (Level 3*)	1-500	\$3600	\$3000
	501-1500	\$4800	\$4200
	More than 1500	\$5800	\$5200
Excellence (Level 4*)	1-500	\$4800	\$4000
	501-1500	\$6000	\$5200
	More than 1500	\$7000	\$6200
Process Level	N/A	\$1400	\$1000

*Additional administration fee per application: Level 2 - \$500 fee; Level 3 - \$750 fee; Level 4 - \$1000 fee

Site Visit Fees are invoiced at actual expense amount. (Refer to pages 9-10 & 16-17)

Workforce Size

Workforce size is based on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees working for the applicant. FTEs are defined as those who regularly work 40 or more hours a week and are entitled to benefits such as paid vacation, sick leave and insurance coverage. Part-time workers are counted as total part-time hours per week divided by 40. For example: 10 people at 20 hours is equal to 5 full time equivalent employees (10*20 / 40 = 5).

Each instance of job sharing, where multiple individuals fulfill the responsibilities of a single position that requires 40 or more hours per week, is counted as a full-time equivalent employee.

Applicant Categories

- 1. Large:** any organization with more than 1500 full-time equivalent workers
- 3. Medium:** any organization with 501 to 1500 full-time equivalent workers
- 4. Small:** any organization with 1-500 full-time equivalent workers



Applying for a SWAE Award

The SWAE Performance Excellence Program recognizes organizations for progress and achievement based on four levels of organization assessment: Level 1 (Interest Recognition), Level 2 (Commitment Award), Level 3 (Achievement Award) and Level 4 (Excellence Award) and a Process Level.

Award application requirements become more involved as award levels increase. To participate, an organization must submit an application packet appropriate for the award level to which it is applying.

Level 1 Applications

Level 1 applications are accepted year-round. For this application, the Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form is not required. The Application Fee (see details on page 8) is due when the application is submitted.

Organization Level 2, 3 and 4 & Process Level Applications

These applications consist of two parts:

Part 1 Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form
50% Application Fee (see table on page 8)
Received by: 2018 Cycle: May 4, 2018

Part 2 Criteria response
Application Fee (see table on page 8)
Received by: 2018 Cycle: July 9, 2018

Process Level Criteria Response

The Process Level application includes a three-page Process Context plus up to 10 pages for the Process Level Criteria responses. (See pages 35–41 for Process Level Criteria) *Baldrige Criteria references* are noted in *italicized* parenthesis after each Process Level criteria question, as appropriate.

Level 2, 3, and 4 Criteria response

Your Criteria response depends on the award level sought. The diagram on page 2 of the Criteria booklet* will help you determine which parts of the Criteria must be addressed in your application. ****All questions in the Organizational Profile must be answered for all Level 2, 3 & 4 applications.***

Level 2 Five-page Organizational Profile plus up to 15 pages addressing the seven categories of the Criteria and basic item requirements.

Level 3 Five-page Organizational Profile plus up to 35 pages addressing the seven categories of the Criteria and overall item requirements.

Level 4 Five-page Organizational Profile plus up to 50 pages addressing the seven categories of the Criteria and multiple item requirements.

Application Review Process

The Organization Level 2, 3 & 4 and Process Level Applications are reviewed and evaluated in a five-stage process by members of the SWAE Board of Examiners. These examiners, specially trained in the *Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence*, adhere to strict rules regarding confidentiality and conflict of interest during each stage of the review process.

Stage 1 – Independent review and evaluation by the individual members of the examiner team

Stage 2 – Consensus review and evaluation by the examiner team

Stage 3 – Site visits for the applicant by the examiner team

Stage 4 – Review of application and examiner team input (findings and recommendations for awards) by the Panel of Judges

Stage 5 – Final due diligence conducted for recommended recipient organizations

Site Visit

The Organization Level 2, 3 & 4 and Process Level SWAE evaluation includes a site visit. A team of examiners will spend one-half to five days at the applicant's worksite to gain a better understanding of operations and processes. The site visit is not an audit; its purpose is to provide the applicant a further opportunity to tell its story and to verify and clarify information in the application.

Applicants will receive a site visit agenda at least one week in advance of the site visit. The agenda may include a schedule of planned visits to facilities and operating units, a list of officials to be interviewed and the names of examiners

**See page 21 on how to order Criteria booklets*



Applying for a SWAE Award

Site Visit (continued)

scheduled to participate.

Site visit length depends on award level sought:

Process Level: half day (4 hours)

Level 2: 1 - 1.5 days

Level 3: 2 - 2.5 days

Level 4: 3 - 5 days depending on the size of the organization

(See more information regarding site visits on pages 16-17)

Feedback to Applicants

At the conclusion of the evaluation, every applicant receives a written assessment by the examiner team called a Feedback Report. Providing a pathway for improvement, the Feedback Report is one of the most valuable features of the SWAE Performance Excellence Program process.

Each Feedback Report contains applicant-specific strengths and opportunities for improvement based on the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*. Used by applicants as an input to the strategic planning process, Feedback Reports help organizations focus on their customers, improving processes and overall performance.

Feedback Reports are emailed to applicants after the site visit, judging and editorial process are complete. Strict confidentiality is observed at all times.

Supplying Volunteer Examiners

As a non-profit organization, SWAE's volunteer workforce – the Board of Examiners- is the engine that drives us. In order to maintain a robust and active workforce, we rely on all applicants to provide at least one examiner.

The Board of Examiners work best when there is a balance of new and experienced examiners, so we encourage organizations to send us examiners who have served in the past, as well as those who are new to the program. Many examiners return year after year, because they find their service to SWAE an unparalleled professional development

experience, as well as an opportunity to benchmark and network.

The added benefits of supplying examiners are significant: Examiners receive valuable training and insight, which they bring back to their organization. The organizations that have SWAE examiners on staff are better able to integrate the Criteria's improvement framework and engage in a successful quest for excellence. Visit the SWAE website for more information about the Board of Examiners.

<http://www.swae.org/examiners/>

Promoting Excellence

Regardless of award level, all SWAE applicants demonstrate a commitment to excellence. We encourage all organizations that receive an award to promote their achievements and the benefits of the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*.

SWAE urges award recipients to publicize their awards, and to share non-competitive information about their successful performance strategies with other organizations.

Excellence Award recipients are asked to participate in the annual Awards Banquet, and host a Benchmarking Tour/Workshop the year following their achievement.



SWAE Performance Excellence Program Recognition Levels

SWAE Award recognition is based on the demonstration of performance excellence and best practices at one of four organization levels: Level 1: Interest, Level 2: Commitment, Level 3: Achievement and Level 4: Excellence or at the Process Level.

Organizations apply to the SWAE Performance Excellence Program at one of these levels. As the award levels increase, so does the depth of the Criteria response. In other words, applicants must submit a longer, more detailed self-assessment, answering more questions posed by the Criteria.

For details, the table “Award Application Requirements by Level of Review” on page 14 describes the application requirements by level. And the diagram “Criteria for Performance Excellence Structure” in the Criteria booklet (page 2) shows which parts of the Criteria must be addressed, depending on your application level.

Each level is a continuum with lower, middle and upper limits. Improvement alone does not ensure that an organization will move from one level to the next- often, organizations will show progress from year to year, yet continue to receive recognition within the same level. The only way organizations can move up a level is to meet the standards for the next level.

When reading about the levels, particular emphasis should be placed on the information in boldface type. The *Criteria for Performance Excellence* is updated every two years, and these refinements may result in movement between award levels.

Level 1 – Interest Recognition

This is the beginning level for organizations interested in adopting and applying performance improvement principles. By applying for a Level 1 Recognition, an organization will learn about the Criteria and the assessment process. In addition, the organization will receive feedback that will help improve processes and propel it toward higher award levels. SWAE offers Level 1 applicants a hands-on, coaching approach during this first step of the performance improvement journey.

Level 1 Applicants will have their Leadership Team participate in a SWAE “Baldrige 101” Workshop. The applicant team will then meet with their Coach who is a SWAE Senior Examiner

to discuss the common vocabulary of the Baldrige Criteria, define key business factors, and learn how to answer questions in the organizational profile. The Applicant will then write and submit their own 5-page organizational profile and receive a written Feedback Report. The Feedback Report indicates actions, processes or system improvements that would most benefit the organization. Finally, the applicant will meet with their Coach to review the Feedback Report and determine the next steps for the organization.

Organizations that complete Level 1 will receive a Certificate of Recognition for participation and public recognition.

Level 2 – Commitment Award

Level 2 is the intermediate level of the SWAE Program. It recognizes organizations that are beginning to demonstrate serious commitment to, and implementation of, performance improvement principles. To apply at this level, organizations must submit the **Organizational Profile answering all questions** described in the Criteria booklet (pages 4-6).

Applications also include the signature of the highest ranking official, indicating his or her commitment. In addition, the organizations complete a self-assessment (up to 15 pages long), detailing how they apply the **Basic Item Requirements** of the seven categories outlined in the Criteria booklet. It is important that applicants at this level clearly note processes that have been systematically improved based on data and assessment. Level 2 applicants host a 1 - 2 day site visit conducted by a team of SWAE examiners.

Recipients of Commitment Awards have demonstrated progress by identifying and putting in place some key process improvements, which are directly attributable to a fact-based improvement process. The organization has addressed the Basic Item Requirements within each category of the Criteria. At this level, results may or may not be evident; however, a measurement system should be in place to capture data and analyze results.

