

# **2013 ALFORD-AXELSON AWARD FOR NONPROFIT MANAGERIAL EXCELLENCE**

## **Award Process and Timeline**

### **Eligibility**

In order to be considered for the award, at minimum, an applicant must be a 501(c)3 organization and its primary mission focus must benefit Chicago and/or its surrounding communities. Staff, board members, and volunteers may nominate their own organizations, and do so by completing this application. Organizations that have received the honorable mention designation or have applied in previous years are encouraged to reapply. Past winners will not be considered.

We have also added an eligibility checklist as the first page of this application. In an effort to save time for the applicant, we ask that if you cannot check every item on the list that you not complete the application at this time.

If you are a small 501(c)3 organization that has been in existence 10 years or less, has a budget of under \$750,000, and has less than 10 full-time staff, you might consider applying instead for the Excellent Emerging Organization Award. More information about this award is available on our website.

### **Application Process**

Please note that we have made revisions to the application process to reduce the amount of time required to apply. Below are the steps:

1. Complete and mail the initial application (electronic files are preferred, postmarked no later than February 1, 2013). Include a copy of your 501(c)3 letter.
2. The initial applications will be reviewed and 10-12 organizations will be chosen to complete a more detailed application. The qualifying organizations will be notified no later than February 22, 2013 and will be sent the final application.
3. These organizations will have until April 1, 2013, to postmark the final application.
4. The finalists will be chosen during a review committee meeting in mid-April. These organizations will be notified of the date and time, and are asked to have one contact person available via phone for clarification on questions that may arise during the review.
5. All qualifying organizations will receive special recognition at the Symposium luncheon on June 4, 2013. The two winning organizations (one small organization and one large organization) will each receive a \$5,000 unrestricted grant.

### **Evaluation Process**

The first round of evaluations will take place between February 1 and February 22 by a review committee, who will then nominate 10-12 organizations to be considered for the final round. The second round applications will be reviewed in more depth by the review committee after April 1. The committee may contact your organization to clarify questions they may have

about your application.

*Keep in mind that this award focuses primarily on management aspects, not individual programming. Applicant organizations will be assessed on several dimensions: mission and impact, leadership and governance, strategy and innovation, human resources, financial strength and performance, resource diversity and generation, external relations, and accountability and integrity. The quality and completeness of the application is essential as it will serve as the primary basis for assessment. In this regard, all questions should be answered directly and explicitly; generic responses are not acceptable. Incomplete applications—including indirectly addressed criteria or omitted financial data—will limit our ability to assess your organization. Remember, the quality of how you express your organization's story is critical in our decision.*

## Confidentiality

All information collected during this process will be kept strictly confidential. North Park University will make public only the names of the award winners and finalists. Portions of the data may be used at a later date for educational purposes but not without prior permission from the organization.

## How to Submit

If you would like a Word version of this application, please email your request to [axelson@northpark.edu](mailto:axelson@northpark.edu).

Mail or email (electronic files are preferred) your application, postmarked no later than February 1, 2013, to:

Attention: Jessica Bouboulis  
The Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management  
North Park University  
3225 West Foster Ave. - Box 4  
Chicago, Illinois 60625

Email: [axelson@northpark.edu](mailto:axelson@northpark.edu)

## Questions

If you have questions about the application or process, please email [axelson@northpark.edu](mailto:axelson@northpark.edu) or call 773-244-5747.

We will respond as quickly as possible to help address your questions and assist you in the application process. Please note that we will not release any information about the evaluation process or its outcome until the Symposium luncheon on June 4, 2013.

**THE AXELSON CENTER  
FOR NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT**



We have added the following checklist as the first step in your application process. We are providing this list to you in an effort to make the process more efficient for you. If you cannot check off every item on this list, your organization will not be considered to proceed to the second round of the process. Please check off the following items, confirming your organization follows these practices and/or has these structures in place, and include this page with your returned application. The signature page at the end of the application also confirms this information. Applications without these completed checklists will not be considered. If you have questions about any of the requirements on this list, please contact us at axelson@northpark.edu or 773-244-5747.

