About Partners in Performance Excellence

Modeled after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, PiPEx fulfills its mission by providing in-depth, low-cost assessments of regional organizations using the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*. This process is the basis of the PiPEx Performance Excellence Program.

Organizations that go through an assessment receive detailed feedback that may be used to improve processes and results. It's an effective way to energize employees, sharpen focus, look at your organization from a systems perspective and earn recognition for your business or organization.

The PiPEx Performance Excellence Program is multi-tiered, offering four levels of review. An organization that is new to the Criteria can get its feet wet by starting with a Level 1 (Commitment) application or a Process Level application. As the organization grows and develops, it may apply for a Level 2 (Achievement), Level 3 (Proficiency) and Level 4 (Excellence) Award. Among other eligibility requirements, organizations that apply for a Baldrige National Quality Award must first receive a PiPEx Platinum-level Award for Excellence.

To participate in the PiPEx Performance Excellence Program, organizations submit a self-assessment to the PiPEx office based on questions posed in the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*. The length and breadth of this self-assessment depends on the award level sought.

A team of PiPEx examiners then evaluates the self-assessment and conducts a site visit to gain a thorough understanding of the organization. Based on its findings, the team prepares a detailed Feedback Report that identifies the applicant's strengths and opportunities for improvement.

The Panel of Judges reviews the examiner team's work for integrity and completeness and determines the applicant's award level.

Code of Ethical Standards

Integrity is one of PiPEx's core values. A strict Code of Ethical Conduct and Conflict of Interest Statement binds each examiner and judge. Neither examiners nor judges may participate in any evaluation, scoring or recognition decisions where there may be, or could appear to be, any personal, potential or perceived conflict of interest.

Applicant Eligibility

Any public or private organization located in the states of MA, NY, CT or RI may participate in the Performance Excellence Program.

Organizational Units

Business/organizational units or subsidiaries are eligible to submit an application. For purposes of the evaluation process, a subsidiary means an actual subsidiary, business unit, division, or district office. Eligible organizations must be recognizable as discrete entities, and must be easily distinguishable from a parent and other sub-units. They must function as business or operational entities, not as activities assembled to write an application.

Organizations must be self-sufficient enough to be examined in all seven Criteria categories. For example, an organizational unit with its own administrative, human resources and other support functions is eligible; but a unit that is entirely dependent upon the parent organization for the majority of these functions is ineligible.

The following organizational units are expressly allowed:

- Business units or larger
- Whole manufacturing plant
- Hospitals within systems; whole health care systems
- State government office/division/department
- Stand-alone sub-units of larger organizations
- School districts
- Individual schools
- Colleges within Universities; whole universities

Note: Meeting eligibility requirements for Level 4 awards does not necessarily convey eligibility as a national Baldrige Applicant.

Future Eligibility

If an organization receives the Platinum Award for Excellence (Level 4), the organization is ineligible to apply for another PiPEx organization level Award for a period of three years. For example, a 2014 Platinum Award recipient would be eligible to reapply in 2018. There is no such restriction for Commitment Recognition (Level 1), Achievement Awards (Level 2) or Proficiency Awards (Level 3).

Eligibility Determination

In order to ensure fairness and consistency to all award applicants, an Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form is required for Organization Levels 2, 3 and 4 applicants and Process Level applicants. This form takes into account an organizational unit's structure, functions and performance. Potential applicants are

encouraged to submit the Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form as early as possible. For more information on eligibility determination, see the Intent-to- Apply and Eligibility Form on the website.

Award Allocation

Awards are granted on the basis of fulfilling the Criteria requirements described for each level There is no limit to the number of awards presented annually. However, if no candidate demonstrates the levels of performance excellence outlined on pages 11-13 ("PiPEx Award Program Recognition Levels") and established by the Criteria, no award will be conveyed. In other words, there may be years when no recipients are named, particularly at the higher award levels.

Responsibilities of Award Recipients

Applicants receiving recognition and awards are encouraged to support the development of performance improvement for others participating in the PiPEx Performance Excellence Program. Excellence Award recipients are expected to share nonproprietary information from their application material and participate in the Southwest Alliance for Excellence annual Awards Banquet, so others may learn from their success. A minimum of one "Best Practice" workshop or "Benchmark Tour" is generally held at the recipient's site.

2019 Performance Excellence Program

PiPEx members receive discounts on application fees. See the website for benefits of PiPEx membership.

Application Fee

The Application Fee is required for all award levels. For Process Level and Levels 2, 3 & 4, (50%) should be included with the Intent to Apply Form and the remaining 50% when the application is submitted to PiPEx. The fee is related to workforce size and application level. Members receive a discount on this fee. For Level 1 and Process Level submit the entire fee with the appropriate completed application. Use the table below to determine your Application Fee.

*Please note there is an additional administrative fee per application for Levels 2- 4.

Site Visit Cost

All applicants (with the exception of Level 1) participate in a site visit from a team of PiPEx examiners (see pages 9-10 & 16-17 for details). The applicants will be invoiced for the actual expenses of the Site Visit following completion of the Site Visit. A deposit may be requested prior to the Site Visit.

Workforce Size

Workforce size is based on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees working for the applicant. FTEs are defined as those who regularly work 40 or more hours a week and are entitled to benefits such as paid vacation, sick leave and insurance coverage. Part-time workers are counted as total part-time hours per week divided by 40. For example: 10 people at 20 hours is equal to 5 full time equivalent employees (10*20 / 40 = 5).

Each instance of job sharing, where multiple individuals fulfill the responsibilities of a single position that requires 40 or more hours per week, is counted as a full-time equivalent employee.