Level 3 – Achievement Award

Level 3 is an advanced level of participation. It recognizes organizations that have demonstrated, through their commitment to and practice of performance improvement principles, significant progress and results in building sound processes. Level 3 applicants must submit the **Organizational**



SWAE Performance Excellence Program Recognition Levels

Profile answering all questions described in the Criteria booklet (pages 4-6) and the signature of the highest ranking official, indicating his or her commitment. The application also includes a self-assessment (up to 35 pages long), detailing how the organization applies the **Overall Item Requirements** of the seven categories outlined in the Criteria booklet.

Level 3 applicants host a comprehensive 2 – 3 day site visit conducted by a team of SWAE examiners. The year after receiving the Achievement Award, organizations are expected to provide voluntary assistance to organizations that are new to the SWAE performance excellence process.

Recipients of Achievement Awards have demonstrated significant progress in building systematic processes that effectively address the overall requirements of each item. These processes are deployed and aligned throughout the organization appropriately to meet the key needs of the organization. Results for some key processes show improvement (at least a year in most cases) that is directly attributable to a systematic improvement approach. These organizations have many practices from which other organizations can learn and grow.

Level 4 – Excellence Award

The highest level of recognition is presented to organizations that have demonstrated, through their practices and achievements, the highest level of performance excellence. Only 6 organizations have attained the Pinnacle Award for Excellence (formerly called the Governor's Award for Quality). Their success is typically the result of applying feedback from previous SWAE applications. There have been 35 recipients of the Pioneer Award for Excellence and 1 recipient of the Category Award for Excellence.

The Pinnacle Award for Excellence recognizes organizations that have mature and fully-deployed quality systems within their operations that demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and have a sustained significant record of performance. Organizational learning, including innovation and sharing of best practices, is a key management tool. Current performance results have been evaluated against relevant comparisons or benchmarks and show areas of favorable performance for most key customer, process and market requirements.

The Pioneer Award for Excellence recognizes organizations that demonstrate effective, systematic approaches that are aligned with the organizational needs. Deployment may vary in some areas. Results show good performance and comparative and trend data are available for some important results areas. Some beneficial trends are evident but sustained excellence has not been achieved.

The Category Award for Excellence recognizes organizations in one or more of the six categories: Leadership; Strategy, Customers; Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management; Workforce; and Operations. In each case, the organization will achieve recognition based on its performance in that category and the results related to that performance.

An application at this level requires submission of the **Organizational Profile answering all questions** described in the Criteria booklet (pages 4-6) and the signature of the highest ranking official, indicating his or her commitment. The application also includes a self-assessment (up to 50 pages long) detailing how the organization applies the **Multiple Item Requirements** of the seven categories outlined in the Criteria booklet.

Level 4 applicants host a comprehensive 3 - 5 day site visit conducted by a team of SWAE examiners. The year after receiving the Excellence Award, organizations are expected to provide voluntary assistance to organizations that are new to the SWAE performance excellence process. Additionally, Excellence Award recipients are asked to participate in the annual Awards Banquet, and host a Benchmarking Tour/Workshop the year following their achievement.

Process Level Award (Team Award)

We realized the need to complement our Organization Level Awards (holistic look at an organization) with an award that focuses more on specific organizational processes. The Process Level Application provides an opportunity for receiving feedback and recognition on specific organizational processes.

The Showcase in Excellence Award recognizes a team for one specific process that could be innovative or a cutting-edge approach. It may be used as a role model or result in exceptional performance. It could also be a routine process performed in an extraordinary manner.



SWAE Performance Excellence Program Recognition Levels

A **process** is a defined series of steps or actions to produce an intended output— either a service or a product, for an internal or external customer. A process is systematic, in that it is well-ordered, repeatable, and uses data from which to learn about maintaining or improving performance. A one-time project is not a process. The use of a one-time event to improve performance is not a process. A generalized workflow that is not well-defined and changing in an uncontrolled manner is also not a process.

The Process Level criteria, in general, ask how the submitted process has been designed, improved, and managed through the use of data. Additionally, the criteria ask the applicant to demonstrate with data that the process produced the intended results for which it was designed, and to demonstrate the performance levels and trends that it attained. Review the “Glossary of Key Terms” in the Criteria booklet to make sure that your application presents an actual process. If you have questions about your process eligibility, please call the SWAE office at (480)874-5815.

The evaluation of Process and Results Item responses includes a review of the Criteria Items in combination with the Scoring Guidelines (refer to Process Level Criteria document). Specifically, the Process Item (Category 1) Scoring Guidelines address the maturity of your approaches, breadth of deployment, extent of learning, and integration with other elements of the organization. Similarly, the Results Item (Category 2) Scoring Guidelines focus on the significance of the results trends, actual performance levels, relevant comparative data, and integration with important elements of your process. Consider both the Criteria and the Scoring Guidelines as you prepare your responses to the process and results items.

Applying for an Award

If your organization is interested in applying for a SWAE Award, please turn to pages 15-16, 26-27 and 28-34 for details and forms.

Important Dates

Examiner training:

A great way to learn the Criteria and develop leadership skills is to serve on the **SWAE Board of Examiners (BOE)**. You can learn more about examiner duties and fill out an application form on the Award Program page on the SWAE website (<http://www.swae.org/performance-excellence-program/>).

BOE Application Deadline:

2018 Cycle: May 11, 2018

Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form:

If you are applying for an Organization Level 2, 3 or 4 Award or a Process Level Award you must submit the Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form (located on pages 28-34), and 50% of the Application Fee to the SWAE office (mailing address below). *Level 1 Applicants do not need to fill out the Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form.*

Received by:

2018 Cycle: May 4, 2018

Organization Level 2, 3, 4 & Process Level Application:

Level 2, 3, 4 & Process Level Applicants must submit a completed application package (described on pages 15-16) and the Application Fee. (Fees are described on page 8). Mailing address below.

Received by:

2018 Cycle: July 9, 2018

Level 1 Application:

Level 1 applications are accepted year-round, so there is not an application deadline. To apply for Level 1 recognition, applicants must submit the completed Level 1 Application Form (located on pages 26-27), and the Application Fee (see page 8 for details). Level 1 Applicants are not required to fill out an Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form.

Contact SWAE

3961 E. Chandler Blvd. Suite 111-334 (mailing address only)

Phoenix, AZ 85048

(480)874-5815

www.swae.org

kshepard@swae.org



Award Application Requirements by Level of Review

This table shows the Southwest Alliance for Excellence (SWAE) application requirements and review process for each application level (as described on the previous pages). The diagram on page 2 of the Criteria booklet may help Level 2, 3 and 4 applicants determine which parts of the Criteria must be addressed in their application.

	Org. Level 1 Interest	Org. Level 2 Commitment	Org. Level 3 Achievement	Org. Level 4 Excellence	Process Level
Intent to Apply/ Eligibility Form with 50% Application fee & 100% admin fee	Not required	Required *Received by May 4, 2018	Required *Received by May 4, 2018	Required *Received by May 4, 2018	Required *Received by May 4, 2018 Administration fee not required
Organizational Profile	Required: 5 pages maximum Levels 2, 3 and 4: Applicants must answer all the Organizational Profile questions and must accompany the Response to the Criteria. Received by – July 9, 2018				Required: Process Profile (1 page) and Process Context (3-page max.) Received by – July 9, 2018
Application Form and Fee	Level 1: Applicants must use the Application Form on pages 26-27. (No due date, Level 1 applications are accepted throughout the year.) 100% application fee due with application. There is no administrative fee.				
Response to Criteria (using the 2017-18 Criteria Booklet for Levels 1-4 for 2018 program cycle).	Not Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 categories, • Basic item requirements (15 pages max.) • Org Profile + 17 Criteria Questions <i>*submitted with remaining application fee by July 9, 2018.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 categories, • Overall item requirements. (35 pages max.) • Org Profile + 106 Criteria Questions <i>*submitted with remaining application fee by July 9, 2018.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 categories, • Multiple item requirements. (50 pages max.) • Org Profile + 252 Criteria Questions <i>*submitted with remaining application fee by July 9, 2018.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Level Criteria • 2 Categories (Process & Results) (10 pages max.) • Process Profile & Process Context + 35 Criteria Questions <i>*submitted within 30 days of initial application form and fee.</i>
Site Visit	N/A – Replaced with coaching	1 - 1.5 Days	2 - 2.5 Days	3 - 5 Days (depending on size of organization)	4 hours
Recognition Eligibility	Interest Recognition	Commitment Award	Achievement or Commitment Award	Pinnacle, Pioneer or Category Award for Excellence or Achievement Award	Showcase in Excellence Award
Applicant Responsibilities	N/A	Provide at least one SWAE examiner	Provide at least one SWAE examiner Assistance to other organizations	*Provide at least one SWAE examiner *Assistance to other organizations *Participation in annual Award Banquet *Benchmarking Tour / Best Practices Workshop	Provide at least one SWAE examiner Benchmarking Tour (if appropriate)



Preparing Your Award Application

How to Apply:

- Contact SWAE if you have questions determining whether your organization is eligible to submit an application.
- File the Intent to Apply and Eligibility Agreement form (by stated deadline) for Organization Level 2, 3, 4 & Process Level with 50% of the appropriate application fee. (All fees are non-refundable but can be used in the following year.)
- Submit an electronic application that meets the enclosed guidelines (no paper copies of applications will be accepted). The applicant will provide this electronic copy in a Portable Document Format (PDF) to allow for appropriate printing where necessary. *(Keep in mind that font size and formatting is to match the criteria stipulated in the application, even after figures and graphs have been inserted and saved as a PDF file. The final copy will be tested for format requirements.)* Mail the remaining 50% of the application fee to the SWAE address.
- Host a site visit per the Performance Excellence Program guidelines and reimburse SWAE for the team's expenses (this item is optional if the organization is submitting for feedback only).
- An organization that submits a Feedback only application may choose not to receive a site visit. There is no reduction in the Application Fees, but no site visit or site visit expenses will be included in the assessment. The feedback report will then be based on the consensus score of the examiner team. Note: The Site Visit is a vital part of the assessment process. Although an organization may choose not to host the Site Visit, the value of the feedback report will be reduced by this choice. If an organization declares that its application is for Feedback only, this declaration cannot be changed after the application is submitted to the Southwest Alliance for Excellence.

