# 2027 Awards for Excellence
# Frequently Asked Questions

**Call for Entries Opens: August 3, 2026**
**Entry Deadline: October 15, 2026, 11:59 pm PT**

- **Why should I submit my project, program, or publication?**
  - Be a beacon of hope and progress by sharing your stories, successes, and innovations on a national platform. Inspire others and demonstrate what is possible through your example.
  - Awards for Excellence winners receive national recognition for their creative and effective approaches in advancing medicine, research, education, and community collaborations. The AAMC highlights the award-winning entries in publications and social media, notifies each institution's leaders, recognizes the winners during the AAMC External Relations Conference each spring, and provides materials for you to promote your award winning work.
  - Another significant benefit of participation in the Awards for Excellence program is constructive feedback. Every submission to the program is peer-reviewed by a set of experienced external relations professionals, whose comments are shared with the submitter. Program participants have said they value this honest feedback and use it to improve future programs and projects.
  - The act of preparing an award submission is a valuable exercise too. Consider a team approach to crafting your submission narrative, starting with a conversation and review of the overall strategy and goals, the approach you took, the tools you selected, and the evaluation of the outcomes.
  - Additionally, award recipients, recognized for their expertise or innovation, are often tapped to share their successful programs and projects at conferences and may serve as future award program judges.
- **Is there an entry eligibility time frame?**
  - Yes, all submissions for the 2027 Awards for Excellence competition must have taken place between April 1, 2025 and July 31, 2026.
- **What is the entry fee? How can I pay?**
  - The early bird entry fee is $40 valid from August 3-September 5. The standard entry fee is $50 from September 6-October 15. Entry fees must be paid online at the time of entry via credit card only: MasterCard, Visa, American Express, or Discover. You will receive a payment confirmation and receipt via email once confirmed. We cannot accept checks. Entry fees are non-refundable.
- **Is the narrative important?**
  - The narrative is your opportunity to tell the judges your story and help them understand the situation you and your institution faced. The narrative is as important as the supporting materials because it provides the foundation of your submission.
- **Is there a page limit for the narrative?**
  - Yes, your narrative should be double-spaced; Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri 12-point font; and no more than four (4) pages in length. Judges have a brief amount of time to review each entry, so please be concise.
- **How do I submit my entry?**

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All entries must be submitted via an online portal. You may locate the online portal and other valuable information about the competition via the Awards for Excellence website. **Please do not mail submissions to AAMC headquarters.**

- **How do I upload my supporting documents to the online portal?**
  - The narrative and all supporting entry materials must be uploaded into the online portal through the task titled "Attach Narrative and Supporting Documents." Upload your files in the corresponding section.
  - Please note there is a separate box for each supporting document. Uploading a document to a previously used slot will override the original document uploaded. Please review the upload instructions carefully.
- **Can I have an extension on the submission deadline?**
  - To be fair to all contestants, we are unable to extend the deadline. The online submission system closes at 11:59 pm PT on October 15, 2026; entries cannot be entered after the deadline.
- **When will I receive notification about my entry?**
  - You will be notified in writing in January 2027 of the judges' decision about the status of your submission. Regardless of the decision, all participants will receive constructive comments from the judging panel.
- **I won! Now what?**
  - Congratulations—winning an Award for Excellence is a national honor!
  - All Awards for Excellence winners receive an award certificate or plaque. Awardees are also recognized—
    - Via a letter from AAMC leadership to the awardees' institutional leadership.
    - In External Relations Group publications and social media.
    - On the External Relations Group website.
    - At the annual AAMC External Relations Conference during a special Celebration of Excellence.
    - Access to Awards for Excellence seals to display on your work.
    - Access to a press release to share the news about your Award for Excellence.
  - In addition, Gold winners will receive a free AAMC Conference for Institutional Advancement registration for the 2027 conference. Best in Show winners will receive a free AAMC External Relations Conference registration for the 2028 conference.
  - All 2027 winners will be notified in writing in January 2027, except for Best in Show, which will be announced at the AAMC External Relations Conference. Awards for Excellence recipients are required to provide photographs and additional information about the winning entry for awards displays and in External Relations Group publications.

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