



Eureka Award Application Information

California Awards for Performance Excellence (CAPE) Program

EUREKA AWARD OVERVIEW

Modeled after the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the Eureka Award for Performance Excellence is the highest level of statewide recognition for performance excellence that a California organization can receive. The award focuses on performance in five key areas:

- Product and process outcomes
- Customer outcomes
- Workforce outcomes
- Leadership and governance outcomes
- Financial and market outcomes

There are three levels of Eureka Awards: Bronze, Silver, and Gold. The award is **not** given for specific products or services. To be selected as an award recipient, an organization must have a system that ensures continuous improvement in overall performance in the delivery of products and/or services and that provides an approach for satisfying and responding to customers and stakeholders. Organizations that receive the Eureka Award Gold Level become eligible to apply for [The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award](#).

WHY WAS THE EUREKA AWARD ESTABLISHED?

The award was established to promote the awareness of performance excellence as an increasingly important element in competitiveness. Not only does the award recognize organizations with exceptional performance strategies, but it also aims to increase understanding of the Criteria questions for performance excellence. To accomplish this, the award promotes information sharing on successful performance strategies and the benefits derived from using these strategies.

BENEFITS OF APPLYING

Each applicant gains an outside perspective on the organization based on 300 to 1,000 hours of review by members of the Board of Examiners. The results of this review are synthesized in a feedback report outlining strengths and opportunities for improvement based on the Criteria for Performance Excellence. Feedback reports are often used by organizations as part of their strategic planning process to focus on their customers and to improve results, as well as to help energize and guide their organizational improvement efforts.

SITE VISIT

Eureka applicants receive a site visit. A team of five to ten members of the Board of Examiners, led by the Senior Examiner, conducts on-site verification and clarification of the application. Site visits consist primarily of a review of pertinent records and data, and interviews with senior leaders, employees, and process owners of key processes (whether directly employed by the applicant or not). Additionally, the organization is expected to provide updates for all results provided in the application. These updates become part of the official application. The organization is responsible for paying a site visit fee, which covers the expenses associated with the site visit. 2024 Site Visit Weeks:

Week of September 22

Week of October 6

THE FEEDBACK REPORT

The feedback report is a detailed, individualized, written assessment of your organization's strengths and opportunities based on your Eureka Award application and the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence (part of the Baldrige Excellence Framework). The report is compiled by a team of CAPE Examiners with sector/industry knowledge and training in the [Baldrige Excellence Framework](#). Components of the report include:

- **Key Themes:** These are the "executive summary," a synthesis of the most significant, cross-cutting strengths and opportunities for improvement in your organization's processes and results.
- **Comments:** You will receive around six detailed, actionable strengths and opportunities for improvement related to each of the 17 Baldrige Criteria items. The comments can help you prioritize your improvement efforts.
- **Item Scoring Range:** The percentage scoring range for each Item allows you to determine how far along your organization is in that area.
- **Scoring Band Distribution:** The percentage of applicants scoring in each of the eight overall scoring bands gives you a context for your total score.



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SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

The application process consists of two parts:

Step 1: Intent to Apply Form/Fee

- <https://www.calexcellence.org/cape-intent-to-apply>
- Nonrefundable fee
- Intent to Apply information is used to avoid conflicts of interest when assigning examiners to your application. A CCE representative will email your designated point of contact shortly after receiving your Intent to Apply.

Step 2: Submit an Award Application Package

In the package, you provide the information that a team of examiners needs to conduct a rigorous evaluation of your organization. All information you provide is considered confidential. The Award Application Package consists of the following:

- Application in PDF format
 - Award Application Form
 - Organization Chart(s)
 - Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
 - Organizational Profile
 - Item to Address Response to the [2021-2022 Baldrige Excellence Framework](#)
- Application Fee

2023 EUREKA AWARD DEADLINES

Intent to Apply – March 1

- Intent to Apply Form and Fee (\$500 non-refundable) must be submitted by this date. The form can be completed at:
<https://www.calexcellence.org/cape-intent-to-apply>.

Late Intent to Apply – April 1

- Intent to Apply Form and Fee (\$600 non-refundable) must be submitted by this date. The form can be completed at:
<https://www.calexcellence.org/cape-intent-to-apply>.