Applicant Categories

1. **Large**: any organization with more than 500 full-time equivalent workers

3. **Medium**: any organization with 100 to 500 full-time equivalent workers

4. **Small:** any organization with 1-99 full-time equivalent workers

Application Fee Table			
Application	Number of Employees	Application Fee (Non-member)	Application Fee (Member)
Commitment (Level 1)	Same for all sizes	$3,000	$2,500
Achievement (Level 2*)	Fewer than 100	$5,000	$2,000 discount for Premium, $4,000 discount for Elite
	100-499	$5,500	
	More than 500	$6,500	
Proficiency (Level 3*)	Fewer than 100	$6,000	$2,000 discount for Premium, $4,000 discount for Elite
	100-499	$6,500	
	More than 500	$7,500	
Excellence (Level 4*)	Fewer than 100	$7,500	$2,000 discount for Premium, $4,000 discount for Elite
	100-499	$8,000	
	More than 500	$9,000	
Process Level	N/A	$3,000	$2,500

*Additional administration fee per application: Level 2 - $500 fee; Level 3 - $750 fee; Level 4 - $1000 fee

Site Visit Fees are invoiced at actual expense amount.

Applying for an Award

Award application requirements become more involved as award levels increase. To participate, an organization must submit an application packet appropriate for the award level to which it is applying.

Level 1 Applications

Level 1 applications are accepted year-round. For this application, the Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form is not required. The Application Fee (see details in the Application Fee Table) is due when the application is submitted.

Organization Level 2, 3 and 4 & Process Level Applications

These applications consist of two parts:

Part 1   Intent to Apply/Eligibility Form
50% Application Fee (see table)
Received by: 2019 Cycle: May 10, 2019

Part 2   Criteria response
Application Fee (see table)
Received by: 2019 Cycle: July 26, 2019

Process Level Criteria Response
The Process Level application includes a three-page Process

Context plus up to 10 pages for the Process Level Criteria responses. (See Process Criteria Award Application Guidelines for Process Level Criteria) *Baldrige Criteria references* are noted in *italicized* parenthesis after each Process Level criteria question, as appropriate.

Level 2, 3, and 4 Criteria response
Your Criteria response depends on the award level sought. The diagram on page 2 of the Criteria booklet* will help you determine which parts of the Criteria must be addressed in your application. ***All questions in the Organizational Profile must be answered for all Level 2, 3 & 4 applications.***

Level 2   Five-page Organizational Profile plus up to 25 pages addressing the seven categories of the Criteria and basic item requirements.

Level 3   Five-page Organizational Profile plus up to 35 pages addressing the seven categories of the Criteria and overall item requirements.

Level 4   Five-page Organizational Profile plus up to 50 pages addressing the seven categories of the Criteria and multiple item requirements.

Application Review Process

The Organization Level 2, 3 & 4 and Process Level Applications are reviewed and evaluated in a five-stage process by members of the PiPEx Board of Examiners. These examiners, specially trained in the Baldrige *Criteria for Performance Excellence*, adhere to strict rules regarding confidentiality and conflict of interest during each stage of the review process.

Stage 1 – Independent review and evaluation by the individual members of the examiner team

Stage 2 – Consensus review and evaluation by the examiner team

Stage 3 – Site visits for the applicant by the examiner team

Stage 4 – Review of application and examiner team input (findings and recommendations for awards) by the Panel of Judges

Stage 5 – Final due diligence conducted for recommended recipient organizations

Site Visit

The Organization Level 2, 3 & 4 and Process Level PiPEx evaluation includes a site visit. A team of examiners will spend one-half to three days at the applicant's worksite to gain a better understanding of operations and processes. The site visit is not an audit; its purpose is to provide the applicant a further opportunity to tell its story and to verify and clarify information in the application.

Applicants will receive a site visit agenda at least one week in advance of the site visit. The agenda may include a schedule of planned visits to facilities and operating units, a list of officials to be interviewed and the names of examiners scheduled to participate.

Site visit length depends on award level sought:
Process Level and Level 1: half day (4 hours)
Level 2: 1 day
Level 3: 2 days
Level 4: 3 days

Feedback to Applicants

At the conclusion of the evaluation, every applicant receives a written assessment by the examiner team called a Feedback Report. Providing a pathway for improvement, the Feedback Report is one of the most valuable features of the PiPEx

Performance Excellence Program process.

Each Feedback Report contains applicant-specific strengths and opportunities for improvement based on the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*. Used by applicants as an input to the strategic planning process, Feedback Reports help organizations focus on their customers, improving processes and overall performance.

Feedback Reports are emailed to applicants after the site visit, judging and editorial process are complete. Strict confidentiality is observed at all times.

Supplying Volunteer Examiners

As a non-profit organization, PiPEx's volunteer workforce – the Board of Examiners- is the engine that drives us. In order to maintain a robust and active workforce, we rely on all applicants to provide at least one examiner.

The Board of Examiners work best when there is a balance of new and experienced examiners, so we encourage organizations to send us examiners who have served in the past, as well as those who are new to the program. Many examiners return year after year, because they find their service to PiPEx an unparalleled professional development experience, as well as an opportunity to benchmark and network.

The added benefits of supplying examiners are significant: Examiners receive valuable training and insight, which they bring back to their organization. The organizations that have PiPEx examiners on staff are better able to integrate the Criteria's improvement framework and engage in a successful quest for excellence. Visit the PiPEx website for more information about the Board of Examiners.
https://www.partnerspex.org/become-an-examiner

Promoting Excellence

Regardless of award level, all applicants demonstrate a commitment to excellence. We encourage all organizations that receive an award to promote their achievements and the benefits of the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*.

