

The 2008 New York Times Company Nonprofit Excellence Awards

Presented by

The New York Times Community Affairs Department
Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York
New York Regional Association of Grantmakers

Application Information

Deadline: November 30, 2007

Definition

Nonprofits play a critical role in enriching and improving the lives of people throughout the greater New York City area. The 2008 New York Times Company Nonprofit Excellence Awards will be presented to four New York City area nonprofit organizations for excellence in organizational management. The Awards recognize management excellence and encourage innovation and communication among New York's large and diverse nonprofit community.

Eligibility

The Awards competition is open to any 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in and serving the following areas: **Manhattan, the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, Nassau County, Suffolk County and Westchester County**. The competition is free to all applicants.

Applications are welcome from small as well as large organizations, new or well-established organizations, and any part of the nonprofit sector, regardless of mission, religious affiliation, ethnicity, socioeconomic grouping, ideological perspective or sexual orientation. In reviewing applications, the Selection Committee will take into account the management resources available to each organization in terms of funding, staff and volunteers.

Once an organization has received an award, that organization will become ineligible to participate in the competition for the following three years (e.g., the 2008 award-winner cannot participate until the 2012 award competition).

The Awards

- **The Overall Excellence Award** - A \$25,000 grant presented to the winning organization
- **Three additional awards (\$5,000 each) will be presented for outstanding performance in at least one other key area of nonprofit management (See *Seven Areas of Nonprofit Excellence*, attached). One of these will be an Award for Excellence in Communications.**

Each of the four winning organizations will also receive a scholarship of \$4,500 to be applied toward the Columbia Business School Executive Education Institute for Not-for-Profit Management (a \$4,500 value).

Selection Process

The winners will be selected after a three-step judging process, including two stages of written applications and a site visit. The Awards Selection Committee is an all-volunteer expert group selected by the Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York (NPCC), the New York Regional Association of Grantmakers (NYRAG) and the New York Times Community Affairs Department. No NPCC, NYRAG or New York Times Community Affairs Department employees serve on the Selection Committee; however, these organizations administer and facilitate the Awards selection process. All information submitted for consideration remains confidential to Selection Committee members and staff administering the Awards.

After the Selection Committee reviews all applications, the pool will be reduced to a maximum of 10 semi-finalists for consideration. The 10 semi-finalists will be asked to complete the Part Two application. You will be notified whether or not you qualify for Part Two of the competition by Thursday, February 14, 2008.

The four winning organizations are required to participate in the awards presentation scheduled for June 24, 2008, which will include a Best Practices Workshop featuring management strengths, ideas and strategies identified through the awards program selection process.

Co-Sponsors

The Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York serves as the tax-exempt sponsor of this award, in partnership with The New York Times Community Affairs Department and the New York Regional Association of Grantmakers. Additional financial and in-kind support is provided by the Surdna Foundation, The New York Community Trust, and RSM McGladrey, Inc.

Identifying Nonprofit Excellence

Key factors that will be considered by the Awards Selection Committee are outlined in the attached document, *Seven Areas of Nonprofit Excellence*. The 7 areas are:

- Overall management focus on results
- Governance structure that moves the organization forward
- Strong, transparent and accountable financial management
- Inclusive and diverse organizational practices
- Enlightened use of human and other resources
- Regular and effective communications
- Effective, ethical fundraising and resource development

The strongest applications are expected to be from those organizations where discussion and reflective time has been invested by staff, board, volunteers and other stakeholders prior to completing the application. We would hope that the questions in The 2008 New York Times Company Nonprofit Excellence Awards application will stimulate this work.

HOW TO APPLY

Content

The application is designed to give considerable flexibility for organizations to tell their management stories. **In formulating responses, applicants should bear in mind that the awards competition focuses on management as opposed to program content. Discussion of program content should be minimal, and mentioned only in support of excellent management practices.**

Page Requirements

Both paper and online applications will be accepted. Your Part One paper application addressing questions 1 through 10 should be no more than a total of six (6) pages. Please submit only one copy of the application form. Paper submissions must be typed single-spaced with no less than **1/2 inch margins**. The text must be a minimum 12-point size in Arial, Helvetica, Palatino or Times-Roman font. Each question must be clearly numbered. Applications not meeting these margin and font size requirements will **not** be considered. Materials submitted by mail should be sent to the address below.