Application Package

- The Application Package consists of:
 - Title Page
 - Table of Contents (page #'s of each Category Item)

- Organization Chart
 - Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
 - (Levels 2, 3 & 4) - Organization Profile (not to exceed 5 pages) **OR**
 - Process Level - Process Profile (1 page) & Process Context (not to exceed 3 pages)
 - The Responses to the Criteria Items (not to exceed specified # pages per Level).
- Organizations must submit an electronic application that meets the enclosed guidelines. (No paper copies of applications will be accepted) The applicant will provide this electronic copy in a (PDF).
- Levels 2, 3, 4 & Process Level updated electronic copy of the completed "Intent to Apply and Eligibility Form," pages 4 & 5 only, submitted in a separate document (ONLY if any information has changed).
- Full payment of the application fee (a minimum of 50% is paid with Intent to Apply and Eligibility submission). The admin fee is paid in full with the Intent.
- Checks or electronic transfers are preferred. A 5% service charge will be applied for credit card payments.

Formatting the Application

- Consider each of the questions listed in the criteria in the Level you are applying..
- Use the same Category and Item numerical designations as in the Criteria.
- The application should be formatted:
 - Page size: 8 ½ by 11 inch size
 - Page orientation: Portrait / Pages with graphs; figures & tables: portrait or landscape
 - Lines per page: 60 (includes headings and blank lines separating paragraphs; does not include headers/footers with recurring info, i.e. org. name, page #, etc.)
 - Leading: 2 points between lines (1 point of leading equals 1/72 or 0.0138 inch)
 - Margins: Left = ¾ inch minimum; Right = ½ inch minimum
 - Text Columns: 2 preferred with ¼ inch between columns
 - Numbering: pages that respond to all criteria items should be numbered as such, i.e. Org. Level 4 (1 - 50), Org. Level 3 (1 – 35) or Process Level (1 – 10); don't number blank pages, or use small Roman numerals, i.e. iii, iv, etc..
 - Figure Numbers: Figures within Organizational/Process Profile and Item sections should be in sequence; use numbers corresponding to the section (e.g., Figure P.1-1, Figure 2.1-2)



Preparing Your Award Application

Formatting the Application *(continued)*

- Font and type size:
 - Running text: 10 points minimum; Times New Roman or Arial
 - Do not use narrow, compressed, or condensed fonts
 - The font and type size need not be uniform as long as they meet the requirements
 - If you shrink graphics to fit the space available, ensure that text in the reduced figure meets the requirements
 - Tables filled mainly with text: 8 points minimum; Times New Roman or Arial
 - Other graphics (charts, graphs, data tables, and other figures), including titles and captions: 8 points minimum; any font
- Clearly label each figure using descriptive text. For example, the title of the third figure for results Item 2.1 might read “Figure 2.1-3 Reliability of Service: Carrier-Dropped Calls.”
- Clearly label all axes and units of measure
- All components of the application must be in ONE document; i.e. the title page, table of contents, organization chart, glossary, organization or profile, and the responses to the criteria items.

Page Limits and Exclusions

- Criteria response page limits must include all pictures, graphs, figures, tables, and appendices. These pages must be consecutively numbered. Page limits do NOT include Organizational Profile or Process Profile or Context, glossary, title pages, organization chart, or table of contents.
- Examiners must base their evaluations solely on information contained within the application report. Do not add links to information on internet or websites. Examiners are instructed to rely solely on the content in the application and are not allowed to follow any such links.
- Do not submit copies of video, audiotape or other information aids.

An application that does not comply with all of the requirements, including the permitted page limit, font size, and margins will not be accepted by SWAE.

(Keep in mind that font size and formatting is to match criteria stipulated in the application, even after figures and graphs have been inserted and saved as a PDF file. The final copy will be tested for format requirements.)

It is suggested that you submit your final application before the due date to avoid potential issues. You may set up an appointment with the SWAE staff to review and ensure your application meets the above requirements.

Site Visits

(All applicants that wish to be considered for an award will receive a site visit)

The primary objectives of a Site Visit are to verify the information provided in the Application and to clarify issues and questions raised during review of the application. A general Site Visit schedule is developed by the examiner team, and is provided to the organization in advance of the Site Visit dates. This initial schedule is tentative and may be revised by the team as the Site Visit proceeds. The schedule includes an estimate of the total time for the visit. Site Visits consist of interviews by examiner teams, team reviews of pertinent records and data, including data and information that has been generated since the formal submission of the application, and other appropriate methods for verifying the application content. Every effort will be made by the SWAE and the examiner team to minimize the disruption caused by the Site Visit. Applicants may make an introductory presentation, usually not exceeding 15-20 minutes in length depending on the Level of application. Depending upon the applicant’s size, the examiner team may request a tour of the facility. During and after site visit the examiner team develops a Feedback Report for the Panel of Judges. For Level 4 applications, a mentor will be assigned to the Site Visit. The mentor will ensure that the team and applicant are kept informed of the status of the visit and act as a way for the team to be contacted in the event of unforeseen circumstances. The mentor does not act as a member of the team in evaluating the applicant.



Preparing Your Award Application

Site Visit Expenses and Protocol

Site Visit costs may be estimated and partially paid by the applicant prior to the scheduling of the Site Visit. After the Site Visit is completed and expenses have been tabulated, applicants will be invoiced by SWAE for the actual amount of the examiner team expense. This may include lodging, food, meeting room costs for the examiner team at their place of lodging, and travel and/or roundtrip mileage to the applicant's location. Examiner teams endeavor to keep the costs of the Site Visits as low as possible. Expenses of the Site Visit mentor, if any, will be included with the costs of the other team members.

The examiner team will request that the applicant provide a common meeting area on site for the team for the duration of the Site Visit. This area should be secure during the periods of the team's on-site activities and should be kept secured when the team is not on-site. All documentation requested by the team for examination will be reviewed in the team's meeting area – these materials will not be taken off-site by the examiners. If the applicant has restrictions or requirements on the possession or use of personal computer devices, citizenship, security clearances, etc., they should notify SWAE of these constraints prior to submittal of their application.

To avoid any appearances of impropriety or perceptions of undue influence on the examiners by the applicant, examiners are not permitted to accept gifts, tokens of appreciation, or other items as part of the Site Visit. The team will arrange for their accommodations and travel, and may not accept lodging or other services from the applicant. Even if it is available as part of the applicant's normal business or provided at market rates, the team will not accept accommodations from the applicant. SWAE may ask the applicant for contact information on convenient accommodations as they prepare for the Site Visit.

Feedback to Applicants

The feedback report, a tool for continuous improvement, is a written evaluation by an evaluation team from the Board of Examiners. Each applicant organization will receive a full feedback report at the conclusion of the review process. The feedback report contains an applicant-specific listing of

strengths and opportunities for improvement based on the Criteria. When used by organizations as part of their strategic planning processes, the feedback report can help them focus on their customers and improve productivity. The feedback system is one of the most important components of the Performance Excellence Program process; it provides a pathway for continuous improvement. Strict confidentiality is observed at all times and in every aspect of application review and feedback.

Judges' Final Review

A final review of all applications is conducted by the Panel of Judges. The Panel of Judges review the examiner team's work for integrity and completeness then develops a recommendation for each applicant. This recommendation is forwarded to SWAE and includes the determination of the level of award for each recipient.

Final Award Determination

Due diligence is performed for all recommended recipients to determine if there are any other outstanding issues that may affect their selection as a Performance Excellence Program Recipient. The purpose of this final review is to ensure that the integrity of the Program and Awards is maintained.

Feedback Report Review Meetings

As a value-add to all applicants, whether or not an award is received, SWAE offers each applicant the opportunity to meet with the Lead Examiner and Lead Judge on their application in addition to the SWAE Executive Director to review their final feedback report. These have been very positive and helpful to each applicant.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES (18-20) REFER TO ORGANIZATION LEVELS 2, 3 & 4



Preparing Your Award Application

Notes for Public Sector and Not-for Profit Organizations

The SWAE Performance Excellence Program is patterned after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP). This allows organizations to follow the same criteria, standards, and procedures while making meaningful comparisons with any of the many organizations that apply for the Baldrige Award, state programs based on BPEP, or use BPEP criteria in self-assessments. Unfortunately, a common language across sectors does not exist. Some interpretation and translation of terms is necessary for some of the organizations covered by the Performance Excellence Program. These guidelines should assist in that process.

Special Note: It is very important that applicants in the public sector or not-for-profit arena describe their unique circumstances in their Organizational Profile. The details provided are critical for examiners to understand the organizational context and learn of the elements of the organization's environment that are significant to improving its performance, including relationships and limitations.