PiPEx urges award recipients to publicize their awards, and to share non-competitive information about their successful performance strategies with other organizations.

Excellence Award recipients are asked to participate in the annual Awards Banquet, and host a Benchmarking Tour/Workshop the year following their achievement.

Performance Excellence Program Recognition Levels

PiPEx Award recognition is based on the demonstration of performance excellence and best practices at one of four organization levels: Level 1: Commitment, Level 2: Achievement, Level 3: Proficiency and Level 4: Excellence or at the Process Level.

Organizations apply to the PiPEx Performance Excellence Program at one of these levels. As the award levels increase, so does the depth of the Criteria response. In other words, applicants must submit a longer, more detailed self-assessment, answering more questions posed by the Criteria.

For details, the table "Award Application Requirements by Level of Review" describes the application requirements by level. And the diagram "Criteria for Performance Excellence Structure" in the Criteria booklet (page 2) shows which parts of the Criteria must be addressed, depending on your application level.

Each level is a continuum with lower, middle and upper limits. Improvement alone does not ensure that an organization will move from one level to the next- often, organizations will show progress from year to year, yet continue to receive recognition within the same level. The only way organizations can move up a level is to meet the standards for the next level.

When reading about the levels, particular emphasis should be placed on the information in boldface type. The *Criteria for Performance Excellence* is updated every two years, and these refinements may result in movement between award levels.

Level 1 – Commitment Recognition

This is the beginning level for organizations interested in adopting and applying performance improvement principles. By applying for a Level 1 Recognition, an organization will learn about the Criteria and the assessment process. In addition, the organization will receive feedback that will help improve processes and propel it toward higher award levels. PiPEx offers Level 1 applicants a hands-on, coaching approach during this first step of the performance improvement journey.

Level 1 Applicants should have their Leadership Team participate in a PiPEx "Baldrige 101" Workshop. The applicant team will then meet with their Coach who is a PiPEx Senior

Examiner to discuss the common vocabulary of the Baldrige Criteria, define key business factors, and learn how to answer questions in the organizational profile. The Applicant will then write and submit their own 5-page organizational profile and receive a written Feedback Report. The Feedback Report indicates actions, processes or system improvements that would most benefit the organization. Finally, the applicant will meet with their Coach to review the Feedback Report and determine the next steps for the organization.

Organizations that complete Level 1 will receive a <u>Certificate of Recognition</u> for participation and public recognition.

Level 2 – Achievement Award

Level 2 is the intermediate level of the PiPEx Program. It recognizes organizations that are beginning to demonstrate serious commitment to, and implementation of, performance improvement principles. To apply at this level, organizations must submit the **Organizational Profile answering all questions** described in the Criteria booklet (pages 4-6).

Applications also include the signature of the highest ranking official, indicating his or her commitment. In addition, the organizations complete a self-assessment (up to 25 pages long), detailing how they apply the **Basic Item Requirements** of the seven categories outlined in the Criteria booklet. It is important that applicants at this level clearly note processes that have been systematically improved based on data and assessment. Level 2 applicants host a 1-day site visit conducted by a team of PiPEx examiners.

Recipients of <u>Achievement Awards</u> have demonstrated progress by identifying and putting in place some key process improvements, which are directly attributable to a fact-based improvement process. The organization has addressed the Basic Item Requirements within each category of the Criteria. At this level, results may or may not be evident; however, a measurement system should be in place to capture data and analyze results.

Level 3 – Proficiency Award

Level 3 is an advanced level of participation. It recognizes organizations that have demonstrated, through their commitment to and practice of performance improvement principles, significant progress and results in building sound processes. Level 3 applicants must submit the **Organizational Profile answering all questions** described in the Criteria booklet (pages 4-6) and the signature of the highest ranking official, indicating his or her commitment. The application also

includes a self-assessment (up to 35 pages long), detailing how the organization applies the **Overall Item Requirements** of the seven categories outlined in the Criteria booklet.

Level 3 applicants host a comprehensive 2-day site visit conducted by a team of PiPEx examiners. The year after receiving the Proficiency Award, organizations are expected to provide voluntary assistance to organizations that are new to the PiPEx performance excellence process.

Recipients of Proficiency Awards have demonstrated significant progress in building systematic processes that effectively address the overall requirements of each item. These processes are deployed and aligned throughout the organization appropriately to meet the key needs of the organization. Results for some key processes show improvement (at least a year in most cases) that is directly attributable to a systematic improvement approach. These organizations have many practices from which other organizations can learn and grow.

Level 4 – Excellence Award

The highest level of recognition is presented to organizations that have demonstrated, through their practices and achievements, the highest level of performance excellence. Success at this level is typically the result of applying feedback from previous PiPEx applications.

The Platinum Award for Excellence recognizes organizations that have mature and fully-deployed quality systems within their operations that demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and have a sustained significant record of performance. Organizational learning, including innovation and sharing of best practices, is a key management tool. Current performance results have been evaluated against relevant comparisons or benchmarks and show areas of favorable performance for most key customer, process and market requirements.

The Category Award for Excellence recognizes organizations in one or more of the six categories: Leadership; Strategy, Customers; Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management; Workforce; and Operations. In each case, the organization will achieve recognition based on its performance in that category and the results related to that performance.

An application at this level requires submission of the

Organizational Profile answering all questions described in the Criteria booklet (pages 4-6) and the signature of the highest ranking official, indicating his or her commitment. The application also includes a self-assessment (up to 50 pages long) detailing how the organization applies the **Multiple Item Requirements** of the seven categories outlined in the Criteria booklet.