Eureka Award Application Package – June 1

- Application package must be submitted electronically by midnight on June 1.

- Submit **one** PDF file of the application to the California Council for Excellence at hello@calexcellence.org.

2024 EUREKA AWARD APPLICATION FEES

Intent to Apply

- \$1,000 non-refundable

Late Intent to Apply

- \$1,250 non-refundable

Application Fee

- More than 150 employees - \$18,000
- 150 employees or less - \$12,000
- K-12 Education Organizations - \$5,750

Site Visit Review Fee

- The site visit expenses for applicants usually ranges between \$10,000 - \$15,000, depending on the size of the examination team and location of the site visit. Applicants will be invoiced for a site visit deposit based on the projected overall site visit expense prior to site visit. The deposit is due prior to the site visit and is used to assist the Examiners with their upfront travel expenses.
- The fee is based on actual costs incurred by the examiners who conduct the site visit and may include travel, lodging, meals, car rental, and conference room rental at the team's hotel. It is possible that a team may be required to travel outside of California in order to evaluate an applicant's facility. The decision to examine a facility outside of California depends on several factors including: (1) the percent of the applicant's businesses conducted in those facilities, and (2) the percent of employees stationed in those facilities.
- Should the site visit be conducted virtually, the applicant will pay an administrative fee of \$1,500 and actual costs incurred by the examiners who conduct the site visit. These costs may include video conference licenses and meal costs incurred by the examiners



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AWARD CYCLE OVERVIEW

Examiner Independent and Consensus Review

June through September

A team from the Board of Examiners is assigned to your award application.

- **Independent Review:** Members of the team individually review your application against the Criteria for Performance Excellence (part of the Baldrige Excellence Framework) to identify and document strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- **Consensus Review:** Led by a Senior Examiner, the team conducts a series of reviews, first virtually through a software platform and then through focused conference calls. Through these reviews, the team reaches consensus on feedback and scores.

Site Visit Review

September/October

Organizations receiving site visits provide updates for all results in the application. Led by a Senior Examiner, a team of Examiners visits the organization to verify and clarify the information in the application. Site visits consist primarily of a review of pertinent records and data, as well as interviews. The team submits its site visit report to the Judges' Panel.

Judges' Review

November

The Judges' Panel conducts final reviews and recommends award recipient levels (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) to the director of the California Council for Excellence (CCE), who conveys the recommendations to the CCE Board of Directors. The CCE Board of Directors determines whether recommended award recipients are appropriate role models and should receive the award. The purpose of this determination is to help preserve the award's integrity.

Feedback Report

December (target completion 12/20/24)

Members of the Board of Examiners prepare feedback reports detailing organization-specific strengths and opportunities for improvement based on the organizations' responses to the Criteria for Performance Excellence. Each organization receives a feedback report when it exits the process: after Consensus Review, after Site Visit Review, or when it is selected as an award recipient.

Executive Briefing (optional)

January/February

Once an application receives its feedback report, an Executive Briefing can be requested. The applicant can meet with the Senior Examiner who led the examination process and feedback report preparation, to discuss the report and findings. The Lead Judge can also participate in the Executive Briefing, at the applicants' request.

Award Ceremony

Spring 2025

The awards and recognition are presented in conjunction with the California Council for Excellence Spring Conference. Eureka Award recipients will be asked to conduct a workshop at this conference.

Eureka Award Recipient Expectations

Award recipients are required to share information about their exceptional performance practices with other California organizations. Recipients are not required to share proprietary information, even if such information was part of their award application. Additionally, award recipients including their highest-ranking official are required to attend CCE's Annual Best Practices and Awards Conference, and Eureka Award recipients will conduct a conference workshop, which is the principal mechanism for sharing information. Sharing beyond the annual conference is voluntary.



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ELIGIBILITY

Contact the CCE Office at (858) 486-0400 with any questions regarding your eligibility to apply. Your organization must meet the following conditions to be eligible to apply:

- Organizations located or headquartered in California (subunits may also apply)
- Has existed for at least one year
- Can respond to all seven categories of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence
- Operational practices associated with all of its major organizational functions are available for examination

Eligible organizations fall into the following categories:

Business (manufacturing, service, and small business)

Eligible for-profit businesses include publicly or privately owned corporations, joint ventures, sole proprietorships, partnerships, and holding companies.

