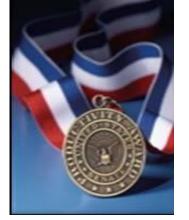# Virginia SPQA

Award

Guide 2022

Our Mission

To promote continual improvement strategies and provide training, mentoring, and recognition to organizations in pursuit of performance excellence.

Q*Award*

United States Senate Productivity and Quality Award
for Virginia and the District of Columbia

July 1, 2021

Dear Virginia or District of Columbia Leader:

The U.S. Senate Productivity and Quality Award for Virginia and the District of Columbia is celebrating over 30 years of serving organizations across the Commonwealth and the District of Columbia. From its beginnings in 1983, SPQA has been a national leader in spreading excellence in organizational performance. Every organization in Virginia and the District of Columbia that participates in SPQA is a winner!

SPQA endorses the Baldrige Excellence Framework and its Criteria for Performance Excellence, which has been used by hundreds of Virginia and D.C. organizations to stay current with competition and to improve performance.

Whether large or small, in manufacturing, business service, education, health care or government, your organization can benefit from the application of the Baldrige Excellence Framework.

Make this the year to apply!

Sincerely,

Matt Smith
Chair, SPQA Board of Directors
Programs.services@spqa-va.org

Virginia SPQA Key Dates for 2022 Award Program Applicants

Date	Activity
Friday, October 15, 2021	**Intent to Apply Form for 2022 Award Cycle Due**
Friday - January 14, 2022	**Written Application for 2022 Award Cycle Due**
January 2022	2022 Examination Cycle Begins
April/May 2022	Applicants' Site Visits Conducted
June 2022	Applicants Notified of Awards
June 2022	Delivery of Applicants' Feedback Reports
July/Aug 2022	Applicants' Feedback Meetings
Fall 2022	Virginia SPQA 2022 Forum for Excellence

Note: This Award Guide is updated annually. You can find updates at:
https://www.spqa-va.org/award/

Overview

The mission of the U.S. Senate Productivity and Quality Award (SPQA) is "…t*o promote continual improvement strategies and provide training, mentoring, and recognition to organizations in pursuit of performance excellence.*" in Virginia and the District of Columbia. We accomplish our mission through a process of knowledge sharing, evaluation, feedback and recognition. SPQA, a 501-C3 non-profit corporation, administered and supported by an extensive network of organizations, sponsors, and individuals, is committed to helping businesses and organizations of all sizes and in all sectors (business, nonprofit, education, health care, and government). SPQA's Board of Directors, with the majority comprised of volunteer representatives from public and private sector organizations, administers the program on behalf of Virginia's United States Senators who serve as Honorary Chairs.

Why Apply

SPQA promotes awareness of performance excellence as an increasingly important element in competitiveness and organizational sustainability. Participation in the SPQA Award Program is an opportunity to critically examine your organization through self-assessment and receive a rigorous and objective external review of your organization's performance through the lens of the internationally-recognized Baldrige Excellence Framework to identify strengths and opportunities to improve. Your application effort may serve to accelerate your organizational improvement. Additionally, organizations are eligible to apply for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award if they have earned the top award in their state organization.

Feedback to Applicants

All SPQA Award Applicants receive a Feedback Report, which is created by a team of examiners with expertise across a broad spectrum of areas and industries, The Feedback Report identifies organization-specific strengths and opportunities for improvement. Also, organizations often use the Feedback Report to help create improvement strategies and action plans.

Feedback Reports are distributed in July at the end of the evaluation process. Strict conflict-of-interest and confidentiality procedures are observed in every aspect of application review and feedback and post-review.

After Feedback Reports are delivered, Applicants can arrange to meet with the examiner team to discuss their report and to clarify any questions. These meetings are strongly encouraged.