Level 4 applicants host a comprehensive 3-day site visit conducted by a team of PiPEx examiners. The year after receiving the Excellence Award, organizations are expected to provide voluntary assistance to organizations that are new to the PiPEx performance excellence process. Additionally, Excellence Award recipients are asked to participate in the annual Awards Banquet, and host a Benchmarking Tour/Workshop the year following their achievement.

Process Level Award (Team Award)

We realized the need to complement our Organization Level Awards (holistic look at an organization) with an award that focuses more on specific organizational processes. The Process Level Application provides an opportunity for receiving feedback and recognition on specific organizational processes.

A *process* is a defined series of steps or actions to produce an intended output– either a service or a product, for an internal or external customer. A process is systematic, in that it is well-ordered, repeatable, and uses data from which to learn about maintaining or improving performance. A one-time project is not a process. The use of a one-time event to improve performance is not a process. A generalized workflow that is not well-defined and changing in an uncontrolled manner is also not a process.

The Process Level criteria, in general, ask how the submitted process has been designed, improved, and managed through the use of data. Additionally, the criteria ask the applicant to demonstrate with data that the process produced the intended results for which it was designed, and to demonstrate the performance levels and trends that it attained. Review the "Glossary of Key Terms" in the Criteria booklet to make sure that your application presents an actual process. If you have questions about your process eligibility, please call the PiPEx office at (781) 801-6893.

The evaluation of Process and Results Item responses includes a review of the Criteria Items in combination with the Scoring Guidelines (refer to Process Level Criteria document). Specifically, the Process Item (Category 1) Scoring Guidelines address the maturity of your approaches, breadth of

deployment, extent of learning, and integration with other elements of the organization. Similarly, the Results Item (Category 2) Scoring Guidelines focus on the significance of the results trends, actual performance levels, relevant comparative data, and integration with important elements of your process. Consider both the Criteria and the Scoring Guidelines as you prepare your responses to the process and results items.

Award Application Requirements by Level of Review

This table shows the PiPEx application requirements and review process for each application level (as described on the previous pages). The diagram on page 2 of the Criteria booklet may help Level 2, 3 and 4 applicants determine which parts of the Criteria must be addressed in their application.

	Org. Level 1 Commitment	Org. Level 2 Achievement	Org. Level 3 Proficiency	Org. Level 4 Excellence	Process Level
Intent to Apply/ Eligibility Form with Processing Fee	**Not** required	Required Received by May 10, 2019 (*Premium and Elite members can submit any time)	Required Received by May 10, 2019 (*Premium and Elite members can submit any time)	Required Received by May 10, 2019	Required Received by May 10, 2019 (some members can submit any time) **Admin fee not required**
Application Fee		June 28, 2019 (* or 1 month before submitting app)	June 28, 2019 (* or 1 month before submitting app)	June 28, 2019 (* or 1 month before submitting app)	
Organizational Profile	**Required: 5 pages maximum** **Levels 2, 3 and 4:** Applicants must answer **all the Organizational Profile questions** and must accompany the Response to the Criteria. Received by – July 9, 2018				**Required: Process Profile (1 pg) and Process Context (3-pg max.)** Recd by – July 26, 2019
Application Form and Fee	**Level 1:** Applicants must use the Application Form. (No due date, Level 1 applications are accepted throughout the year.) 100% application fee due with application. There is no administrative fee.				
Response to Criteria	**Not** Required	• 7 categories, • Basic item requirements (*25 pages max.) • Org Profile + 17 Criteria Questions *submitted by July 26, 2019. (*or 2 months after intent for Premium and Elite members)	• 7 categories, • Overall item requirements. (*35 pages max.) • Org Profile + 106 Criteria Questions *submitted by July 26, 2019. (*or 2 months after intent for Premium and Elite members)	• 7 categories, • Multiple item requirements. (*50 pages max.) • Org Profile + 252 Criteria Questions *submitted by July 26, 2019.	• Process Level Criteria • 2 Categories (Process & Results) (*10 pages max.) • Process Profile & Process Context + 35 Criteria Questions *submitted within 30 days of initial application form and fee.
Site Visit	N/A – Replaced with coaching	1 Day	2 Days	3 Days	4 hours
Recognition Eligibility	Commitment Recognition	Achievement Award	Achievement or Proficiency Award	Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum or Category Award for Excellence or	Showcase in Excellence Award
Applicant Responsibilities	N/A	Provide at least one examiner	Provide at least one examiner Assistance to other organizations	*Provide at least one examiner *Assistance to other organizations *Participation in annual Award Banquet *Benchmarking Tour / Best Practices Workshop	Provide at least one examiner Benchmarking Tour (if appropriate)

Preparing Your Award Application

How to Apply:

- Contact PiPEx if you have questions determining whether your organization is eligible to submit an application.

- File the Intent to Apply and Eligibility Agreement form (by stated deadline) for Organization Level 2, 3, 4 & Process Level with 50% of the appropriate application fee. (All fees are non-refundable but can be used in the following year.)

- Submit an electronic application that meets the enclosed guidelines (no paper copies of applications will be accepted). The applicant will provide this electronic copy in a Portable Document Format (PDF) to allow for appropriate printing where necessary. *(Keep in mind that font size and formatting is to match the criteria stipulated in the application, even after figures and graphs have been inserted and saved as a PDF file. The final copy will be tested for format requirements.)* Mail the remaining 50% of the application fee to the PiPEx address.

- Host a site visit per the Performance Excellence Program guidelines and reimburse PiPEx for the team's expenses (this item is optional if the organization is submitting for feedback only).

