



2009

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

For use with 2008 editions of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence
(available at www.forwardaward.org or by calling the WFA office)

2909 Landmark Place, Suite 110

Madison, Wisconsin 53713

Phone (608) 663-5300 ▪ Fax (608) 663-5302

Key Dates for WFA Applicants

Intent-to-Apply materials must be received or postmarked October 31, 2008
Applications must be received or consigned to a delivery service.....January 16, 2009
Site visits Weeks of May 3 and May 10, 2009
Feedback reports to ApplicantsPostmarked by July 14, 2009

Overview of the Wisconsin Forward Award Program

Introduction to Wisconsin Forward Award

Former Wisconsin Governor Tommy G. Thompson created the Wisconsin Forward Award Program with the issuance of the Governor's Executive Order No. 385 in 1997. At that time, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development was assigned temporary responsibility for program management and development.

In 1999, a new private non-profit organization was created to assume responsibility for the Wisconsin Forward Award program: Wisconsin Forward Award, Inc. (WFA, Inc.), a non-stock, not-for-profit corporation. WFA, Inc. is a charitable organization, granted exemption under Federal IRS regulations, described in section 501(c)(3) and is registered as a charitable organization in Wisconsin through the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing.

WFA, Inc. is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that includes leaders in business, manufacturing, education, health care, government, and other organizations throughout Wisconsin.

Program Description

Award Criteria

The WFA/Baldrige Criteria represent Core Values and Concepts that are universal and are embodied in seven Categories that are fundamental to any organization, whether in business, manufacturing, education, government, health care, or other enterprises. These Categories are:

- Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Customer and Market Focus
- Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management
- Workforce Focus
- Process Management
- Results

The Criteria provide the standards used by the Board of Examiners (described below) to evaluate, validate and provide feedback on applicant achievement. The seven Categories include 18 related Items, each relating to a specific area of organizational processes or results. Applications must respond to each Category Item.

The Criteria provide a clear perspective for comparing usual performance to high performance. They give an unbiased view of current capability as measured against rigorous standards. The Criteria are designed to be a standard for excellence in organizations seeking the highest levels of customer-driven quality, performance and competitiveness. Taken together in an integrated manner, they describe what well-run organizations do.

Every two years, the Criteria undergo extensive review and revision, and such a revision will take place for the 2009 Criteria. Because the 2009 Criteria will not be published until December or early January, and so that applicant organizations

have ample time to prepare an application, **Wisconsin Forward Award requires all applicant organizations to use the 2008 Criteria for Performance Excellence when preparing their 2009 applications.** WFA offers a number of training opportunities to help organizations understand and apply the Criteria for Performance Excellence. Contact the WFA office for more information.

Many organizations use the Criteria for Performance Excellence as a self-assessment tool. This is an excellent first step in embracing the goals of performance excellence. We encourage you to become familiar with the Criteria and to use them to assess your operations against rigorous and tested standards. We also urge you to become a Wisconsin Forward Award applicant in order to enjoy the benefits of receiving an objective outside evaluation of your organizational strengths and opportunities for improvement.

One of the best ways to gain knowledge of the Criteria for Performance Excellence is to serve as an Examiner and see how it's been applied to other, diverse organizations. We encourage applicant organizations to send an employee through the training and evaluation process at no additional charge. See Board of Examiners on the following page for more details.

Board of Examiners

The Wisconsin Forward Award evaluation process is carried out by a Board of Examiners. Board of Examiners members are volunteer experts from business, government, education, health care and other disciplines across Wisconsin who are experienced in performance management and quality assessment processes. All members of the Board of Examiners receive rigorous training with Wisconsin Forward Award.

Examiners work in teams assigned to applications and conduct all phases of the evaluation. The teams are managed by Team Leaders who are experienced in Baldrige-based evaluation processes, have a sound understanding of the Criteria and their application, and possess strong management and facilitation skills.

Past applicant organizations have benefited from the perspective of a Baldrige-based Examiner, and WFA wants to make it as easy as possible to grant this benefit to 2009 applicants.

