Application Content and Format

For the 2017 award cycle, the CD-*only* option has been eliminated. Please submit 25 paper copies of your application, plus 1 CD containing the application as a PDF file. We reserve the right to return incomplete applications and those that don't meet these requirements. If you have questions, call 877-237-9064, option 3.

Content

In your application, include information on all of your organization's units or subunits. Do not add links to websites. Examiners base their evaluations solely on information within your application.
Your award application must contain the items listed in the order given below:

Blank front cover. To help ensure confidentiality, do not include text or illustrations. In addition, for paper applications, we strongly recommend using dark-colored card stock for the front cover to ensure that it conceals the information on the title page. Please do not add a plastic cover to the front of the application.

Title page. Give the name of your organization. You may also include the address and logo, illustrations, the date, a statement indicating that this is an application for the Baldrige Award, and/or a statement regarding the confidentiality of the content. Do not include additional information, text, or links to websites.

Labeled tabs or divider pages. Use tabs or divider pages to separate the sections listed below. On each, include only the section title. If you include additional text or illustrations, the pages will count toward the 50-page limit for the Responses Addressing All Criteria Items.

- Table of Contents
- Page A-1 of the Application Form
- Eligibility Certification Form
- organization chart(s)
- Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
- Organizational Profile
- Responses Addressing All Criteria Items

If you wish, you may also use labeled tabs or divider pages to separate your responses to the seven Criteria categories.

Table of contents. Indicate the page numbers for the

- Award Application Form
- Eligibility Certification Form (date-stamped)
- organization chart(s) (date-stamped)
- Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
- Organizational Profile
- individual category and item sections

You don't need to indicate the page numbers for areas to address, tables, and figures.

Eligibility form and organization charts. Include these signed and stamped documents, which ASQ will return to your organization at the conclusion of the eligibility certification process:

- Eligibility Certification Form
- line-and-box organization chart(s) for your organization
- line-and-box organization chart(s) of the parent (if your organization is a subunit)

Please do not include website references or sensitive payment information on the form.

Application form. In each of the 25 paper copies and in the PDF file on your CD, include page A-1 of the form only, ensuring that it is signed by your organization's highest-ranking official. This page indicates that your organization agrees to the terms and conditions of the award process and that, if selected to receive a site visit, your organization agrees to pay reasonable associated costs (see the Award Process Fees page on our website).

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations. In the glossary, include only terms and abbreviations used in your application, with very brief definitions. Do not include descriptions of processes, tools, methods, or techniques in the glossary, or your application will be returned to you.

An acceptable example of a glossary entry is

> **SPP:** strategic planning process

The following example is not acceptable because it includes a description:

> **SPP:** strategic planning process, which has nine steps: a review of key documents, such as the research contract with the USDA; a two-day retreat; a review of funding and mandates; a review of current organizational performance; a review of an environmental scan; appreciative inquiry; brainstorming; allocation of resources; and creation of action plans.

Organizational Profile. This section outlines your organization and states the key factors that influence its operations and future directions. Examiners use this vital part of your application throughout their review. For guidelines on preparing this section, see the appropriate *Baldrige Excellence Framework* booklet.

Responses Addressing All Criteria Items. In this section, respond to each item as a whole, using the category and item designations in the Criteria within the appropriate *Baldrige Excellence Framework* booklet. In your responses to the areas to address within the items, emphasize your organization and its performance system, maintaining the order of the areas.

Label the areas to address as in the Criteria booklets (e.g., 4.2a). You may group responses for multiple areas (e.g., 4.2a, b). If an area to address does not pertain to your organization or its performance system, explain why in one or two sentences.

Discussion of results and the results themselves should be close together in a Baldrige Award application. Trends that show a significant beneficial or adverse change should be explained. Use figure numbers that correspond to items. For example, the third figure for item 7.1 would be Figure 7.1-3.

For guidelines on responding to the Criteria, see the appropriate *Baldrige Excellence Framework* booklet for your organization's sector (i.e., Business/Nonprofit, Education, or Health Care).

Summary of Supplemental Section(s). If the Baldrige Program informed you during eligibility certification that you must submit one or more supplemental sections, include a brief description of each section, listing the products, services, and NAICS codes.

Blank back cover. Do not include text or illustrations. For paper applications, we strongly recommended using card stock for the cover. Please do not add a plastic cover to the back of the application.

Supplemental sections. If the Baldrige Program informs you during eligibility certification that your organization must submit one or more supplemental sections, then (1) in your application cover the largest group of similar product and/or service lines that are supported by a single performance system, and (2) make sure that, taken together, your application and the supplemental section(s) cover all of your organization's products and/or services and performance systems.