Supporting Documents

In addition to the 10 questions, **you must submit supporting financial documents (see last page)**. (This material is not included in the six-page maximum covering questions 1-10.) If you are submitting these documents by regular mail, they must be **unbound and on 8 ½ by 11 paper**. Do not send books, videotapes, manuscripts or other unrequested materials. These will not be reviewed or returned.

Applying Online

Go to **<http://dey.fcny.org:4242/npea/>** to apply online. If you do not have the capacity to upload supporting documents (see last page for specifics) please mail them under separate cover to NPCC (address below) with a note indicating that you submitted the rest of the application online.

All materials must be received by 7:00 PM on Friday, November 30, 2007.

**Send application and supporting documents to:
2008 Nonprofit Excellence Awards
Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York
1350 Broadway, Suite 1801
New York, NY 10018**

IMPORTANT: Applications lacking supporting documents will not be considered.

**The 2008 New York Times Company
Nonprofit Excellence Awards**

Note: This page, completed, must be submitted with your application.

**PART ONE APPLICATION COVER PAGE
(Due November 30, 2007)**

Name of Organization

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

FAX

E-Mail

Web Page Address

Primary Contact Person's Name & Title

Finance Manager's Name, Email Address & Phone Ext.

Executive Director's Name, Email Address & Phone Ext.

Number of Paid Staff Members : Full-time #

Part-time #

Number of Volunteers (*excluding board members*)

Number Serving on Your Board of Directors

Organization Began Operations In (year)

Most Recent Fiscal Year Ended (date)

Total Revenues for That Year

Total Assets

**Excess (deficit) of support and revenue over expense
during the most recent fiscal year**

PART ONE QUESTIONS (Due November 30, 2007)

Limit your answers to no more than 6 pages total (not counting this page). Please refer to page 3 for specific margin and font size requirements. Applications that do not conform to these limitations will not be considered. Questions can be answered in narrative and/or bullet point form. (Consult *Seven Areas of Nonprofit Excellence*, attached.) **Be specific: describe actual, existing policies and practices.** Questions not in bold face are meant to suggest the types of issues that you might address in describing your excellent practices. You are NOT required to answer all of the unnumbered (non bold) questions. In each area you should focus your answers on those areas of excellent practice within your organization that represent innovative, sustainable and/or replicable practices from which other nonprofit organizations might benefit.

- 1. Please provide your mission statement.**
- 2. How does your organization's management focus on results?** How does regular planning lead to measurable progress toward fulfilling (or affirming) your organization's mission? What types of planning are done? How are results or outcomes defined, verified, tracked and reported? Who does it, how often, and what does it encompass? What is your track record of results over the last 3-5 years? How has impact been sustained? How will you sustain these results going forward?
- 3. How does your board of directors add value to your organization?** How are board members recruited, recognized and involved? How are they effectively engaged in critical policy oversight, leveraging resources, assuring accountability and publicly representing the organization? How are board members and committees informed, involved and held accountable? How is board performance evaluated? What percentage of board members contribute financially? How does the board monitor and evaluate the CEO's performance? How does board governance assure effectiveness, accountability, ethical practices and transparency?
- 4. Describe how financial management is achieved – how does it work and who is involved?** How is your annual budget created, approved and reviewed at the board level? How do you assure financial accountability throughout the year by tracking and reporting financial performance and cash flow to the board, its committees, key staff, supporters and other key stakeholders? Has your organization had significant deficits in recent years; if so, explain why and how you are assuring adequate revenues going forward? If your organization is of sufficient size to require an annual audit, how is that reviewed at the board level? What internal controls are in place to assure integrity, accuracy and transparency in all financial dealings and prevent fraud and waste? Are required local, state and federal forms and reports (e.g, IRS Form 990, NYS CHAR 500, etc.) filed as required, complete, accurate, reviewed by senior management and board leadership, and publicly available?
- 5. How does your organization ensure that it is responsive to emerging issues or communities?** Describe inclusive and culturally competent service, outreach and hiring policies and practices. Do you have a written diversity policy? How do you regularly improve cultural competence in relating to clients or constituents, volunteers, staff and other key stakeholders? Cite specific policies and practices in human resources, governance, management and supervision, and client services. How do you regularly assess and adapt to emerging challenges, issues, needs and demands within the constituencies and issue areas that your organization addresses?
- 6. How does your organization handle the challenges of effectively and ethically developing resources?** Describe fundraising policies, strategies and actual practices, for leveraging financial and other resources. How do you balance assuring sustainable revenues with ensuring ethical and transparent practices and communications? Describe the roles of your board, the organization's leadership, staff, volunteers and the community in resource development. How do you assure that development plans, policies and