If you indicate on the Intent-to-Apply form that you'd like to train one employee as an Examiner in 2009, we will follow up with that individual with information about training and review cycle dates and give him or her an Examiner application. We are happy to provide training free of charge to one employee of each applicant organization, but **if your Examiner is unable to fulfill all requirements of the review schedule, we will invoice you for \$395, the value of Examiner training.**

Who Can Apply?

Your organization is eligible to apply for Wisconsin Forward Award recognition if you are:

- **Located and operating in Wisconsin** including business, manufacturing, education, health care, government, utilities, financial institutions, non-profit, service, or other organizations;
- **An independent organization OR a subunit of a larger organization** (i.e., a subsidiary, business unit, division, government department, or like organization), if the subunit has a clearly defined, documented, and distinct organizational structure and purpose, and functions independently with substantial authority to make key administrative and operational decisions; and
- **Committed to meeting participation requirements** if your organization receives recognition at the Governor's Forward Award of Excellence level. Forward Award of Excellence recipients are expected to:
 - Provide an Examiner for the Forward Award process in the next application year;
 - Participate in the annual recognition event; and,
 - Support and participate in at least one Wisconsin Forward Award-sponsored conference or event to share and discuss best practices (nonproprietary information only) and experiences with colleagues from organizations interested in learning more about performance excellence.

Organizations recognized at other levels of achievement are also encouraged, although not required, to take part in all the activities described above.

Note: Wisconsin Forward Award eligibility rules do not include requirements relative to length of time in business. Organizations at any point in their development can benefit from evaluation of their performance—to establish a baseline or to measure improvements. However, the Criteria include an emphasis on demonstration of trends, sustained improvement efforts, and improving results. Organizations with a limited track record may find it difficult to document trends and improved results over time.

Recognition Levels

The program measures and recognizes four levels of progress and growth toward performance excellence. WFA does not limit the number of organizations that may receive recognition at any level; evaluation results may place any number of applicants at the same recognition level. The levels are:

◆ Governor's Forward Award of Excellence

The Governor's Forward Award of Excellence is the highest level of recognition and is earned by organizations that demonstrate excellence through their performance management practices and achievements. These organizations are outstanding examples of quality Wisconsin enterprises demonstrating superior results. They are role models for others, continuing to learn and build upon their outstanding achievements.

◆ Mastery Award

This is an advanced level for organizations. Through their skillful practice of performance management principles, these organizations demonstrate significant progress in expanding their capabilities through improved processes of all kinds. Achievements are demonstrated by results, are clearly linked to quality and performance management systems, and are directly attributable to a systematic, well-deployed approach.

◆ Proficiency Award

Organizations recognized at the Proficiency level are beginning to effectively use continuous improvement principles and practices. They demonstrate progress in constructing sound and noteworthy processes, show a solid approach to applying the Award Criteria at the system level, and implement plans and procedures. Accomplishments are confirmed by developing and improving performance trends.

◆ Commitment Award

Organizations at the early stages of their journey to performance excellence receive recognition at the Commitment level. These organizations are beginning to adopt and implement continuous improvement practices and principles and demonstrate a commitment to performance excellence.

How to Apply

Required Forms

To apply for Wisconsin Forward Award recognition, organizations must complete two steps and submit two types of forms with accompanying materials.

- **Intent-to-Apply Packet:** Applicant organizations first submit Intent-to-Apply forms and requested materials. These are used by WFA to verify organizational eligibility, estimate Board of Examiner needs, and make preliminary team assignments. Applicants receive confirmation of their eligibility and acknowledgment of fee payment. The deadline for submitting the Intent-to-Apply for 2009 is **October 31, 2008**. (Instructions on the Intent-to-Apply forms give detailed instructions about completing this step.)
- **Application Package:** This includes application forms and two key components: an Organizational Profile (not to exceed 5 pages) and responses to the Criteria for Performance Excellence (not to exceed 50 pages). In responding to the Criteria, each applicant provides extensive information and data on the organization's performance management processes and related results. If you plan to apply to Wisconsin Forward Award in 2009, you will need the appropriate **2008** (not 2009) Criteria for Performance Excellence (Business/Nonprofit, Education, or Health Care). These booklets are available from WFA. (See page 5 for ordering information.) The deadline for submitting the application package for 2008 is **January 16, 2009**. (Instructions on the application forms give detailed information about filling out the forms and each document required for submission.)