### Alford-Axelson Checklist of Eligibility Requirements

- We are an incorporated 501(c)3 organization.
- We serve Chicago and/or the surrounding communities.
- Our Executive Director has been in the role for 2 years or longer.
- We have a strategic plan (or are developing one currently).
- Our financial reports are audited annually by an independent CPA.
- 75% or more of our board of directors has contributed financially to the organization in the last 18 months
- We have quantitative metrics to measure our organization's impact (i.e. X% of students experienced an improvement of X amount in 2012).

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## Initial Application

1. Organization:

Organization Name

Address

Address2

City

State

Zip Code

2. Executive Director/ CEO information:

Last Name

First Name

Title

Email Address

Number of Years at Organization

In Current Role

3. Person to receive communication regarding this application:

Name

Email Address

( )

Title

Phone Number

4.

Current Fiscal Year

Previous Fiscal Year

Specify dates:

Specify dates:

Size of annual operating budget:

Endowment/Cash reserves:

5. Year founded: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Primary objectives of organization (activities actually pursued) and community needs addressed (e.g. arts, poverty, education). Please include your mission statement (attach additional page if necessary):

7. Number of full-time employees (current year): \_\_\_\_\_

8. Number of part-time employees (current year): \_\_\_\_\_

9. Number of volunteer hours (average for most recent year): \_\_\_\_\_

10. How are volunteers utilized in the organization?

11. Financials:

A. Sources of Income: Show as percent (%) of total income.

|  | Most Recently<br>Completed Fiscal Year<br>Specify dates:<br>_____ | Prior Fiscal Year<br>Specify dates:<br>_____ |
|--|---|--|
| Foundation Grants (% of total)               |   |  |
| Corporate Donations (% of total)             |   |  |
| Gifts from Individual Donors (% of total)    |   |  |
| Fee for Service/Product Revenue (% of total) |   |  |
| Membership Fees (% of total)                 |   |  |
| United Way (% of total)                      |   |  |
| Other (specify source)                       |   |  |
| * Total (should equal 100%)                  |   |  |

B. Largest Single Funding Amounts by Source: Show value in dollars and type of income (e.g. cash, in kind, stock, or other). Use the most recent fiscal year for which complete data are available. Specify dates: \_\_\_\_\_

|                                  | Most Recently Completed<br>Fiscal Year | Income Type |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------|
| Largest Foundation Grant         |  |             |
| Largest Corporate Donation       |  |             |
| Largest Donation from Individual |  |             |
| Largest Government Grant         |  |             |
| Other (specify source)           |  |             |

C. Expenses: Use the most recent fiscal year for which complete data are available. Specify dates: \_\_\_\_\_

|                | Amount | % of Operating Budget |
|----------------|--------|-----------------------|
| Fundraising    |        |                       |
| Administration |        |                       |
| Program        |        |                       |
| Other          |        |                       |
| Total          |        |                       |

Does your Form 990 for the two most recently completed fiscal years show that the organization achieved a balanced budget? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No (If no, please explain.):

Comments or clarification on any of the above financial information?

D. In the most recently completed fiscal year, what percentage of your board of directors made a financial contribution (for any purpose) to your organization? \_\_\_\_\_ %

E. Is there a stated get/give policy for your board of directors? If so, what percentage of your board members meet that policy expectation? Does this include in-kind donations?

12. On a separate sheet, please list your current board members, their vocation and the number of years they have served on your board.

13. Service and Impact: Use the most recent fiscal year for which complete data are available. Specify dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Beneficiaries:

Number of total individuals served: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of total organizations served: \_\_\_\_\_

Most important metrics (internal and/or external) used by your organization to measure your impact (list up to five). Include specific results for most recently completed fiscal year (i.e. 75% of all students experienced an improvement of x amount in 2012).

Specify dates: \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

14. Does your organization carry any specific accreditation, certification or other special forms of recognition that it has received from external agencies (e.g. COA, CARF, JCAHO)?