Customers, Stakeholders, Markets, and Sales

Application of quality principles to organizations relies on a 'customer focus' to drive many policies. Public sector organizations are rapidly adapting quality principles and are beginning to adopt the term 'customer' to mean any stakeholder, client, constituent, or user of the service. In the public sector, however, some differences exist in customers and markets compared to the typical private sector organization. For example, the customers of a police department would include all citizens within the jurisdiction as well as those visiting or passing through the area. 'Market share growth' may be interpreted by the police department to mean such things as crime prosecution rates. 'Sales' by a public sector organization means constituents served or services rendered.

Financial Analysis

Financial analysis and measures of success for private sector organizations often rely on revenue and profits. In the public sector, organizations should use costs, budget performance, fees charged, and any other appropriate financial information to indicate effectiveness of service delivery.

Competition and Benchmarking

Private sector organizations operate in a competitive environment, and quality is one of the major factors that will determine their competitiveness. With the movement toward competitive government, organizations should indicate how

quality relates to their continued survival and success. They may benchmark against comparable organizations in the public or private sectors. For example, an agency within city government could compare its results with like agencies in cities of the same size and demographic characteristics.

Laws, Regulations, and Restrictions

Public sector organizations may be mandated by law to provide services and serve customers while their private sector counterparts may have more freedom to choose products, services, markets, and customers.

Support Services

"Support Services" refers to those functions that provide support in the form of information, training, accounting, or other services to the primary core processes and outcomes of the organization. In a private sector organization, these support functions are areas such as accounting, human resources, purchasing, customer support, supplier services and information systems. In the public sector at least some of these services may be centralized in a separate agency that provides support to other agencies.



Preparing Your Award Application

Notes for Health Care Organizations

The SWAE Performance Excellence Program is patterned after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP). This allows organizations to follow the same criteria, standards, and procedures while making meaningful comparisons with any of the many organizations that apply for the Baldrige Award, state programs based on BPEP, or use BPEP criteria in self-assessments. Unfortunately, a common language across sectors does not exist. Some interpretation and translation of terms is necessary by some of the organizations covered by the Performance Excellence Program. These guidelines should assist in that process.

Special Note: It is very important that applicants in the healthcare arena describe their unique circumstances in their Organizational Profile. The details provided in these areas are critical for examiners to understand the organizational content and learn of the elements of the organization's environment that are significant to improving its performance, including relationships and limitations.

Customers, Stakeholders, Markets, and Sales

Application of quality principles relies on a 'customer focus' to drive many policies. Within the Healthcare field, the term "customer" refers to actual and potential users of your organization's services or programs. Patients are the primary customers of health care organizations, but also include: current or future patients, competitor's patients, customers of like or similar organizations, services or programs. Stakeholders refer to groups that are or might be affected by an organization's services, actions, and success. These might include patient families, the community, insurers or other third-party payors, employers, Departments of Health, health care providers, or regulatory bodies. Markets refer to the defined market(s) or area(s) served by your organization. Sales will include health care services, but it may also refer to services provided to the community, especially in not for profit health care organizations.

Workforce

"Workforce" refers to all people actively involved in accomplishing the work of your organization. These may include paid employees, contract staff, independent practitioners, volunteers, and health care students. "Workforce" applies to all workers, including team leaders, directors, and managers at all levels.

Financial Analysis

Financial analysis and measures of success for private sector organizations often rely on revenue and profits. For those in health care this typically will refer to measures of cost, revenue, market position, asset utilization, asset growth and market share. Examples may include returns on investment, value added per staff member, performance to budget, operating margin, or other profitability and liquidity measures.

Competition, Comparative Data and Benchmarking

Private sector organizations operate in a competitive environment: quality is one major factor that will help determine their competitiveness. Likewise, health care organizations should indicate how quality relates to their continued survival and success. Benchmarks are one source of comparative data. Health care organizations, based on selection criteria, may also consider including information obtained from other organizations through sharing, information obtained via contribution to external databases, open literature research, data gathering and evaluation by independent organizations (e.g., CMS, accrediting) on industry data (frequently averages), data on competitor's performance, and other appropriate comparisons from within and outside the health care industry and your markets.

Laws, Regulations, Accreditations, and Restrictions

Health care organizations may be mandated by law to provide services and serve customers while their private sector counterparts may have more freedom to choose products, services, markets, and customers. For healthcare these include HIPAA and JCAHO requirements.

Support Services

"Support Services" refers to those functions that provide support in the form of information, training, accounting, or other services to the primary core processes and outcomes of the organization. In a private sector organization, these support functions are. To a health care organization it may include areas such as accounting, human resources, purchasing, patient support, supplier services and information systems.



Preparing Your Award Application

Notes for Educational Organizations

The SWAE Performance Excellence Program is patterned after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP). This allows organizations can follow the same criteria, standards, and procedures while making meaningful comparisons with any of the many organizations that apply for the Baldrige Award, state programs based on BPEP, or use BPEP criteria in self-assessments. Unfortunately, a common language across sectors does not exist. Some interpretation and translation of terms is necessary by some of the organizations covered by the Performance Excellence Program. These guidelines should assist in that process.

Special Note: It is very important that applicants in the educational arena describe their unique circumstances in their Organizational Profile. The details provided are critical for examiners to understand the organizational context and learn of the elements of the organization's environment that are significant to improving its performance, including relationships and limitations.

Customers, Stakeholders, Markets, and Sales

Application of quality principles to organizations relies on a 'customer focus' to drive many policies. In education, this refers to students and other stakeholders who are either actual or potential users of your educational programs, offerings or services. Key customers for education are students and others who directly use your programs, offering and services. Stakeholders include others or groups that are or might be affected by your success or actions. Examples of these may include parents, parent organizations, the workforce, governing boards, alumni, other schools, regulatory bodies, taxpayers, policy makers, and communities. Market refers to the defined market or area serviced by your organization. Sales for an educational organization may also represent customers served or services rendered.

Workforce

The term "workforce" refers to all people actively involved in accomplishing the work of your organization. These include paid employees, contract workers, non-instructional employees, and volunteers. "Workforce" applies to all workers, including administrators and supervisors at all levels.

Financial Analysis

Financial analysis and measures of success for private sector organizations often rely on revenue and profits. In the public sector, organizations should use costs, budget performance, fees charged, and any other appropriate financial information to indicate effectiveness of service delivery. Specifically for education this would also include measures of cost containment, budget utilization and market share. Areas such as instructional or administration expenditures per student as a percentage of budget, grants and award dollars, program expenditures as a percentage of budget, resources applied to applied to education or redirected to education, grant growth, scholarship growth, and reserves.

Competition and Benchmarking

Private sector organizations operate in a competitive environment: quality is one major factor that will determine their competitiveness. As competition intensifies for educational organizations at all levels, organizations should indicate how quality relates to their continued survival and success. Benchmarks are one form of comparative data. Others may include data collected by a competent third-party (frequently in averages), performance data from other educational organizations and competitors, similar organizations in the same geography or those offering similar programs, offerings or services in other geographic areas.

Laws, Regulations, Accreditations, and Restrictions

Public sector organizations may be mandated by law to provide services and serve customers. For educational organization these may include No Child Left Behind or accreditation organizations.

Support Services

"Support Services" refers to those functions that provide support in the form of information, training, accounting, or other services to the primary core processes and outcomes of the organization. In a private sector organization, these support functions are areas such as accounting, human resources, purchasing, customer support, supplier services and information systems. To an educational organization it may include these or be more student-focused. Areas such as counseling or job placement may be examples.



Criteria for Performance Excellence Booklets

There are three versions of the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*:

- The [Business/Nonprofit](#) *Criteria for Performance Excellence* are used by the manufacturing, service, small business, nonprofit or government sectors.
- The [Health Care](#) *Criteria for Performance Excellence* are used by health care organizations.
- The [Education](#) *Criteria for Performance Excellence* are used by educational organizations.

- [About the Baldrige Criteria](#): Introduction to the Criteria
- [Sample pages from the Criteria Booklet](#) (PDF) (including the Organizational Profile and Item 3.2, Customer Engagement)
- [Organizational Profile](#): A snapshot of your organization, the key influences on how it operates, and the key challenges it faces
- [Criteria Category and Item Commentary](#): Additional guidance on the Criteria
- [Self-Analysis Worksheet](#): A self-assessment tool to use with the Criteria (MS-word) *link on right column under Resources
- [From Fighting Fires to Innovation: An Analogy for Learning](#): See how organizational learning- a Baldrige core value- moves your organization from reacting to problems to preventing them (JPEG, EPS)
- [Steps toward Mature Processes](#): Locate your organization on this continuum from reactive activities to mature processes aligned with your key strategic and operational goals (JPEG, EPS)
- [The Role of Core Values and Concepts](#): Values and concepts that underlie the Baldrige Criteria categories. (JPEG, EPS)

How to Purchase the 2017-2018 Criteria

[Purchase](#) your copy today.

[Purchase/Download PDFs](#) (\$12) from NIST

[Purchase Printed Booklets](#) (\$30 plus shipping)

These fees help recover the cost of developing and producing the Criteria.

Volume Discounts

Volume discounts are available for both electronic and printed formats:

- 5-24 copies: 5% discount
- 25-99 copies: 10% discount
- 100 or more copies: 15% discount



Criteria for Performance Excellence Overview:

The requirements of the Criteria for Performance Excellence are embodied in seven categories, as follows:

- 1 Leadership
- 2 Strategy
- 3 Customers
- 4 Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management
- 5 Workforce
- 6 Operations
- 7 Results

The figure on page 1 of the Criteria Booklet provides the framework connecting and integrating the categories.