Fees

The \$250.00 Intent-to-Apply administrative fee must be paid upon submission of the Intent-to-Apply Packet. This fee is non-refundable, but it may be applied towards the application fee.

The application fee must be paid with the application package. The fee schedule is as follows:

For-profit manufacturing and service business, and all health care organizations

\$6 per full-time equivalency (FTE) with a **minimum fee** of \$2,500 and a **maximum fee** of \$7,500.

Charitable non-profits and government agencies

\$6 per full-time equivalency (FTE) with a **minimum fee** of \$750 and a **maximum fee** of \$4,000.

For example, a health care system with 20,000 FTEs would calculate its application fee at 20,000 x \$6, or \$120,000. But the maximum application fee for health care organizations is \$7,500. Furthermore, since every organization can apply its \$250 intent-to-apply fees towards the application fee, the health care system would pay only \$7,250.

A factory with 500 FTEs would calculate its application fee at 500 x \$6, or \$3,000. Since this is between the minimum and maximum, this is the actual application fee owed. After deducting the intent-to-apply fee of \$250, the factory would pay \$2,750.

Alternatively, a small food pantry with a staff of 15 FTEs would calculate its application fee at 15 x \$6, or \$90. But charitable non-profits have a minimum fee of \$750, and so this is the amount of the food pantry's application fee. Again, the \$250 intent-to-apply fee can be deducted, making the amount due \$500.

Payment may be made by check or credit card.

- Checks should be payable to Wisconsin Forward Award, Inc. and included in your application packet.
- To use a credit card, call us at (608) 663-5300 to arrange payment by MasterCard, Visa, or Discover.

There is a **\$1,250 fee** for an applicant organization receiving a site visit, and the organization is responsible for reimbursement of mileage and all reasonable and necessary costs (meals, lodging, off-site meeting space, etc.) incurred by the Examiner team participating in the on-site visit. These costs usually range between \$1,500 and \$3,000, depending on a variety of factors, including the complexity and location of the applicant organization.

Note: WFA's fees are intended to cover actual costs of program operations and are not intended to prohibit organizations from applying. Please contact WFA's Executive Director in the event of extenuating circumstances

Key Application Dates for 2008

October 31, 2008 Intent-to-Apply packet must be received or postmarked by this date.

January 16, 2009 Application report package must be postmarked or consigned to a delivery service by this date.

Feedback, Public Recognition, and Confidentiality

Feedback Reports

Each Wisconsin Forward Award applicant receives a comprehensive written feedback report at the conclusion of the review process. The feedback report identifies an organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to the WFA/Baldrige Criteria. By identifying gaps in systems and improvement opportunities, the feedback report provides applicant organizations the opportunity to improve in a focused way, such as in the strategic and business planning process.

Post-Feedback Input

Applicants have the opportunity after receiving their feedback reports to communicate further about their application review. Detailed information about setting up an on-site or teleconference review session will be communicated to this year's applicants during the review process.

Annual Recognition Event

Since Wisconsin Forward Award's inception, our annual recognition event has been an integral part of the program. Wisconsin's governor is involved in the ceremony at which organizations are publicly recognized at four levels of achievement. Customarily an organization's highest ranking official or official organizational contact accepts the award and acknowledges the organization's achievements at the event. Award recipients are called upon to submit information, anecdotes about their performance excellence journey and testimonials to be included in promotional and marketing materials. Wisconsin Forward Award joins applicant organizations in actively promoting the award program and each year's award recipients.

Confidentiality

All applications are treated as confidential. Applicants are not expected to provide or to reveal proprietary information regarding products, processes, or services. Examiners are assigned to teams in a way to avoid conflicts of interest. All members of the Board of Examiners sign nondisclosure agreements. The Wisconsin Forward Award administrative staff monitors the review process to ensure that the integrity of the review process is maintained.