Levels of SPQA Award

Because the Award is based on individual performance against specific criteria, there is no minimum or maximum number of awards. There are five Award levels of which the Medallion and ACE represent the highest levels of recognition:

◆ **Commitment to Performance Excellence Award**

◆ **Progress in Performance Excellence Award**

◆ **Achievement in Performance Excellence Award**

◆ **Medallion of Excellence Award**

◆ **Award for Continuing Excellence (ACE)**

Applicant Eligibility

Businesses, large and small, and all organizations in the public, private, nonprofit, healthcare, education and government sectors are eligible to apply. SPQA primarily serves organizations located in the District of Columbia and Commonwealth of Virginia; however, organizations in other U.S. states or territories may apply. An Applicant can be an entire organization or an organizational unit within a larger parent organization. An organizational unit could be one division of a corporation or one department within a government organization. If an organizational unit applies, it should be a

distinct entity that can respond to all the Baldrige Excellence Framework criteria items. Eligibility is intended to be as open as possible to all organizations.

Previous SPQA Medallion recipients are eligible to apply for the ACE no sooner than three years after receiving the Medallion Award. For example, if an organization received the Medallion in 2016 or earlier, it is invited to apply for the ACE in 2022.

Note: **For those organizations interested in later applying for a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the National Program has its own eligibility requirements, which can be found on the NIST website at www.nist.gov/baldrige.**

Applicant Sectors

Applications are accepted from all industry sectors.

◆ **Manufacturing**

Includes organizations or sub-units that produce and sell manufactured products or manufacturing processes, and producers of agricultural, mining or construction products.

◆ **Service**

Includes organizations or sub-units that provide and sell services. Examples include retail, food, information technology, consulting, insurance, banking and hospitality services.

◆ **Nonprofit**

Includes businesses, professional associations, charitable agencies, social service organizations and other organizations that have been granted federal tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

◆ **Education**

Includes public and private elementary and secondary schools and public-school districts; colleges, universities, and university systems; schools or colleges within universities; professional schools; community colleges; and technical schools. (Note: Departments within schools or colleges are ineligible.)

◆ **Health Care**

Includes hospitals, HMOs, long-term care facilities, health care practitioner offices, home health agencies, dialysis centers, hospice care, etc.

◆ **Government**

Includes federal, state or local government organizations.

Submitting an SPQA Award Application

To be considered for an SPQA Award, organizations must submit a written narrative addressing the criteria items in the Baldrige Excellence Framework. For the 2022 Cycle, SPQA will use the *2021-2022 Baldrige Excellence Framework,* which can be obtained from: http://www.nist.gov/baldrige/publications/. Instructions, notes, considerations and recommendations for addressing the Criteria are found in these publications. Organizations intending to apply must complete the following steps.

Step One: Complete the "Intent to Apply" Form

To ensure sufficient resources are available for examination, all Applicants must complete the "Intent to Apply Form" that can be accessed at https://www.spqa-va.org/award/.

Step Two: Submit "Intent to Apply" Form and Related Fee by October 15, 2021

The completed "Intent to Apply Form" must be received by **October 15, 2021** to be eligible for the **2022 Award Cycle**. Forms should reference the organization in the document file name (Intent.to.Apply_AcmeCo_Date) and be emailed to programs.services@spqa-va.org. SPQA will invoice your organization the $500 Intent to Apply fee after receiving the Intent to Apply form.

Step Three: Prepare an Application

Content.   The basis for the application should be organization-wide efforts, processes, and systems, not single projects. The document must effectively describe the organization's efforts to achieve performance excellence. For information on how to write an application, refer to the industry sector specific *2021-2022 Baldrige Excellence Framework (Business, Education, or Health Care)* appropriate for your organization. You can download, or order copies of the Framework and you may also view example applications (award application summaries or case studies) at www.nist.gov/baldrige.

Format. The application must be submitted on 8-1/2" by 11" paper. Margins must be 1" for top, bottom, ¾ inch left and ½ inch right. Running text and tables filled mainly with text should be in Times New Roman font (minimum 10-point size). Do not use condensed or compressed fonts. Font type and size need not be uniform, but must meet requirements. Content is limited to 55 single line–spaced pages. This includes a maximum 5-page, single-spaced Organizational Profile and 50 pages of Content in response to the seven categories. Pages beyond the 55-page limit will not be used in the application scoring. Pages may be double-sided and must be numbered sequentially. Do not number blank pages. Each copy of the application must be bound with either spiral or plastic comb binding. Please do not use 3-ring binders. **The application front and back cover must be blank heavy stock paper or opaque plastic for security – no names, no pictures, dark color preferred.** Also, please include a copy of your Intent to Apply form immediately preceding the Organizational Profile. A glossary of key terms is encouraged and may be included at the front of the application. Note: The glossary does not count as part of the 55-page limit. The glossary should include short definitions for your organization's terms, acronyms, abbreviations used in the application and may include short descriptions of processes, tools methods and techniques discussed in the application. No other supporting documentation or appendices will be accepted.