- An organization that submits a Feedback only application may choose not to receive a site visit. There is no reduction in the Application Fees, but no site visit or site visit expenses will be included in the assessment. The feedback report will then be based on the consensus score of the examiner team. Note: The Site Visit is a vital part of the assessment process. Although an organization may choose not to host the Site Visit, the value of the feedback report will be reduced by this choice. If an organization declares that its application is for Feedback only, this declaration cannot be changed after the application is submitted to the Southwest Alliance for Excellence.

Application Package

- The Application Package consists of:
  - Title Page
  - Table of Contents (page #'s of each Category Item)
  - Organization Chart

  - Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
  - (Levels 2, 3 & 4) - Organization Profile (not to exceed 5 pages) **OR**
  - Process Level - Process Profile (1 page) & Process Context (not to exceed 3 pages)
  - The Responses to the Criteria Items (not to exceed specified # pages per Level).

- Organizations must submit an electronic application that meets the enclosed guidelines. (No paper copies of applications will be accepted) The applicant will provide this electronic copy in a (PDF).

- Levels 2, 3, 4 & Process Level updated electronic copy of the completed "Intent to Apply and Eligibility Form," pages 4 & 5 only, submitted in a separate document (ONLY if any information has changed).

- Full payment of the application fee (a minimum of 50% is paid with Intent to Apply and Eligibility submission). The admin fee is paid in full with the Intent.

- Checks or electronic transfers are preferred. A 5% service charge will be applied for credit card payments.

Formatting the Application

- Consider each of the questions listed in the criteria in the Level you are applying..
- Use the same Category and Item numerical designations as in the Criteria.
- The application should be formatted:
  - Page size: 8 ½ by 11 inch size
  - Page orientation: Portrait / Pages with graphs; figures & tables: portrait or landscape
  - Lines per page: 60 (includes headings and blank lines separating paragraphs; does not include headers/footers with recurring info, i.e. org. name, page #, etc.)
  - Leading: 2 points between lines (1 point of leading equals 1/72 or 0.0138 inch)
  - Margins: Left = ¾ inch minimum; Right = ½ inch minimum
  - Text Columns: 2 preferred with ¼ inch between columns
  - Numbering: pages that respond to all criteria items should be numbered as such, i.e. Org. Level 4 (1 - 50), Org. Level 3 (1 – 35) or Process Level (1 – 10); don't number blank pages, or use small Roman numerals, i.e. iii, iv, etc..
  - Figure Numbers: Figures within Organizational/Process Profile and Item sections should be in sequence; use numbers corresponding to the section (e.g., Figure P.1-1, Figure 2.1-2)
  - Font and type size:
    - Running text: 10 points minimum; Times New Roman or Arial

- Do not use narrow, compressed, or condensed fonts
- The font and type size need not be uniform as long as they meet the requirements
- If you shrink graphics to fit the space available, ensure that text in the reduced figure meets the requirements
- Tables filled mainly with text: 8 points minimum; Times New Roman or Arial
- Other graphics (charts, graphs, data tables, and other figures), including titles and captions: 8 points minimum; any font

- Clearly label each figure using descriptive text. For example, the title of the third figure for results Item 2.1 might read "Figure 2.1-3 Reliability of Service: Carrier-Dropped Calls."
- Clearly label all axes and units of measure
- All components of the application must be in ONE document; i.e. the title page, table of contents, organization chart, glossary, organization or profile, and the responses to the criteria items.

Page Limits and Exclusions

- Criteria response page limits must include all pictures, graphs, figures, tables, and appendices. These pages must be consecutively numbered. Page limits do NOT include Organizational Profile or Process Profile or Context, glossary, title pages, organization chart, or table of contents.
- Examiners must base their evaluations solely on information contained within the application report. Do not add links to information on internet or websites. Examiners are instructed to rely solely on the content in the application and are not allowed to follow any such links.
- Do not submit copies of video, audiotape or other information aids.

An application that does not comply with all of the requirements, including the permitted page limit, font size, and margins will not be accepted by PiPEx.

(Keep in mind that font size and formatting is to match criteria stipulated in the application, even after figures and graphs have been inserted and saved as a PDF file. The final copy will be tested for format requirements.)

It is suggested that you submit your final application before the due date to avoid potential issues. You may set up an appointment with the PiPExstaff to review and ensure your application meets the above requirements.

Site Visits
(All applicants that wish to be considered for an award will receive a site visit)

The primary objectives of a Site Visit are to verify the information provided in the Application and to clarify issues and questions raised during review of the application. A general Site Visit schedule is developed by the examiner team, and is provided to the organization in advance of the Site Visit dates. This initial schedule is tentative and may be revised by the team as the Site Visit proceeds. The schedule includes an estimate of the total time for the visit. Site Visits consist of interviews by examiner teams, team reviews of pertinent records and data, including data and information that has been generated since the formal submission of the application, and other appropriate methods for verifying the application content. Every effort will be made by the PiPEx and the examiner team to minimize the disruption caused by the Site Visit. Applicants may make an introductory presentation, usually not exceeding 15-20 minutes in length depending on the Level of application. Depending upon the applicant's size, the examiner team may request a tour of the facility. During and after site visit the examiner team develops a Feedback Report for the Panel of Judges. For Level 4 applications, a mentor will be assigned to the Site Visit. The mentor will ensure that the team and applicant are kept informed of the status of the visit and act as a way for the team to be contacted in the event of unforeseen circumstances. The mentor does not act as a member of the team in evaluating the applicant.