Include the following for each supplemental section, in the order listed:

- blank front cover (no text, illustrations, or figures)
- title page
- labeled tabs or divider pages
- Table of Contents
- organization chart(s)
- Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
- Organizational Profile
- Responses Addressing All Criteria Items
- blank back cover

Format

Format your application according to the following requirements. If your submission does not meet these requirements, we'll notify you that your application has been rejected. You will have 72 hours or until the original due date, whichever is later, to resubmit your application in the required format. Resubmitted applications must be postmarked within that time frame and shipped via an overnight delivery service. For an example of the required format, see the *2016 FitHabits Case Study*. (https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/publications/baldrige-case-study)

Page Limits

The limits given below include all illustrations, figures, tables, and appendixes. Covers, labeled tabs, and divider pages that contain only titles do not count toward the limits. However, if these pages contain additional material, such as process descriptions, quotations, figures, tables, or illustrations, they count toward the total page allotment.

If any section exceeds the page limit, the Baldrige Program will ask your official contact point to identify which pages to remove.

Section	Page Limit (Single-Sided)
Organizational Profile	5
Responses Addressing All Criteria Items	50

Supplemental Sections (if required)

Summary of Supplemental Sections	2
Organizational Profile	5
Responses Addressing All Criteria Items	35

Page and Text Format

Element	Requirement	Notes
Paper type	Standard, 8½-by-11-inch white	Two-sided printing is strongly recommended. Please ensure that both sides of pages are legible.
Paper orientation		
Text pages		Portrait
Pages with graphs, figures, and data tables		Portrait or landscape
Lines per page	60 maximum	Count headings and blank lines separating paragraphs, but don't count recurring page headers, such as "Baldrige Award Application, page X."
Leading	2 points (or the equivalent) between lines	1 point of leading equals 1/72 or 0.0138 inch.
Margins		
Left (bound side)		3/4 inch minimum
Right		1/2 inch minimum
Text columns	2 (preferred)	Leave at least ¼ inch between columns.
Numbering		
Pages in Responses Addressing All Criteria Items	1–50	Don't number blank pages, tabs, or divider pages.
Figures within the Organizational Profile and item sections	In sequence	Use numbers corresponding to the section (e.g., Figure P.1-1, Figure P.1-2, Figure 2.1-1, Figure 2.1-2).
Font and type size Running text	Times New Roman or Arial, 10 point minimum	Don't use narrow, compressed, or condensed fonts. The font and type size need not be uniform so long as they meet the requirements. Smaller type sizes make it difficult for examiners to interpret the data

		and to provide accurate and actionable feedback. If you shrink graphics to fit the space available, ensure that text in the reduced figure meets the requirement.
Tables filled mainly with text	Times New Roman or Arial, 8 points minimum	
Other graphics (charts, graphs, data tables, and other figures), including titles and captions	Any font, 8 points minimum	

Graphics

- See the font and type-size requirements in the table above.
- Clearly label each figure using descriptive text. For example, the title of the third figure for item 7.1 might read "Figure 7.1-3: Reliability of Service: Carrier-Dropped Calls."
- Clearly label all axes and units of measure.
- For information on using graphics in category 7 (Results), see "Guidelines for Responding to Results Items" in the *Baldrige Excellence Framework* booklet that's appropriate for your organization's sector.

Application Assembly

Assemble paper copies and CD versions of your application following all the guidelines listed below:

Paper Copies

- Do not add a plastic cover to the front or back of the application. Cardstock only.
- Securely fasten all components of your application to prevent separation during handling. We strongly recommend that you bind each application with either comb or coil binding. Bind supplemental sections separately from the application.
- Do not use pressure-sensitive clips, binders with such clips, or bulky ring binders or similar heavy covers.
- Do not include video or audio material or other information aids.

CD Version

- Submit your application in PDF format on a CD-R, not a CD-RW.
- Ensure that the CD can be read from a standard CD-ROM drive.
- Create one PDF file, not multiple files, containing your application. Select the "embed fonts" option.
- In the PDF file, include
    - a scan of the date-stamped Eligibility Certification Form and chart(s) you received from the American Society for Quality (ASQ) **OR** an electronic version that is not date-stamped, plus one paper copy of the date-stamped documents.
    - a scan of the completed page A-1 of the Application Form.

- Do not include page A-2 of the Application Form in your PDF file. Instead, submit one paper copy with your award application package.
- Proof the PDF file to verify the contents and number of pages. Also verify that the file prints properly and that all elements meet formatting requirements when printed. If needed, ASQ will print additional copies of your application in color on a laser-type copier/printer at a resolution of 600 by 600 and bind it with a coil binding.