activities are ethical, effective, regularly reviewed by the board and accountable to donors? How do you assure that fundraising professionals acting on behalf of your organization adhere to the highest ethical standards, such as the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Code of Ethical Principles and Standards of Practice? Does your organization comply with local, state and federal laws and regulations concerning fundraising practices? Do fundraising communications clearly convey accurate, honest information about your organization, its activities, and intended use of funds? How do you balance between publicly recognizing contributions and donor confidentiality when needed? Do you assure that donor names are not shared or traded with others without donor permission?

7. **How does your organization recruit, train, utilize and recognize human and other resources?** How do your human resources policies and practices recognize the importance and changing expectations, availability and needs of staff and volunteers? Are written personnel policies communicated to staff and reviewed at the Board level? Are there job descriptions for each position and annual performance reviews? Are internal or external professional development opportunities available? Do policies and practices protect your clients, employees and volunteers from harm and unnecessary risk and ensure standards of prudent care? Do you have employee whistleblower and conflict of interest policies that protect confidential reporting of suspected fraud and material conflicts of interest? How do you regularly use technology and other resources to increase efficiency and effectiveness?
8. **How do you communicate with your constituencies?** Cite specific internal and external communications with key stakeholders that clearly convey your organization's "story." Do you have a communications plan and practices that assure regular delivery of accurate information to your various publics? Describe your strategies to protect consumer privacy and confidentiality. How do you regularly assess how well your communications are working relative to your competitors, clients, donors and others? How does your organization actively and effectively "brand" itself and "tell its story?"
9. **Highlight up to three specific "best practices" examples of management excellence in your organization over the past three years.** Illuminate creative program or business practices that distinguish your organization's work. How might these practices be taken to scale? Each example highlighted can cover one or more of the management areas identified above.
10. **What is special about the management of your organization that merits consideration for this award?**

NOTE:

Applicants must document significant accomplishments in more than one of the areas described above. Impact on overall management must be described. Competence does not equal excellence. The New York Times Company Nonprofit Excellence Awards recognize management competence, encourage innovation, and reward excellence!

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

*Applications lacking any of these documents will **NOT** be forwarded to the Selection Committee for consideration. If submitting by paper, submit in the following order. Check off that you have included:*

- 1) Completed **cover page**.
- 2) This **checklist**.
- 3) Completed **6 page (maximum) application** (answers to questions 1-10).
- 4) If your organization is required to obtain an annual audit, include your **latest audited financial statement**. (Include any management letter or other recommendations from your auditor.) Nonprofits in New York State with revenues above \$250,000 are required to have an annual audit: organizations between \$100,000-\$250,000 are encouraged to have an alternative Financial Review by an accounting firm. If your organization had revenues below \$250,000, provide the most recent Financial Review or financial statement covering your organization's finances.
- 5) If your most recent audit (or Financial Review) covers a period that ended prior to August 31, 2007, provide an **interim financial statement (statement of income and expenses, plus balance sheet if available)** covering the period through September 30, 2007.
- 6) Copy of your **budget for the current fiscal year**.
- 7) Copy of your most recent **IRS Form 990**, including all schedules (if required).
- 8) Copy of your **IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter**.
- 9) A list of your **Board of Directors**, with their affiliations.