Site Visit Expenses and Protocol

Site Visit costs may be estimated and partially paid by the applicant prior to the scheduling of the Site Visit. After the Site Visit is completed and expenses have been tabulated, applicants will be invoiced by PiPEx for the actual amount of the examiner team expense. This may include lodging, food, meeting room costs for the examiner team at their place of lodging, and travel and/or roundtrip mileage to the applicant's location. Examiner teams endeavor to keep the costs of the Site Visits as low as possible. Expenses of the Site Visit mentor, if any, will be included with the costs of the other team members.

The examiner team will request that the applicant provide a common meeting area on site for the team for the duration of

the Site Visit. This area should be secure during the periods of the team's on-site activities and should be kept secured when the team is not on-site. All documentation requested by the team for examination will be reviewed in the team's meeting area – these materials will not be taken off-site by the examiners. If the applicant has restrictions or requirements on the possession or use of personal computer devices, citizenship, security clearances, etc., they should notify PiPEx of these constraints prior to submittal of their application.

To avoid any appearances of impropriety or perceptions of undue influence on the examiners by the applicant, examiners are not permitted to accept gifts, tokens of appreciation, or other items as part of the Site Visit. The team will arrange for their accommodations and travel, and may not accept lodging or other services from the applicant. Even if it is available as part of the applicant's normal business or provided at market rates, the team will not accept accommodations from the applicant. PiPEx may ask the applicant for contact information on convenient accommodations as they prepare for the Site Visit.

Feedback to Applicants

The feedback report, a tool for continuous improvement, is a written evaluation by an evaluation team from the Board of Examiners. Each applicant organization will receive a full feedback report at the conclusion of the review process. The feedback report contains an applicant-specific listing of strengths and opportunities for improvement based on the Criteria. When used by organizations as part of their strategic planning processes, the feedback report can help them focus on their customers and improve productivity. The feedback system is one of the most important components of the Performance Excellence Program process; it provides a pathway for continuous improvement. Strict confidentiality is observed at all times and in every aspect of application review and feedback.

Judges' Final Review

A final review of all applications is conducted by the Panel of Judges. The Panel of Judges review the examiner team's work for integrity and completeness then develops a recommendation for each applicant. This recommendation is forwarded to PiPEx and includes the determination of the level of award for each recipient.

Final Award Determination

Due diligence is performed for all recommended recipients to determine if there are any other outstanding issues that may affect their selection as a Performance Excellence Program Recipient. The purpose of this final review is to ensure that the integrity of the Program and Awards is maintained.

Feedback Report Review Meetings

As a value-add to all applicants, whether or not an award is received, PiPEx offers each applicant the opportunity to meet with the Lead Examiner and Lead Judge on their application in addition to the PiPEx Executive Director to review their final feedback report. These have been very positive and helpful to each applicant.

THE FOLLOWING REFER TO ORGANIZATION LEVELS 2, 3 & 4

Preparing Your Award Application

Notes for Public Sector and Not-for Profit Organizations

The PiPEx Performance Excellence Program is patterned after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP). This allows organizations to follow the same criteria, standards, and procedures while making meaningful comparisons with any of the many organizations that apply for the Baldrige Award, state programs based on BPEP, or use BPEP criteria in self-assessments. Unfortunately, a common language across sectors does not exist. Some interpretation and translation of terms is necessary for some of the organizations covered by the Performance Excellence Program. These guidelines should assist in that process.

> *Special Note: It is very important that applicants in the public sector or not-for-profit arena describe their unique circumstances in their Organizational Profile. The details provided are critical for examiners to understand the organizational context and learn of the elements of the organization's environment that are significant to improving its performance, including relationships and limitations.*

Customers, Stakeholders, Markets, and Sales

Application of quality principles to organizations relies on a 'customer focus' to drive many policies. Public sector organizations are rapidly adapting quality principles and are beginning to adopt the term 'customer' to mean any stakeholder, client, constituent, or user of the service. In the public sector, however, some differences exist in customers and markets compared to the typical private sector organization. For example, the customers of a police department would include all citizens within the jurisdiction as well as those visiting or passing through the area. 'Market share growth' may be interpreted by the police department to mean such things as crime prosecution rates. 'Sales' by a public sector organization means constituents served or services rendered.

Financial Analysis

Financial analysis and measures of success for private sector organizations often rely on revenue and profits. In the public sector, organizations should use costs, budget performance, fees charged, and any other appropriate financial information to indicate effectiveness of service delivery.

Competition and Benchmarking

Private sector organizations operate in a competitive environment, and quality is one of the major factors that will determine their competitiveness. With the movement toward competitive government, organizations should indicate how quality relates to their continued survival and success. They may benchmark against comparable organizations in the public or private sectors. For example, an agency within city government could compare its results with like agencies in cities of the same size and demographic characteristics.

Laws, Regulations, and Restrictions

Public sector organizations may be mandated by law to provide services and serve customers while their private sector counterparts may have more freedom to choose products, services, markets, and customers.

Support Services

"Support Services' refers to those functions that provide support in the form of information, training, accounting, or other services to the primary core processes and outcomes of the organization. In a private sector organization, these support functions are areas such as accounting, human resources, purchasing, customer support, supplier services and information systems. In the public sector at least some of these services may be centralized in a separate agency that provides support to other agencies.

Notes for Health Care Organizations

The PiPEx Performance Excellence Program is patterned after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP). This allows organizations to follow the same criteria, standards, and procedures while making meaningful comparisons with any of the many organizations that apply for the Baldrige Award, state programs based on BPEP, or use BPEP criteria in self-assessments. Unfortunately, a common language across sectors does not exist. Some interpretation and translation of terms is necessary by some of the organizations covered by the Performance Excellence Program. These guidelines should assist in that process.

Special Note: It is very important that applicants in the healthcare arena describe their unique circumstances in their Organizational Profile. The details provided in these areas are critical for examiners to understand the organizational content and learn of the elements of the organization's environment that are significant to improving its performance, including relationships and limitations.