Graphics, Charts and Numerical Information.   Graphics, charts and numerical information are highly encouraged. All displays of information and data must be labeled with figure/table numbers and titles. Do not use less than 8-point font in data tables, charts, graphs, and other displays of numerical information and data. Clearly label all axes and units of measure. Ensure all displays of information and data are legible, easy to read, and can be interpreted by examiners. The Baldrige Criteria framework offers good examples and guidance on how to construct graphs for the Results section.

Step Four: Submit Application and Related Fee by January 14, 2022

To be eligible for the 2022 Award Cycle, applications must be received BOTH electronically and in hard copy by **January 14, 2022.** Email the electronic version to programs.services@spqa-va.org**.** Submissions must include the following:

◆ One electronic copy (PDF preferred) including the 2022 Intent to Apply Form and blank covers as noted in *Format* above. Email to programs.services@spqa-va.org.

SPQA will invoice you for the Application Fee as soon as the electronic Application is received.

SPQA will later invoice you for the Site Visit Fee once site visit eligibility is established in late March or early May 2022. SPQA's policy is to conduct site visits for all Applicants that will benefit from a site visit.

Confirmation of receipt of your Application package will be sent via email to the address of the Applicant point of contact provided on the Intent to Apply Form.

Step Five: Evaluation, Notification, & Feedback

A team of well-trained examiners is assigned to evaluate each Application. The Examiner Team works through a rigorous process of individual and consensus review to formulate their feedback. Every applicant has the option of having a Site Visit process to enhance the Examiner's understanding of the organization. The applicant must be willing to host the site visit, generally lasting two days, is part of the examination process. The Examiner Team submits its report to a Panel of Judges, which reviews the reports, determines award levels, and forwards Award determinations to the SPQA Board of Directors. The SPQA Board of Directors certifies that the established evaluation and award recommendation processes were followed. Applicants are notified of their award level soon after the Judges' decision is certified (June).

All Applicants receive a comprehensive written "Feedback Report" prepared by the Examiner Team. The report provides valuable insight regarding the organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement. After reviewing this report, Applicants are asked to evaluate the report's usefulness. Applicants also are encouraged to arrange a Feedback Meeting with their Examiner Team to discuss the report and clarify any questions.

Expectations of Applicants

To support its mission to promote performance excellence, SPQA has the right to ask any level of Award recipients to publicly share best practices (excluding proprietary information) and lessons learned to help other organizations improve their own performance. Award recipients will be recognized, typically at the annual SPQA Forum for Excellence, and will be invited to present their experience at the Forum. Sharing their experience with others is another way to enhance an Award recipient's organizational learning derived from participating in the SPQA Award process.

Another way to facilitate an organization's journey to performance excellence is to recommend individuals to serve on the SPQA Board of Examiners. These individuals comprise the examiner team. The skills and experiences gained as an SPQA examiner are valuable for professional development, especially in the areas of analytical thinking, synthesis, and evaluation. Examiners can take their learning experience and become performance excellence champions within their own organizations. Many organizations have benefited from having examiners on staff to enhance their understanding of the Baldrige Excellence Framework and help facilitate the organization's journey to performance excellence.

Applicants may nominate up to two individuals to serve on the Examiner Board for the current evaluation cycle. Once the examiners have been accepted, the organization is eligible for a discount of $500 for each examiner serving from their organization, up to a $1000 (for 2 examiners nominated).

Applicant Examiner Expectations

SPQA encourages applicants to nominate individuals from your organization to serve on the 2022 SPQA Board of Examiners. Application discounts are limited to a maximum of $1000 for up to two examiners to serve from any one organization ($500 for each examiner).   Board of Examiner appointments provide a significant opportunity for your organization to learn about the Criteria and the evaluation process. The time commitment is also substantial: Examiners commit to a minimum of 200 hours from January to May, including approximately 20-30 hours in January to complete self-study and participate in Examiner Training, and 90-150 hours from January through May to complete an Independent and Consensus Review. Examiners also participate in a Site Visit Review of approximately 2 -3 days.