- **Manufacturing organizations** produce and sell manufactured products or manufacturing processes, or produce agricultural, mining, or construction products.
- **Service organizations** provide or sell services. If your organization is a manufacturer and a service provider, choose your eligibility category based on the activity that provides the larger percentage of your sales.
- **Small businesses** have 500 or fewer paid employees, are engaged in manufacturing and/or the provision of services, and are discrete, independent entities.

Nonprofit

Nonprofit and government organizations are eligible to apply in this category. Examples include:

- local, state, tribal, and federal government agencies
- trade associations
- charitable organizations
- social service agencies
- credit unions
- professional societies

If your nonprofit organization provides direct education or direct health care services in addition to other nonprofit services, choose your eligibility category based on the activity that represents the larger percentage of the budget. For example, if a state department of education allocates 70 percent of its budget to certifying teachers and educational programs and 30 percent to directly educating students, it is eligible in the nonprofit category.

Health Care

Organizations eligible in the health care category are for-profit and nonprofit public, private, and government organizations that devote more than 50 percent of their staff members and/or budget to providing health care services directly to people.

Examples include:

- health systems
- hospitals
- health maintenance organizations
- long-term care facilities
- health care practitioners' offices
- home health agencies
- dialysis and ambulatory surgery centers

Organizations that do not provide health care services directly, such as social service agencies, health insurance companies, or medical/dental laboratories, are ineligible in this category but may be eligible in the service, small business, or nonprofit category.

Health care organizations may apply in the health care category, using the Health Care Criteria for Performance Excellence (included in the *2023-2024 Baldrige Excellence Framework [Health Care]* booklet), or, as appropriate, in the service, small business, or nonprofit category, using the Business/Nonprofit Criteria. If your organization is both an education organization and a provider of health care services, choose your eligibility category based on the activity that represents the larger percentage of your budget.



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Education

Organizations eligible in this category are for-profit and nonprofit public, private, and government organizations that devote more than 50 percent of their faculty and staff members and/or budget to providing teaching and instructional services directly to students. Examples include:

- elementary and secondary schools and school districts
- colleges, universities, and university systems
- schools or colleges within universities
- professional schools
- community colleges
- technical schools

Educational departments within schools or colleges are ineligible. Education organizations may apply in the education category, using the Education Criteria for Performance Excellence, or, as appropriate, in the service, small business, or nonprofit category, using the Criteria for Performance Excellence (the Business/Nonprofit Criteria).

Eligibility of Subunits (Units or Divisions of Larger Organizations)

The larger organization that holds or has control of a subunit is the "parent"— examples of parent organizations are:

- the State of Maryland (not the Maryland Department of Transportation)
- the Montgomery County Government (not the Montgomery County Health Department)
- Sutter Health (not Sutter Davis Hospital)
- Lockheed Martin (not Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control)

There is no limit on the number of subunits of an organization that may apply for the Eureka Award within the same year.

Education and health care subunits. If the parent provides direct teaching and instructional services to students or direct health care services to people, a subunit that also provides these services is eligible.

Manufacturing, service, small business, and nonprofit subunits.

To be eligible, a subunit in these categories must function independently, with substantial authority to make key administrative and operational decisions, but it may receive policy direction and oversight from the parent organization.

A subunit in these categories must

- be recognizable as a discrete entity;
- be easily distinguishable from the parent and its other subunits (e.g., by location or customers served);
- have a clear definition of "organization" reflected in its literature;
- function as a business or operational entity, not as activities assembled to write an award application; and
- be self-sufficient enough to be examined in all seven categories of the Criteria. Thus, it must
 - have its own senior leaders;
 - plan and implement its own strategy;
 - serve identifiable customers either inside or outside the organization;
 - be responsible for measuring its performance and managing knowledge and information;
 - manage its own workforce;
 - manage its own work processes and other aspects of its operations; and
 - be able to report results related to these areas.

Subunits with less than 500 employees may apply under service or manufacturing if it is more appropriate than small business (i.e., divisions).



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EUREKA AWARD APPLICATION CONTENT AND FORMAT DETAILS

Instructions on how to write the Organizational Profile and respond to the Criteria are included in the [Baldrige Excellence Framework](#). Use the Criteria appropriate for your sector/industry.