Customers, Stakeholders, Markets, and Sales

Application of quality principles relies on a 'customer focus' to drive many policies. Within the Healthcare field, the term "customer" refers to actual and potential users of your organization's services or programs. Patients are the primary customers of health care organizations, but also include: current or future patients, competitor's patients, customers of like or similar organizations, services or programs. Stakeholders refer to groups that are or might be affected by an organization's services, actions, and success. These might include patient families, the community, insurers or other third-party payors, employers, Departments of Health, health care providers, or regulatory bodies. Markets refer to the defined market(s) or area(s) served by your organization. Sales will include health care services, but it may also refer to services provided to the community, especially in not for profit health care organizations.

Workforce

"Workforce" refers to all people actively involved in accomplishing the work of your organization. These may include paid employees, contract staff, independent practitioners, volunteers, and health care students. "Workforce" applies to all workers, including team leaders, directors, and managers at all levels.

Financial Analysis

Financial analysis and measures of success for private sector organizations often rely on revenue and profits. For those in health care this typically will refer to measures of cost, revenue, market position, asset utilization, asset growth and market share. Examples may include returns on investment, value added per staff member, performance to budget, operating margin, or other profitability and liquidity measures.

Competition, Comparative Data and Benchmarking

Private sector organizations operate in a competitive environment: quality is one major factor that will help determine their competitiveness. Likewise, health care organizations should indicate how quality relates to their continued survival and success. Benchmarks are one source of comparative data. Health care organizations, based on selection criteria, may also consider including information obtained from other organizations through sharing, information obtained via contribution to external databases, open literature research, data gathering and evaluation by independent organizations (e.g., CMS, accrediting) on industry data (frequently averages), data on competitor's performance, and other appropriate comparisons from within and outside the health care industry and your markets.

Laws, Regulations, Accreditations, and Restrictions

Health care organizations may be mandated by law to provide services and serve customers while their private sector counterparts may have more freedom to choose products, services, markets, and customers. For healthcare these include HIPAA and JCAHO requirements.

Support Services

"Support Services' refers to those functions that provide support in the form of information, training, accounting, or other services to the primary core processes and outcomes of the organization. In a private sector organization, these support functions are. To a health care organization it may include areas such as accounting, human resources, purchasing, patient support, supplier services and information systems.

Preparing Your Award Application

Notes for Educational Organizations

The PiPEx Performance Excellence Program is patterned after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP). This allows organizations can follow the same criteria, standards, and procedures while making meaningful comparisons with any of the many organizations that apply for the Baldrige Award, state programs based on BPEP, or use BPEP criteria in self-assessments. Unfortunately, a common language across sectors does not exist. Some interpretation and translation of terms is necessary by some of the organizations covered by the Performance Excellence Program. These guidelines should assist in that process.

Special Note: It is very important that applicants in the educational arena describe their unique circumstances in their Organizational Profile. The details provided are critical for examiners to understand the organizational context and learn of the elements of the organization's environment that are significant to improving its performance, including relationships and limitations.

Customers, Stakeholders, Markets, and Sales

Application of quality principles to organizations relies on a 'customer focus' to drive many policies. In education, this refers to students and other stakeholders who are either actual or potential users of your educational programs, offerings or services. Key customers for education are students and others who directly use your programs, offering and services. Stakeholders include others or groups that are or might be affected by your success or actions. Examples of these may include parents, parent organizations, the workforce, governing boards, alumni, other schools, regulatory bodies, taxpayers, policy makers, and communities. Market refers to the defined market or area serviced by your organization. Sales for an educational organization may also represent customers served or services rendered.

Workforce

The term "workforce" refers to all people actively involved in accomplishing the work of your organization. These include paid employees, contract workers, non-instructional employees, and volunteers. "Workforce" applies to all workers, including administrators and supervisors at all levels.

Financial Analysis

Financial analysis and measures of success for private sector organizations often rely on revenue and profits. In the public sector, organizations should use costs, budget performance, fees charged, and any other appropriate financial information to indicate effectiveness of service delivery. Specifically for education this would also include measures of cost containment, budget utilization and market share. Areas such as instructional or administration expenditures per student as a percentage of budget, grants and award dollars, program expenditures as a percentage of budget, resources applied to applied to education or redirected to education, grant growth, scholarship growth, and reserves.

Competition and Benchmarking

Private sector organizations operate in a competitive environment: quality is one major factor that will determine their competitiveness. As competition intensifies for educational organizations at all levels, organizations should indicate how quality relates to their continued survival and success. Benchmarks are one form of comparative data. Others may include data collected by a competent third-party (frequently in averages), performance data from other educational organizations and competitors, similar organizations in the same geography or those offering similar programs, offerings or services in other geographic areas.

Laws, Regulations, Accreditations, and Restrictions

Public sector organizations may be mandated by law to provide services and serve customers. For educational organization these may include No Child Left Behind or accreditation organizations.

Support Services

"Support Services" refers to those functions that provide support in the form of information, training, accounting, or other services to the primary core processes and outcomes of the organization. In a private sector organization, these support functions are areas such as accounting, human resources, purchasing, customer support, supplier services and information systems. To an educational organization it may include these or be more student-focused. Areas such as counseling or job placement may be examples.

- .

Additional Costs:
- Site visit costs to reimburse travel and lodging for the examiner team: These costs may be estimated and a portion paid by the applicant prior to the scheduling of a site visit. The remainder will be paid after the site visit.
  - Site visit costs include examiner team's hotel accommodations, food, transportation, etc.
  - Select dates for site visit on the Intent to Apply and Eligibility Form attached (page 31).
  - The length of a site visit is determined by the type of application and size of the organization. Refer to the Application Guidance Manual (page 8).