SPQA strives for continuous improvement and evaluates each phase of the Award process for improvement opportunities. Since listening to customers is the best source of this information, all Applicants are encouraged to complete the evaluations provided for site visits, feedback reports, and the feedback meeting. Please take advantage of these opportunities for input and assist SPQA in its ongoing improvement efforts.

Due Diligence

Certification of Good Corporate Citizenship
During the site visit phase, the SPQA Examiner Team Leader will request a private meeting with the most senior organizational leader (or their designee if the most senior leader is unavailable). The purpose of the meeting will be an opportunity for disclosure of any matters affecting the organization that could, if the organization receives public recognition from the SPQA, impact the integrity or perceived integrity of the SPQA Award Program, or the SPQA organization. The leader will be asked questions such as: Have there been any major organizational changes since the submission of the application? Are there any current, pending or anticipated sanctions or restrictions imposed by any regulatory or accrediting body? Is there any current, pending or anticipated unfavorable media exposure about the organization?

General Information

Fees. Fees may be paid via PayPal or check made payable to <mark>Virginia SPQA</mark>. SPQA will provide an invoice for each phase and where the payment should be mailed. Fees help defray expenses associated with the Award process and are non-refundable.

◆ **Intent to Apply Fee**

The intent to apply fee is $500

◆ **Application Fee**

The Application fee for all organizations is as follows.

<mark>$5,500 for organizations less than 100 employees</mark>

<mark>$7,000 for organizations more than 100 employees</mark>

◆ **Site Visit Fee**

A site visit is typically a part of the evaluation process. There is a flat fee of <mark>$2,500 for the two-day Site Visit.</mark> This fee will be invoiced separately from the application fee after site visit eligibility is determined.

Confidentiality. All Applications, commentary and scoring information developed are regarded as proprietary and kept confidential under a strict records retention schedule. Applications are kept confidential for 7 years, commentary and scoring information are kept confidential indefinitely. Applications, commentary and scoring are only available to individuals directly participating in the review of their assigned organization. Information is available only on a need-to-know basis to individuals involved in the review process. All members of the Examiner Team sign non-disclosure agreements, an ethics statement and conflict of interest documents to protect Applicants from unwanted disclosure of proprietary information. After 7 years, SPQA will make a reasonable attempt to contact the organization and confirm the application may be placed in a publicly available library. Organizations who respond to reasonable attempt for contact will be given the opportunity to redact content prior to placing the application in a publicly available library.

Awards Celebration. All Award recipients will be recognized by SPQA during the annual SPQA Forum for Excellence.

Recognition of Recipients. Organizations receiving an Award are eligible for the following:

All Recipients:

◆ Press Release announcing accomplishment

◆ Recognition and presentation of Award at the SPQA Forum for Excellence.

Medallion and ACE Recipients:

◆ Use of Virginia SPQA logo (within written guidelines established by SPQA).

Virginia SPQA Program Support

There is no guarantee that an Applicant will be recognized at the highest award level. Many Applicants repeat the process several times. The most successful organizations are those that exhibit an ongoing commitment to organizational learning.

Participation in scheduled training events and offering individuals to serve as SPQA examiners are excellent ways to expand knowledge within an organization, while simultaneously supporting the SPQA Program.

SPQA can arrange to conduct focused training at an organization's site. Details of these offerings can be found at https://www.spqa-va.org/training/. Please email us at programs.services@spqa-va.org if this is something your organization might consider.

An Alternative – the Virginia SPQA Discovery Program

Is your organization just beginning its journey in performance excellence? Perhaps your organization isn't ready to apply for an award but is interested in learning more about the Baldrige Excellence Framework and receiving expert feedback to accelerate

its excellence journey and organizational maturity. You should consider the **Virginia SPQA Discovery Program**. This non-award program is less intense yet still provides valuable feedback. The Discovery Program accepts participants year around. The Discovery Program Guide can be found at https://www.spqa-va.org/Discovery/. For additional information concerning the **Discovery Program**, email programs.services@spqa-va.org.