From top to bottom, the framework on the following page has these basic elements.

Organizational Profile

Your Organizational Profile (top of figure) sets the context for the way your organization operates. Your organization's environment, key working relationships, and strategic situation—including competitive environment, strategic challenges and advantages, and performance improvement system—serve as the background for all you do.

Performance System

The performance system is composed of the six Baldrige categories in the center of the figure that define your processes and the results you achieve.

Leadership (category 1), Strategy (category 2), and Customers (category 3) represent the leadership triad. These categories are placed together to emphasize the importance of a leadership focus on strategy and customers.

Workforce (Category 5), Operations (Category 6), and Results (Category 7) represents the Results Triad. Your organization's workforce and key operational processes accomplish the work of the organization that yields your overall performance results.

All actions lead to results- a composite of product and process, customer-focused, workforce-focused, leadership and governance and financial and market results.

The arrows in the center of the framework show that all the elements of the system are interrelated.

System Foundation

Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management (Category 4) are critical to effective management and to fact-based, knowledge-driven, agile system for improving performance and competitiveness.

Criteria Structure

The Seven Criteria categories shown in the figure are subdivided into items and areas to address.

Items

There are 17 Criteria Items (plus 2 in the Organizational Profile), each with a particular focus. Item titles and point values are given on page 3 of the Criteria booklet. The item format is shown on page 2 of the Criteria booklet.

Items are divided into 3 groups according to the kinds of information they ask for:

- The Organizational Profile asks you to define your organizational environment.
- Process Items (Categories 1-6) ask you to define your organizational processes.
- Results Items (Category 7) asks you to report results for your organizational processes.



Criteria for Performance Excellence Overview: A Systems Perspective



From Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. 2017. *2017–2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework: A Systems Approach to Improving Your Organization's Performance*. Gaithersburg, MD: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology. <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige>.



SWAE Award Recipients

Excellence Award Recipients

Governor's Award

(currently the Pinnacle Award)

- 2005 Sonora Quest Laboratories
- 2001 Arizona Department of Transportation
- 1999 56th Medical Group of the 56th Fighter Wing at Luke Air Force Base
- 1997 Raytheon Missile Systems (formerly Hughes Missile Systems Company)
- 1995 Honeywell Satellite Systems
- 1994 Avnet Electronic Marketing Group

Pioneer Award

- 2014 City of Henderson, NV
- 2012 Southern Arizona VA Health Care System
- 2010 Scottsdale Healthcare
- 2008 John C. Lincoln Deer Valley Hospital
- 2006 Maricopa County Library District
- 2005 Arizona Game and Fish Department
Maricopa County Parks & Recreation Department
- 2004 BRGA Division, Honeywell
- 2003 Sonora Quest Laboratories
- 2002 Boeing - Military Aerospace Support – Mesa
- 1999 Interface Data Systems
- 1998 Arizona Department of Economic Security
Phelps Dodge Miami, Inc. (acquired by Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc. in 2007)
University of Phoenix - Phoenix Campus
- 1997 J.B. Rodgers Mechanical Contractors
- 1996 The Boeing Company (formerly McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Systems)
Holsum Bakery
IKON Office Solutions, Technology Services (now Ricoh USA, Inc. as of 2012)
MicroAge Inc.
- 1995 Arizona Department of Transportation
CIGNA Healthcare of Arizona Inc.
Lucent Technologies (now Alcatel-Lucent as of 2006 merger)

Pioneer Award (continued)

- 1994 Cyprus Miami Mining (became Phelps Dodge Miami, Inc., then acquired by Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc. in 2007)
Raytheon Missile Systems (formerly Hughes Missile Systems Company)
Shea Homes
SmartPractice
- 1993 Avnet Electronic Marketing Group
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona
Boise Cascade Office Products
CartridgeCare Inc. (acquired by Loffler Companies, Inc.)
Childress Buick
Rio Salado Community College
Sonic Air
Varian Tempe Electronics Center
(acquired by Jabil Circuit Inc. in 2005)

Category Award (*initiated in 2012*)

- 2017 City of Henderson Nevada – Category 1 and Category 5
- 2017 Nathan Adelson Hospice – Category 5
- 2015 Student Development Center of the LDS Business College, UT – Category 5
- 2012 Arrowhead Hospital – Category 4

Achievement Award (*initiated in 2015*)

- 2017 Yuma Regional Medical Center
- 2016 Nathan Adelson Hospice, NV

Commitment Award (*initiated in 2015*)

- 2016 Bristol Global Mobility
Montevista Hospital, NV
Phoenix Convention Center & Venues
Scottsdale Medical Imaging
Yuma Regional Medical Center
- 2015 Deer Valley Unified School District

Leadership Award (*initiated in 2015*)

- 2017 Jane Dobbs – Canyon State Credit Union
- 2016 Jonathan Gardner – Southern Arizona VA Health Center
- 2015 Dave Dexter – Sonora Quest Laboratories / Laboratory Sciences of Arizona



SWAE Award Recipients

Process Award Recipients

Showcase in Excellence Award (initiated in 2002)

- 2015 University of Phoenix (2)
Yuma Regional Medical Center
- 2014 Arizona State Retirement System (2)
Deer Valley Unified School District, AZ
University of Phoenix
Yuma Regional Medical Center, AZ
- 2013 Deer Valley Unified School District
Laboratory Sciences of Arizona/Banner
Health
Scottsdale Healthcare
Town of Gilbert Fire Department
University of Phoenix (2)
- 2012 Banner Health
Maricopa County Department of
Transportation
Rio Salado College
Scottsdale Healthcare (2)
University of Phoenix (3)
- 2011 Avnet Global Solutions Center
Deer Valley Unified School District
Laboratory Sciences of Arizona / Banner
Boswell Medical Center Laboratory
Maricopa County Adult Probation
Department
Maricopa County Department of
Transportation
Rio Salado College
University of Phoenix
- 2010 Banner Desert Medical Center
The Boeing Company - Rotorcraft Division
– Mesa (2)
The Council on Chiropractic Education
Deer Valley Unified School District
Laboratory Sciences of Arizona/Banner
Del Webb Medical Center Laboratory
Maricopa County Animal Care and Control
Maricopa County Correctional Health
Services
Maricopa County Public Works Facilities
Management Division
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

- University of Phoenix
 - 2009 Arizona Game and Fish Department
Laboratory Sciences of Arizona / Banner
Baywood Medical Center Laboratory
Laboratory Sciences of Arizona / Banner
Estrella Medical Center Laboratory
Scottsdale Healthcare (2)
University of Phoenix
 - 2008 Arizona Game & Fish
Maricopa County Adult Probation
Department
Maricopa County Planning &
Development Department
Verde Valley Medical Center
- (2003 – 2007 Showcase in Excellence Award
Recipients can be viewed at: www.swae.org)*



Level 1 Application Form

This form is to be used by Level 1 applicants only. Level 2, 3, 4 & Process Level applicants, please use the Intent-to-Apply form.

Submit your Level 1 Application form and application fee to:

kshepard@swae.org or

Southwest Alliance for Excellence
3961 E. Chandler Blvd. Suite 111-334 (mailing address only)
Phoenix AZ, 85048

1. Applicant

Organization Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip code: _____

Total # of employees (full time equivalent): _____

*Part-time workers are counted as total part-time hours per week divided by 40. For example: 10 people at 20 hours is equal to 5 full time equivalent employees (10*20 / 40 = 5).

2. Industry Sector

Please check the sectors that best describes your organization

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing | <input type="checkbox"/> Government | <input type="checkbox"/> For Profit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit | <input type="checkbox"/> Not-for-Profit |

3. Official Contact

Name: _____

Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Street Address (no PO Box): _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

4. Percent of physical assets in the state from which the organization is applying: _____

5. Has the organization existed for at least one year? Yes No

6. Is the organization headquartered in the same state from which the organization is applying?

Yes No

7. Is the organization a subsidiary of a larger organization?

Yes No

8. If the applicant answered "Yes" to being a subsidiary, complete the following:

a. Parent Organization: _____

b. Address: _____

c. Highest Official of Parent Organization: _____

d. Title: _____

e. Does the Applicant comprise over 50% of the parent organization? Yes No

9. Fees

An Application Fee is required with this Application Form. (Refer to the fee schedule in the Application Guidance Manual, page 8).

Total Enclosed: _____

10. One-Sentence Description of your organization: _____

I state and attest that: To the best of my knowledge, no untrue statement or omission of a material fact has been made in this application package. Based on the information herein and the current eligibility requirements for the Southwest Alliance for Excellence Performance Excellence Program, my organization is eligible to apply. I understand if information is found not to support eligibility at any time during the Award Process cycle, my organization will no longer receive consideration for recognition and will only receive a Feedback Report.

Signature

Date



2018 Intent to Apply & Eligibility Agreement Form

Intent to Apply submitted to SWAE by.....	May 4, 2018
Applications submitted to SWAE by.....	July 9, 2018
Site Visit	Sept 24-28 or Oct 1-5, 2018
Award Recipient(s) Announcement.....	Nov 26 - 30, 2018
Feedback Report sent to applicant by.....	Mid-December, 2018

Congratulations! By applying to the Performance Excellence Program, you are taking a major step to improve your organization's performance and growth. Because of the learning inherent in completing the application and in the feedback you will receive, the effort that goes into applying to the Program should result in a significant return on your investment. The process will help you prioritize opportunities for improvement and identify strengths to celebrate. As a result, the rate at which your organization improves should accelerate.

