**Frequently Asked Questions about Baldrige Award Eligibility Conditions**

**Note: This information pertains to key eligibility changes implemented in 2015, though the dates have been updated, as appropriate, to reflect current eligibility conditions for 2021 applicants.**

* Organizations that have previously received a Baldrige Award will be automatically eligible to reapply five years after the year of their award (in the sixth year), even if new or revised requirements (e.g., related to subunits) implemented during subsequent years would otherwise screen them out.
* Eligibility requirements are being modified to allow more subunits of organizations to apply. Specifically, the eligibility of subunits will be based on their ability to respond to the Criteria for Performance Excellence in all seven categories rather than on their size, percentage of external customers, or percentage size relative to their parent organization.
* Organizations will be allowed an opportunity to apply for a waiver of the standard requirement of first achieving a top-level Alliance for Performance Excellence award. Those organizations will submit additional materials with their eligibility forms to demonstrate a level of maturity that indicates they could be potential national role models as high-performing organizations. At the end of the award cycle, if organizations applying under this opportunity achieve total (combined) process and results scoring bands of 6 or higher, they may apply again for the national award without first achieving a top-level Alliance award. This eligibility status will remain for the following four years.

1. **What prompted these changes?**

The main three changes respond to feedback received by the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program from customers and other stakeholders. The due date change will enable the Baldrige Program to adjust the size of its examiner board to the number of award applicants.

At its June 12, 2014, semi-annual meeting, the Baldrige Program’s Board of Overseers discussed and recommended the three changes in organizations’ eligibility to apply for the Baldrige Award; the Baldrige Program subsequently worked out the details of the resulting process changes in conjunction with the Alliance for Performance Excellence. The Alliance continues to partner with the Baldrige Program in the shared endeavor of helping organizations of every sector, size, and location improve their performance and reach excellence using the Baldrige framework.

1. **What materials must be submitted by organizations that have not met the eligibility requirement to have received a top-level Alliance program award?**

Such applicants must submit eligibility materials that include the following:

* A completed Organizational Profile
* Two results measures with data responding to each of the five results items of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence—i.e., items 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5—for a total of 10 results measures. Within each measure provided, the two results should address different multiple-requirements areas.
* Whether the organization is a current or recent customer of the Alliance program and its rationale for the waiver of the requirement related to the relevant Alliance program’s award process.

1. **How will the Baldrige Program determine applicants’ eligibility based on the aforementioned materials submitted?**

Reviews of the submitted materials to determine an organization’s eligibility will be based on the following questions:

* Are all Organizational Profile answers responsive to the questions as appropriate for the organization?
* Are two results measures provided for each of the five Criteria results items, each addressing different multiple-requirements areas? For this purpose, results may be provided in the applicant’s desired format (e.g., text, tables, graphs).
* Based on the Criteria for Performance Excellence Results Scoring Guidelines, do the results for each results item show all of the following:
* Good levels: Levels are responsive to at least the basic requirements of the item.
* Beneficial trends: Three historical data points are in a favorable direction.
* Good relative performance against comparisons: Performance is at or better than the given comparison.
* Segmentation: Results data are disaggregated in a way that allows for meaningful analysis of the organization’s performance.

1. **Which award application forms must organizations fill out if they opt to apply for the Baldrige Award following the alternate process (i.e., they apply for and receive a waiver of the requirement of having first achieved a top-level award of an Alliance for Performance Excellence program)?**

All applicants will use the same Baldrige Award Application Forms (BAAF), which require them to meet all of the stipulations identified in BAAF, with the exceptions of having (1) received the Baldrige Award, (2) received a Baldrige site visit in the past five years, and (3) received an Alliance program’s top-level award in the past six\* years.

\*We are extending the 5-year eligibility window to six years through the 2024 award cycle to allow state top-tier recipients whose efforts to apply at the local or national level were impacted by the global pandemic of 2020. The 5-year eligibility requirement will resume at the beginning of the 2025 Award Cycle.

1. **When are the additional materials for eligibility due from such organizations?**

All eligibility materials *must be submitted by* February 17, 2021. The additional materials should be included with the eligibility certification packages.

1. **Must organizations that opt for the alternate process still meet all four “general eligibility requirements”?**

Yes. Baldrige and ASQ staff members will conduct eligibility reviews against the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award’s four general eligibility requirements of

1. being headquartered in the United States (with U.S. subunits of foreign organizations being eligible to apply for the award if the subunit is headquartered in the United States);
2. having existed for at least one year (i.e., at least since April 1, 2020);
3. having operational practices associated with all of its major organizational functions that are available for examination in the United States or its territories; and
4. being able to share information on the seven Criteria categories at the organization's U.S. facilities and at the Baldrige Program’s Quest for Excellence© Conference.
5. **When will organizations submitting additional materials for the alternate process find out if they are eligible to send a complete Baldrige Award application package for consideration for the 2021 Baldrige Award?**

Notifications will be provided to all applicants on a rolling basis, no later than two weeks after applications are received.

1. **When are applications for the Baldrige Award due?**

Full applications for all applicants must be submitted by the following date:

* 2021 Baldrige Award applications (PDF file only) are due April 27, 2021.

1. **May applicants that submit additional materials for the alternate process reapply the next year?**

It depends. Organizations that apply using the alternate process must receive process and results band scores totaling 6 or higher in order to be eligible to apply for the Baldrige Award for four additional years. If the organization’s process and results band scores total 5 or lower, the organization will be referred to its applicable Alliance for Performance Excellence program.