Additional Requirements:

Because having internal knowledge of the Criteria framework is critical to advancing excellence within your organization, and to support the Performance Excellence Program, it is necessary that each applicant provide or sponsor at least one examiner per application submitted or increase each application fee by $500. *(NOTE - Please contact PiPEx if you have questions or concerns, or if you are unable to provide an examiner.)*
  - PiPEx encourages applicant organizations to provide more than the necessary volunteer examiner to serve in the current award application cycle. An examiner fee of $400 or $500, will depend on examiner previously serving 2 of the past 3 years, will be assessed as a deposit. *(Refer to Examiner Application for details.)*
  - Upon successful completion of training **and** successful completion of service on an evaluation team, the examiner/organization may receive a refund of a portion of the examiner fee.
  - Examiners can be any staff member within the organization, but are typically senior leaders, quality / improvement professionals, and/or other functional leaders. We seek a variety of expertise on our Board of Examiners – those representing different sectors (manufacturing, service, non-profit, healthcare, education, and government), those possessing different functional expertise (quality, finance/accounting, human resources, operations, IT, etc.), and those at different levels of leadership.

Award Level Descriptions:
- Organization Level Applications - Refer to page 8 of the Application Guidance Manual.

By completing and submitting the Intent to Apply, the applicant agrees to:
- Follow the guidelines provided in the Application Guidance Manual, criteria and materials.
- Provide an electronic application (no paper copies of applications will be accepted). Allow PiPEx to upload the application, and the Board of Examiners and Judges to download the application, or it can be copied temporarily as a file onto a thumb drive or printed. The applicant will provide this electronic copy in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format to allow for appropriate printing where necessary. *(Keep in mind that font size and formatting are to match criteria stipulated in the application and guidance document, even after figures and graphs have been inserted and saved as a PDF file. The final copy will be tested for format requirements.)*
- Provide to PiPEx an electronic copy of the original application edited for general public consumption.
- Give permission for PiPEx to use the organization's recipient status and edited application (see above) for marketing and promotional materials for the Performance Excellence Program and PiPEx.
- Share with other organizations, should the applicant become a recipient of an award, non-proprietary information on successful performance strategies. Such sharing may take place through a variety of methods including making presentations at PiPEx workshops and events.

- Supply information requested by PiPEx (or other designated representatives) concerning the applicant's organization in the event issues are identified that could affect the credibility and valuation of the Performance Excellence Program.

PiPEx agrees to the following items:
- Unless the applicant is selected as a recipient or the applicant requests such, PiPEx will not disclose its identity to anyone other than members of the Board of Examiners or the Panel of Judges.
- A training session on the application and site visit preparation may be conducted by PiPEx at the applicant's choice of location and time prior to application submittal. Any charges for this session will be the responsibility of the applicant.
- PiPEx will coordinate the application process and ensure the examiner team is properly constituted.
- PiPEx will deliver an electronic copy of the Feedback Report to the applicant's contact person at the conclusion of the application process.
- PiPEx will take all prudent measures to protect the integrity of the applicant's electronic application so that only the appropriate examiner team and judges can view the application.

Organization Eligibility and Restrictions

Specific to All Award applicants	• An organization with at least 50% of its assets, revenues or workforce based in NY, MA, CT or RI as appropriate, OR any organization with its headquarters located in those states. • An organization that is part of a larger entity must have sufficient autonomy and authority to make decisions, initiate actions, implement programs, and allocate resources free from the direct control of the larger entity. For example, a college within a university is eligible if it can demonstrate sufficient independent control over the factors that affect the quality of its processes and services. • All sectors are eligible – manufacturing, service, healthcare, education, profit, not-for-profit, private, public, local, state or federal government. NOTE: Organizations whose purposes are primarily social are not eligible. • Must have existed at least one year prior to submitting an application. • Is a permanent organization; i.e., it must not be an organizational unit with a defined limited life or an ad-hoc committee, board, or other such unit. • Must have more than two full-time workers.
Additional specific to applicants for Organization Levels 2, 3 & 4 **Level 2 – Achievement Award** **Level 3 – Proficiency Award** **Level 4 – Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum or Category in Excellence Award**	• All major operations of the applicant may be inspected as part of the Award Program. This means that the organization's operations, activities, and results can be assessed and visited by a team of examiners. • A subsidiary and its parent organization may not apply for the award in the same year -Different subsidiaries of the same parent organization may apply concurrently. • Recipients of the Level 4 Award for Excellence are ineligible to be recognized as an Award Recipient for a period of five years after their selection. A recipient of the Level 4 Award for Excellence, although not eligible for the award, may still submit an application to obtain a feedback report. This process will be handled as a regular application in all respects except that no award will be granted, regardless of the score received. • One or more Category Awards may be received by an organization in any given or subsequent year as merited. • These restrictions do not have any bearing with concern to the Showcase in Excellence Award.
Additional specific to applicants for Process Level	• All operations related to the process being considered as part of the Performance Excellence Program may be inspected as part of the Program. This means that the process operations, activities, and results can be assessed and visited by a team of examiners. • Different subsidiaries and their parent organization may concurrently apply, if submitting different processes. • Recipients of a Showcase Award are ineligible to re-apply for the same process for a period of 3 years after the selection. However, an applicant that did not receive an award is permitted to re-apply for the same process each year if it feels it has made meaningful changes & has achieved sufficient improvement and results.
If you have questions about your organization's eligibility, please call PiPEx (801) 781-6893.	