Base Application Costs:

- At least 50% of the application fee and 100% of the admin fee is due (**Org. Level 2, 3 & 4 and Process Level only**) with the submission of the Intent to Apply and Eligibility Form; remainder is due with submission of the application.
- If the applicant, for any reason, chooses not to submit the application, the portion of the fee submitted with the Intent to Apply and Eligibility Form may be applied towards the next year's application fee. It is not refundable.

Application Fee Table

Application	Number of Employees	Application Fee (Non-member)	Application Fee (Member)
Process Level **	NA	\$1400	\$1000
Commitment (Level 2*)	1-500	\$2400	\$2000
	501-1500	\$3600	\$3200
	More than 1500	\$4600	\$4200
Achievement (Level 3*)	1-500	\$3600	\$3000
	501-1500	\$4800	\$4200
	More than 1500	\$5800	\$5200
Excellence (Level 4*)	1-500	\$4800	\$4000
	501-1500	\$6000	\$5200
	More than 1500	\$7000	\$6200

*Additional administration fee per application: Level 2 - \$500 fee; Level 3 - \$750 fee; Level 4 - \$1000 fee

**No additional administration fee for Process Level applications

Site Visit Fees are invoiced at actual expense amount. (Refer to pages 9-10 & 16-17 of the Application Guidance Document.)

Additional Costs:

- Site visit costs to reimburse travel and lodging for the examiner team: These costs may be estimated and a portion paid by the applicant prior to the scheduling of a site visit. The remainder will be paid after the site visit.
 - Site visit costs include examiner team's hotel accommodations, food, transportation, etc.
 - Select dates for site visit on the Intent to Apply and Eligibility Form attached (page 31).
 - The length of a site visit is determined by the type of application and size of the organization. Refer to the Application Guidance Manual (page 8).

Additional Requirements:

Because having internal knowledge of the Criteria framework is critical to advancing excellence within your organization, and to support the Performance Excellence Program, it is necessary that each applicant provide or sponsor at least one examiner per application submitted or increase each application fee by \$500. **(NOTE - Please contact SWAE if you have questions or concerns, or if you are unable to provide an examiner.)**

- SWAE encourages applicant organizations to provide more than the necessary volunteer examiner to serve in the current award application cycle. An examiner fee of \$400 or \$500, will depend on examiner previously serving 2 of the past 3 years, will be assessed as a deposit. *(Refer to Examiner Application for details.)*
- Upon successful completion of training **and** successful completion of service on an evaluation team, the examiner/organization may receive a refund of a portion of the examiner fee.
- Examiners can be any staff member within the organization, but are typically senior leaders, quality / improvement professionals, and/or other functional leaders. We seek a variety of expertise on our Board of Examiners – those representing different sectors (manufacturing, service, non-profit, healthcare, education, and government), those possessing different functional expertise (quality, finance/accounting, human resources, operations, IT, etc.), and those at different levels of leadership.

Award Level Descriptions:

- Organization Level Applications - Refer to page 8 of the Application Guidance Manual.

By completing and submitting the Intent to Apply, the applicant agrees to:

- Follow the guidelines provided in the Application Guidance Manual, criteria and materials.
- Provide an electronic application (no paper copies of applications will be accepted). Allow SWAE to upload the application, and the Board of Examiners and Judges to download the application, or it can be copied temporarily as a file onto a thumb drive or printed. The applicant will provide this electronic copy in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format to allow for appropriate printing where necessary. *(Keep in mind that font size and formatting are to match criteria stipulated in the application and guidance document, even after figures and graphs have been inserted and saved as a PDF file. The final copy will be tested for format requirements.)*
- Provide to SWAE an electronic copy of the original application edited for general public consumption.
- Give permission for SWAE to use the organization's recipient status and edited application (see above) for marketing and promotional materials for the Performance Excellence Program and SWAE.
- Share with other organizations, should the applicant become a recipient of an award, non-proprietary information on successful performance strategies. Such sharing may take place through a variety of methods including making presentations at SWAE workshops and events.

- Supply information requested by SWAE (or other designated representatives) concerning the applicant's organization in the event issues are identified that could affect the credibility and valuation of the Performance Excellence Program.

SWAE agrees to the following items:

- Unless the applicant is selected as a recipient or the applicant requests such, SWAE will not disclose its identity to anyone other than members of the Board of Examiners or the Panel of Judges.
- A training session on the application and site visit preparation may be conducted by SWAE at the applicant's choice of location and time prior to application submittal. Any charges for this session will be the responsibility of the applicant.
- SWAE will coordinate the application process and ensure the examiner team is properly constituted.
- SWAE will deliver an electronic copy of the Feedback Report to the applicant's contact person at the conclusion of the application process.
- SWAE will take all prudent measures to protect the integrity of the applicant's electronic application so that only the appropriate examiner team and judges can view the application.

Organization Eligibility and Restrictions

<p>Specific to All Award applicants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An organization with at least 50% of its assets, revenues or workforce based in Arizona, Nevada or Utah, as appropriate, OR any organization with its headquarters located in those states. • An organization that is part of a larger entity must have sufficient autonomy and authority to make decisions, initiate actions, implement programs, and allocate resources free from the direct control of the larger entity. For example, a college within a university is eligible if it can demonstrate sufficient independent control over the factors that affect the quality of its processes and services. • All sectors are eligible – manufacturing, service, healthcare, education, profit, not-for-profit, private, public, local, state or federal government. NOTE: Organizations whose purposes are primarily social are not eligible. • Must have existed at least one year prior to submitting an application. • Is a permanent organization; i.e., it must not be an organizational unit with a defined limited life or an ad-hoc committee, board, or other such unit. • Must have more than two full-time workers.
<p>Additional specific to applicants for Organization Levels 2, 3 & 4</p> <p>Level 2 – Commitment Award Level 3 – Achievement Award Level 4 – Pinnacle, Pioneer or Category in Excellence Award</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All major operations of the applicant may be inspected as part of the Award Program. This means that the organization's operations, activities, and results can be assessed and visited by a team of examiners. • A subsidiary and its parent organization may not apply for the award in the same year -Different subsidiaries of the same parent organization may apply concurrently. • Recipients of the Pinnacle Award for Excellence are ineligible to be recognized as a Pinnacle Award Recipient for a period of five years after their selection. A recipient of the Pinnacle Award for Excellence, although not eligible for the award, may still submit an application to obtain a feedback report. This process will be handled as a regular application in all respects except that no award will be granted, regardless of the score received. • Recipients of the Pioneer Award may re-apply in any given year, but may not receive the Pioneer Award more than once. • One or more Category Awards may be received by an organization in any given or subsequent year as merited. • These restrictions do not have any bearing with concern to the Showcase in Excellence Award.
<p>Additional specific to applicants for Process Level</p> <p>(Showcase in Excellence Award)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All operations related to the process being considered as part of the Performance Excellence Program may be inspected as part of the Program. This means that the process operations, activities, and results can be assessed and visited by a team of examiners. • Different subsidiaries and their parent organization may concurrently apply, if submitting different processes. • Recipients of a Showcase Award are ineligible to re-apply for the same process for a period of 3 years after the selection. However, an applicant that did not receive an award is permitted to re-apply for the same process each year if it feels it has made meaningful changes & has achieved sufficient improvement and results.
<p>If you have questions about your organization's eligibility, please call SWAE (480) 874-5815.</p>	



2018 Intent to Apply and Eligibility Form

1. The applicant is applying for:

Organization Level

- Level 4 (Excellence) Level 3 (Achievement) Level 2 (Commitment)

Process Level

Workforce Size

- Large Organization (More than 1500 paid workers)
- Medium Organization (501-1500 paid workers)
- Small Organization (Less than 500 paid workers)

2. Please check which of the following weeks the applicant's preferred week for site visit is. If both weeks are acceptable, please check both weeks. *Site visits for Organization Level applicants will not exceed 5 days; actual duration will depend on initial review of the application and size of the organization. (Refer to the Application Guidance Document, page 8.)*

- Week of September 24 – 28, 2018** *(Your "preferred" week is not guaranteed.)*
- Week of October 1 – 5, 2018**

3. Organization name *(include parent & subsidiary names if applicable)*:

4. Organization address [city, state, zip] *(headquarters address or location applying to the program)*:

5. Contact person *(to be the liaison with SWAE)*:

Name: _____

Title: _____

6. Contact person's telephone number: _____ Fax number: _____

7. Contact person's email address: _____

8. Name of CEO or President *(provide name of person with closest approximate position, if different)*:

9. Quality/Performance Excellence Director *(person with closest approximate responsibilities)*:

10. Industry

- Computers/Technology
- Education
- Energy/Utilities
- Finance or Insurance
- Government or Nonprofit
- Healthcare
- Hospitality
- Manufacturing
- Professional/Commercial Services
- Real Estate/Construction
- Retail
- Telecommunications
- Wholesale Distribution
- Other (*please specify*)

11. Type of organization

- For Profit
- Not for Profit (non-government)
- Government

12. Number of full-time paid workers

- 2-19 20-49 50-99
- 100-249 250-499 500+

13. Number of part-time paid workers

- Zero 1-19 20-49
- 50-99 100-249 250-499
- 500+

14. Percent of workforce in applicant's state ____%

15. Number of Volunteers _____

16. Percent of physical assets in the state from which the organization is applying. _____%

17. Has the organization existed for at least one year? Yes No

18. Is the organization headquartered in the same state from which the organization is applying?
 Yes No

19. Is the organization a subsidiary of a larger organization? Yes No

20. If applicant answered "Yes" to being a subsidiary, complete the following:

a. Parent Organization _____

b. Address _____

c. Highest Official of Parent Organization _____

d. Title _____

e. Does Applicant comprise over 50% of parent organization? Yes No

21. Confidentiality Considerations:

a. Applicant waives the right to bring suit against the Southwest Alliance for Excellence, from any claims, actions, or losses arising from the Performance Excellence Program process.