Organizations may choose not to receive public recognition after learning their award level, and in this case, the fact that the organization has applied remains confidential indefinitely.

Other Opportunities for Applicant Organizations

Throughout 2008 and 2009 Wisconsin Forward Award will offer additional ways for applicant organizations, first-time or returning, to learn more about self-assessment, the WFA/Baldrige Criteria, and using Wisconsin Forward Award feedback for continuous improvement and/or to prepare for a Baldrige application. An annual conference, workshops, and other events will be offered in various locations around the state. Visit our website or call our office for updated information throughout the year.

Organizations should use the appropriate Criteria booklets for their sector. **2009 applicants should write responses to the 2008 Criteria for Performance Excellence.** Copies of the 2008 Criteria for Performance Excellence (Business/Nonprofit, Education, or Health Care) can be downloaded for free from our website at www.forwardaward.org or ordered in hard copy from WFA.

Individual copies of the 2008 Business/Nonprofit, Education, and Health Care Criteria for Performance Excellence and Application booklets are available upon request from WFA at no charge. Multiple copies of Criteria books may be ordered in packets of 10 at a cost of \$40.00 per packet plus shipping and handling charges.

Quick Reference Application Facts

Application Fees and Submission of Materials

Intent-to-Apply Packet

Due: Friday, October 31, 2008

A \$250.00 (non-refundable) fee must accompany the Intent-to-Apply materials to cover the costs associated with the initial processing and eligibility determination. Fees are payable by check to Wisconsin Forward Award, Inc, or call us at (608) 663-5300 to arrange a MasterCard, Visa, or Discover payment.

The Intent-to-Apply Packet must include the following materials along with the \$250 processing fee:

- Intent-to-Apply cover letter
- Intent-to-Apply form
- Organizational chart(s)
- Form A (Business Factors)
- Form B (Site Listing, if applicable)
- Form C (Subunit, if applicable)
- One additional copy of the intent-to-apply form, the organizational charts, and Forms A, B, and C (as applicable).

The confirmation of your Intent-to-Apply will include a letter and a copy of your Intent-to-Apply form with an authorized WFA signature and your confirmation number included.

Application Report Package

Due: Friday, January 16, 2009

An application fee is due with the application package; this fee depends on the type and size of your organization. **See page 3 for a complete fee schedule.** Fees are payable by check to Wisconsin Forward Award, Inc., or by calling us at (608) 663-5300 to arrange MasterCard, Visa, or Discover payment.

The original, twelve (12) copies of the application package and a disk or USB flash drive copy of the application are required. The front cover of each paper copy of the application should include just your confirmation number (assigned to you upon confirmation of your Intent-to-Apply) and otherwise be blank.

The Application Report Package must include:

- cover letter
- application fee
- one copy of the application form
- an unbound original of the application
- twelve (12) **additional** copies of the application, including Intent-to-Apply materials
- CD or USB flash drive containing the following materials:
 - Intent-to-Apply form and all attachments
 - table of contents
 - Organizational Profile
 - glossary of terms
 - responses addressing Criteria Items

Submit Materials To:

Wisconsin Forward Award, Inc.
2909 Landmark Place, Suite 110
Madison, WI 53713

Ordering Materials

You may use the Business/Nonprofit, Education, or Health Care Criteria to write your application. All of these are available for free download through our website at www.forwardaward.org.

Individual printed copies of the 2008 Business/Nonprofit, Health Care or Education Criteria for Performance Excellence and Application booklets are available upon request from the WFA at no charge. Multiple copies may be ordered in packets of 10 at a cost of \$40.00 per packet plus shipping and handling charges.

Contact Us

Please contact Elizabeth Menzer, Executive Director, if you have further questions about the application and review process.

Email: menzer@forwardaward.org

Telephone: (608) 663-5300

Fax: (608) 663-5302

WFA website: www.forwardaward.org

Note:

Please review the Criteria before completing your application. WFA offers a variety of workshops and trainings to help organizations understand the Criteria. Contact WFA for details.

QUESTIONS? Call (608) 663-5300