Please submit **one** PDF file for the entire application. We reserve the right to return incomplete applications and those that do not meet these requirements. **NOTE: PDF file size cannot exceed 25MB. If your application package is larger than 25MB, you may need to adjust the size of your charts, tables, and other graphics.**

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:

1. **Blank front cover.** To help ensure confidentiality, do not include text or illustrations.
2. **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 CAPE Eureka Award, and/or a statement regarding the confidentiality of the content. Do not include additional information, text, or links to websites.
3. **Labeled tabs/divider pages.** Use 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.
 - Table of Contents
 - Eureka Application Form
 - Organization Chart(s)
 - Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
 - Organizational Profile
 - Responses Addressing All Criteria Items
4. **Table of Contents.** Indicate the page numbers for the following:
 - Eureka Application Form
 - Organization Chart(s)
 - Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
5. **Eureka Application Form.** Ensure 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 agrees to host a site visit; facilitate an open and unbiased examination; pay reasonable costs associated with the site visit; and, if selected as an award recipient, share information on successful performance excellence strategies with other California organizations. In the event that the applicant receives the award, the applicant must be able to share nonproprietary information on the seven Criteria categories at the annual CCE conference. Sharing beyond the conference is on a voluntary basis. The Application form can be found: <https://www.calexcellence.org/awardprogram>.
6. **Organization chart(s).** Please include a line-and-box organization chart(s) for your organization; a line-and-box organization chart(s) of the parent (if your organization is a subunit); Please do not include website references on the form.
7. **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. See the [2020 LifeBridge Organ Tissue and Sharing Case Study, Year 2](#) for additional examples.

An acceptable example of a glossary entry is:
PES: Performance Evaluation System

The following example is not acceptable because it includes a description:
PES: Performance Evaluation System used by ST members to assess associate capability and capacity when setting organizational direction.



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8. **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.
9. **Responses Addressing All Framework Items.** In this section, respond to each item as a whole, using the category and item designations in the Criteria within the appropriate year *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).
10. **Blank back cover.** Do not include text or illustrations.

FORMAT

Format your application according to the following requirements. If your submission does not meet these requirements, we will 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. Applications must be resubmitted within that time frame. For an example of the required format, see the [2020 LifeBridge Organ and Tissue Sharing Case Study, Year 2.](#)

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 CAPE 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

Electronic Application Assembly

Assemble the PDF file of your application following all the guidelines listed below:

- Create one PDF file, not multiple files, containing your application package. Select the “embed fonts” option.
- The PDF file should contain the following items:
 - Completed Eureka Application Form
 - Organizational Chart(s)
 - Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
 - Organizational Profile
 - Criteria Response
- 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.
- Submit your application in PDF format California Council for Excellence at hello@calexcellence.org.

QUESTIONS

California Council for Excellence
 Email: hello@calexcellence.org
 Office Phone: 858-486-0400



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PAGE AND TEXT FORMAT

Element	Requirement
Page Size	Standard, 8½-by-11-inch white
Page Orientation	Text Pages: Portrait Pages with graphs, figures, and data tables: Portrait or Landscape
Margins	Left - 3/4 inch minimum Right - 1/2 inch minimum
Text columns	2 (preferred) Leave at least ¼ inch between columns.
Numbering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational Profile: Use roman numerals (five page maximum) Responses Addressing All Criteria Items: Label 1–50 (50 page maximum; applicants may present fewer pages) Figures within the Organizational Profile and Items Sections: Number in sequence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use numbers corresponding to the section (e.g., Figure P.1-1, Figure P.1-2, Figure 2.1-1, Figure 2.1-2). Do not number blank pages or divider pages.
Font Size	Use a standard font (Times New Roman or Arial recommended), 10 point minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not use narrow, compressed, or condensed fonts. Smaller type sizes make it difficult for examiners to interpret the data and to provide accurate and actionable feedback.
Tables filled mainly with text	Use a standard font (Times New Roman or Arial recommended), 8 points minimum
Graphics	Standard font, 8 points minimum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This may include charts, graphs, data tables, and other figures. If you shrink graphics to fit the space available, ensure that text in the reduced figure meets the requirements. 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 “Responding to Results Items” in the <i>Baldrige Excellence Framework</i> booklet that is appropriate for your organization’s sector