- Accept Decline

Confidentiality Note: Strict conflict of interest rules apply throughout the processes. Names of applicants, individual applications, commentary, and scoring information developed during the review of the application are regarded as proprietary and are kept confidential. Such information is available only to those individuals directly involved in the evaluation and application distribution process. Information on successful strategies of award recipients and other applicants may be released only with written approval of the applicant.

22. The applicant submits the following required and potential, additional Examiner candidates:

(Please contact the SWAE if you have questions or concerns, or if you are unable to provide an examiner.)

Necessary Examiner: _____ Email: _____

Potential Examiner: _____ Email: _____

Potential Examiner: _____ Email: _____

Potential Examiner: _____ Email: _____

Note: (Examiner Applications can be found at www.swae.org go to [What We Do](#) on the top Navigation bar of the home page then click on [Examiners](#), or you can request one from the SWAE at kshepard@swae.org.)

Release Statement

We agree to all terms stated above and attest to the validity and truth of all information we have provided. We understand that by applying for the Performance Excellence Program, we accept all the requirements of the Performance Excellence Program process. The application fee is non-refundable. We agree to host a site visit and to facilitate an open and unbiased examination. We understand that our organization must reimburse the Southwest Alliance for Excellence (SWAE) for reasonable costs and expenses associated with a site visit and the team of examiners. Additionally, we understand that our organization must provide one examiner per application, to support the program.

The SWAE may request additional information concerning our organization if issues are identified that could affect the credibility and valuation of the Performance Excellence Program. This information must be supplied, if requested, to the SWAE. We agree to make SWAE aware upon inquiry of any current or pending regulatory, criminal, or civil action that could damage the reputation of the Performance Excellence Program process.

If our organization is selected to receive an Award, we agree to share non-proprietary information on our successful performance and quality strategies with other organizations. This includes participation in conferences, workshops or other events sponsored by SWAE.

By applying to the Performance Excellence Program, the applicant agrees to provide an electronic application and allow SWAE to upload the application, and the Board of Examiners and Judges to download the application, so it can be copied temporarily as a file onto a thumb drive or printed.

By applying to the Performance Excellence Program, the applicant agrees to provide to SWAE an electronic copy of the original application edited for general public consumption. The applicant also agrees to allow SWAE to use this edited application as well as the organization's name as a recipient of an award in educational, marketing and promotional materials for the Performance Excellence Program and the SWAE. However, our organization will continue to own the information.

Signature, Contact Person of Applicant

Title

Date

Signature, CEO or Other Official)

Title

Date

Please sign where indicated, email pages 31-34 of this document to kshepard@swae.org, and provide a minimum of 50% of the application fee and 100% of the admin fee to SWAE.

via Credit Card (+ 5% service fee), electronic payment or check to:

Southwest Alliance for Excellence
3961 E. Chandler Blvd., Suite 111-334 (*mailing address only*)
Phoenix, Arizona 85048-0303
(480) 874-5815

2018 Process Level Criteria and Scoring Guidelines

Please Note:

- ✓ *The Process Profile is not assigned points but **is required** for application submittal.*
- ✓ *Words presented in blue underlined text are defined in the Baldrige Criteria booklet.*
- ✓ *Refer to the Scoring Guidelines.* The evaluation of Process and Results Item responses includes a review of the Criteria Items in combination with the Scoring Guidelines (see Application Guidance Manual for the Performance Excellence Program). Specifically, the Process Item (Category 1) Scoring Guidelines address the maturity of your approaches, breadth of deployment, extent of learning, and integration with other elements of the organization. Similarly, the Results Item (Category 2) Scoring Guidelines focus on the significance of the results trends, actual performance levels, relevant comparative data, and integration with important elements of your process. Consider both the Criteria and the Scoring Guidelines as you prepare your responses to the process and results items.
- ✓ *Baldrige Criteria references are noted in italicized parenthesis after each Process Level criteria question, as appropriate.*

P Process Profile

P.1 Process Description

1. Name of process being submitted: _____
2. Date (month/year) the process was first implemented: _____
3. Date (month/year) the process was improved: _____
4. Who will the contact person be as the liaison with SWAE? – *(This person should understand the process being submitted)*

Name: _____ Title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

5. I have read, understood and agree to the information concerning my application.

Contact Person Name	Title	Date
---------------------	-------	------

6. Where does this process reside within your organization (e.g. – Human Resources, manufacturing, finance, strategic planning, marketing, engineering, IT, etc.)? _____

P.2 Process Context (no more than 3 pages)

The *Process Context* is a snapshot of your organization, the [key](#) influences on the [process](#) presented in this application, and the [key](#) challenges you face. Within your response, include answers to the following questions: (P / P.1)

P.2a Organizational Description

1. What are your stated [mission](#), [vision](#), and [values](#)? Indicate if this is for the entire organization or a sub-unit of the organization, i.e. for the parent, the subsidiary, division or the work unit in which the [process](#) resides. (P.1a (2))
2. Provide a brief history of your organization, including when it was founded. (Include majority of detail about your own organization - where the [process](#) resides.)
3. What are your organization's main products and services? What is the relative importance of each to your success? (P.1a (1))
4. Comment briefly, if appropriate, on any special circumstances your organization faces (i.e. – organizational size, industry changes, local environment, state or federal regulations). (P.1a (5))
5. Provide an organizational chart (as attachment) showing where the [process owner\(s\)](#) fits. (P.1b(1))

P.2b Process Identification and Context

(The *Process Identification and Context* is a snapshot of your [process](#), its importance to your organization, and its key participants and stakeholders.)

1. Briefly describe your [process](#). What are the inputs and outputs? Provide a [process](#) map or flowchart of your [process](#).
2. Describe the organizational need for your [process](#) or process improvement.
3. For your [process](#), who are your principal [customers](#) and/or types of [customers](#)? (Customers may include clients, patients, donors, students, etc. Types of [customers](#) may include retail, wholesale, commercial, etc.) (P.1b (2))
4. [How](#) does this [process](#) relate to participants, suppliers, partners, collaborators, or other stakeholders, as applicable? (P.1b (3))
5. [How](#) does this [process](#) contribute to providing [customer value](#) and achieving organizational success and growth?
6. What key sources of comparative and competitive data, including [benchmarks](#), are available for this [process](#) or similar processes from within your industry? What key sources of comparative data are available for this [process](#) or similar processes from outside your industry? What limitations, if any, affect your ability to obtain or use these data? (P.2a (3))
7. Describe [how](#) your [process](#) aligns with three (3) of the SWAE Performance Excellence [core values](#).

Reminder: Your answers to Categories 1 and 2 Criteria combined must not exceed 10 pages.

1 The Process (550 pts.)

1.1 Work Process – [How](#) do you design, manage, and improve your [process](#)?

Describe [how](#) your organization identified and created or improved the [process](#). Describe [how](#) this [process](#) contributes to providing [customer value](#), achieving organizational success and [sustainability](#), and addressing organizational needs, as applicable. See notes for further clarification of criteria requirements. (6.1)

Within your response to the following questions, include answers to all that apply to your [process](#).

1.1a Process Requirements

1. What are the [key requirements](#) for this [process](#) and its outputs? [How](#) did you determine these requirements? (6.1a (1))
2. [How](#) did you collect and incorporate input and knowledge from [customers](#), suppliers, [partners](#), participants, and [collaborators](#) to design your [process](#)? (4.2a (1))

1.1b Process Design or Improvement

1. [How](#) did you design and improve or design and [innovate](#) the [process](#) to meet all [key](#) requirements? [How](#) did you incorporate new technology, organizational knowledge, excellence, and the potential for agility, as applicable? [How](#) did you implement the [process](#) to ensure it met design requirements? (6.1a (2))
2. [How](#) did you select and ensure the effective use of [key](#) comparative data and information to support decision making during the design and innovation of your [process](#)? (4.1a (2))
3. [How](#) do you control the overall cost of your [process](#)? [How](#) do you incorporate cycle time, productivity, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors into your [process](#)? [How](#) do you prevent defects, service errors, and rework and minimize cost or customers' productivity losses, as appropriate? [How](#) do you balance the need for cost control with the needs of your [customers](#)? (6.2a)
4. [How](#) do you determine [customer](#) and market requirements (as applicable) for the outputs of your [process](#)? [How](#) do you identify and adapt the [process](#) outputs to meet the requirements and exceed the expectations of your [customers](#)? (3.2a (1))
5. [How](#) does your day-to-day operation of this [process](#) ensure that it meets the [key requirements](#)? What [key](#) performance [measures](#) or [indicators](#) and in-process measures do you use to control and improve your [process](#)? [How](#) do these measures relate to the quality and/or [performance](#) of the output(s) of your [process](#)? (6.1b (1))
6. [How](#) do you improve your [process](#) to improve products and [performance](#) and reduce variability? (6.1b (3))
7. [How](#) do you use [process performance](#) data and [key](#) comparative and/or competitive data in projecting future performance of your [process](#)? (4.1c (2))

8. [How](#) are improvements and best practices related to this [process](#) shared across the organization to drive innovation and change? (4.2a (1))
9. [How](#) are the lessons learned resulting from this [process](#) embedded in the way your organization operates? (4.2a (2))

NOTES:

- N1. (P.2a (3)) – “Products” are the goods and services you offer in the marketplace. Mechanisms for delivering products to your end-use customers might be direct or might be indirect, through dealers, distributors, collaborators, or channel partners. Nonprofit organizations might refer to their products as programs, projects, or services.
- N2. (P.2a (4)) – In the Criteria, “industry” refers to the sector in which you operate. For nonprofit organizations, this sector might be charitable organizations, professional associations and societies, religious organizations, or government entities – or a subsector of one of these.
- N3. (P.2b (2)) - Determination of the need for [process](#) creation or improvement may be the result of a single event, changes to the organizational environment, or may be part of the organization’s [systematic process](#) evaluation activity.
- N4. For 1.1, include the [key requirements](#) and [measures](#), but report the actual outcomes/[results](#) in 2.1.
- N5. (1.1a (1)) - [Key requirements](#) might include reliability, [value](#), ease of use, on-time delivery, low defect levels, safety, security, ongoing price reductions, electronic communication, rapid response, after-sales service, and multilingual services. [Stakeholder](#) requirements might include socially responsible behavior and community service. *For some nonprofit organizations, requirements also might include administrative cost reductions, at-home services, and rapid response to emergencies.* Requirements are commonly expressed in quantitative terms with performance [measures or indicators](#).
- N6. Comparative data (1.1b (2)) may be obtained in several ways: (external sources) industry [benchmarks](#) or competitor performance, (one source of this information might be social media or the Web), (internal sources) against another sub-unit of your organization or against the [performance results](#) of your [process](#) prior to the creation or improvement of your [process](#). Please explain in 1.1b (2) of your application how you obtained and used the information for [benchmarking](#) purposes.

2 Results (450 pts.)

2.1 Process Results – What are the results of your process?

Summarize your [process performance results](#). **Segment your [results](#), as appropriate. [Results reported in this Item should relate to methods and data determined and described in Item 1.1b \(5\)](#). **Include appropriate comparative data. See notes for further clarification of criteria requirements.** (7.1)**

Within your response to the following questions, include answers to all that apply to your process.

2.1a Process Results

1. What are the current [levels](#) and [trends](#) in [key performance measures or indicators](#) and in-process measures that are important to the [customers](#) of your [process](#)? (e.g. customer satisfaction, customer-perceived value, loyalty and retention, positive referrals, or other aspects of building relationships with internal or external customers.) (7.1a)
2. What are the current [levels](#) and [trends](#) in [key performance measures or indicators](#) and in-process measures of [process performance](#), including productivity, cycle time, and other appropriate measures of effectiveness, efficiency, and [innovation](#)? (7.1b)
3. What are the current [levels](#) and [trends](#) in [key performance measures or indicators](#) and in-process measures contributing to organizational success and growth? (e.g. financial performance, marketplace performance, market share or position, or customer value). (7.5a (1-2))

2.1b Comparative Data

1. What are your [process results](#) as compared to [benchmarks](#) or competitors' performance levels, or, as applicable, with [performance](#) prior to the creation/improvement of this [process](#)? (7.1a)

NOTES:

N1: (2.1a (1)) - [Measures and indicators](#) of [process](#) effectiveness and satisfaction with the [process](#) and resulting products or services might include information and data from your internal or external [customers](#), [partners](#), suppliers, or other [stakeholders](#).

N2: (2.1a (3)) - [Measures](#) contributing to organizational success and growth may include market share, profitability, product and service [performance](#), customer satisfaction, customer perceived-value, financial performance, marketplace performance, workforce engagement, workforce capability and capacity, and other similar [measures or indicators](#).

SCORING GUIDELINES – Process Level - PROCESS Item (1.1)

Factor	0% or 5%	10%, 15%, 20%, or 25%	30%, 35, 40%, or 45%	50%, 55%, 60, or 65%	70%, 75%, 80%, or 85%	90%, 95%, or 100%
APPROACH (A)	No SYSTEMATIC APPROACH is evident; information is ANECDOTAL. (A)	The beginning of a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the Item is evident. (A)	An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, responsive to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the Item is evident. (A)	An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, responsive to the OVERALL REQUIREMENTS of the Item, is evident. (A)	An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, responsive to the MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS of the Item, is evident. (A)	An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, fully responsive to the MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS of the Item, is evident. (A)
DEPLOYMENT (D)	Little or no DEPLOYMENT of any SYSTEMATIC APPROACH is evident. (D)	The APPROACH is in the early stages of DEPLOYMENT in most areas or work units inhibiting progress in achieving the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the Item. (D)	The APPROACH is deployed, although some areas or work units may be in the early stages of DEPLOYMENT. (D)	The APPROACH is well deployed, although DEPLOYMENT may vary in some areas or work units. (D)	The APPROACH is well deployed, with no significant gaps. (D)	The APPROACH is fully deployed without significant weaknesses or gaps in any areas or work units. (D)
LEARNING (L)	An improvement orientation is not evident; improvement is achieved through reacting to problems. (L)	Early stages of a transition from reacting to problems to a general improvement orientation are evident. (L)	The beginning of a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to evaluation and improvement of the PROCESS is evident. (L)	A fact-based, SYSTEMATIC evaluation and improvement PROCESS and some organizational LEARNING, including innovation, are in place for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the PROCESS. (L)	Fact-based, SYSTEMATIC evaluation and improvement and organizational LEARNING, including innovation, are KEY management tools; there is clear evidence of refinement in the PROCESS as a result of organizational ANALYSIS and sharing. (L)	Fact-based, SYSTEMATIC evaluation and improvement and organizational LEARNING through innovation are KEY PROCESS management tools; refinement and innovation, backed by ANALYSIS and sharing are evident throughout the PROCESS. (L)
INTEGRATION (I)	No organizational or other work unit ALIGNMENT is evident; the PROCESS operates independently. (I)	The APPROACH is aligned with other areas or work units largely through joint problem solving. (I)	The APPROACH is in the early stages of ALIGNMENT with your basic organizational need(s) identified need(s) and MISSION identified in your response to the Process Profile and 1.1a Process Identification. (I)	The APPROACH is aligned with your organizational need(s) and MISSION identified in your response to the Process Profile and 1.1a Process Identification. (I)	The APPROACH is integrated with the current & future organizational need(s) and MISSION identified in your response to the Process Profile and 1.1a Process Identification. (I)	The APPROACH is well integrated with the current & future organizational need(s) and MISSION identified in your response to the Process Profile and 1.1a Process Identification. (I)

SCORING GUIDELINES – Process Level - RESULTS Item (2.1)

Factor	0% or 5%	10%, 15%, 20%, or 25%	30%, 35, 40%, or 45%	50%, 55%, 60, or 65%	70%, 75%, 80%, or 85%	90%, 95%, or 100%
LEVELS (Le)	There are no PROCESS PERFORMANCE RESULTS for KEY performance measures and/or poor in-PROCESS results reported. (Le)	A few PROCESS PERFORMANCE RESULTS are reported responsive to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the Item & PERFORMANCE LEVELS are evident in a few areas. (Le)	Good PROCESS PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported responsive to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the Item. (Le)	Good PROCESS PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported responsive to the OVERALL REQUIREMENTS of the Item. (Le)	Good to excellent PROCESS PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported responsive to the MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS of the Item. (Le)	Excellent PROCESS PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported that are fully responsive to the MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS of the Item.(Le)
TRENDS (T)	TREND data either are not reported or show mainly adverse TRENDS. (T)	Some TREND data are reported, with some adverse TRENDS evident. (T)	Some TREND data are reported, and a majority of the TRENDS presented are beneficial. (T)	Beneficial TRENDS are evident in areas of importance to the accomplishment of the KEY PROCESS requirement(s) or your organization's MISSION, as appropriate. (T)	Beneficial TRENDS have been sustained over time in most areas of importance to the accomplishment of the KEY PROCESS requirements or your organization's MISSION, as appropriate. (T)	Beneficial TRENDS have been sustained over time in all areas of importance to the accomplishment of the KEY PROCESS requirements or your organization's MISSION, as appropriate. (T)
COMPARISONS (C)	Comparative information is not reported. (C)	Little or no comparative information is reported. (C)	Early stages of obtaining comparative information are evident. (C)	Some current PERFORMANCE LEVELS have been evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or BENCHMARKS and show areas of good relative PERFORMANCE. (C)	Many to most TRENDS and current PERFORMANCE LEVELS have been evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or BENCHMARKS and show areas of leadership and very good relative PERFORMANCE. (C)	Evidence of industry and benchmark leadership is demonstrated in many areas. (C)
INTEGRATION (I)	Results are not reported for any areas of importance to the accomplishment of the KEY PROCESS requirement(s). (I)	RESULTS are reported for a few areas of importance to the accomplishment of KEY PROCESS requirement(s). Limited or no PERFORMANCE PROJECTIONS are reported. (I)	RESULTS are reported for many areas of importance to the accomplishment of KEY PROCESS requirement(s). (I)	PROCESS performance results are reported for most KEY CUSTOMER and PROCESS requirements. (I)	PROCESS PERFORMANCE RESULTS are reported for most KEY CUSTOMER, PROCESS and improvement requirement(s). (I)	PROCESS PERFORMANCE RESULTS and PROJECTIONS are reported for most KEY CUSTOMER, PROCESS and improvement requirement(s). (I)