



2019
Interest in Excellence
Application

**Manufacturing, Service, Small Business,
Nonprofit, Government**

IMEC
1501 W. Bradley Ave, Jobst 428
Peoria, IL 61625

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Introduction

The IMEC Interest in Excellence application is a self-assessment program designed and administered with the primary objective of helping you understand your organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement as defined by the criteria of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award®. Known around the world as best-in-class, these biennially reviewed and updated criteria provide the framework for assessing yourself against role model organizations both within and outside your sector. Throughout the year, IMEC also offers multiple training programs geared toward assisting your organization on its journey toward excellence.

IMEC offers three levels of review that include external assessment:

1. Full 50-page Application, including the Organizational Profile, and
2. Focus on Excellence Application, based on specific areas of focus
3. Interest in Excellence Application, based on only the 5-page Organizational Profile.

Those organizations completing the Interest in Excellence Application receive a written feedback report based on the information provided and have the opportunity to be publicly recognized.

The Interest in Excellence Application is based on completion of the *Organizational Profile* because this is considered the starting point for self-assessment. Why?

- The Organizational Profile helps you and your management team step back and answer logically sequenced questions that collectively provide an overview of what your organization does, values, worries about, and focuses on strategy. The answers provide an overview of your organization that can be shared with new employees, customers, suppliers, stakeholders, grantors, etc.
- Working together to complete the profile will help you determine the cohesiveness of your organization's management team members as you identify any gaps in information, focus, and/or conflicting viewpoints.
- Your self-assessment relative to the organizational profile questions will help you understand potential gaps based on areas where you find conflicting, little, or no information; these gaps represent areas to be addressed before you move any further in the application process.
- Completing the Organizational Profile is not only one of the requirements for the full Application, but it also sets the context for addressing the unique aspects of your organization within each of your responses in categories 1-7 (should you decide to complete the full Application at a later date).
- Your participation in the Interest in Excellence Application process demonstrates your organization's interest in excellence and continuous improvement. This process can serve as an effective starting point to improve the quality of your products and service, enhance customer loyalty, increase workforce engagement, and provide a platform to accelerate change, growth, and improvement throughout your entire organization.



Interest in Excellence Application Specifics

What you can expect...

Once you complete and submit the Interest in Excellence Application:

- Your 5-page Organizational Profile will be assigned to experienced examiners who will individually assess and then collectively complete a synthesized written Feedback Report based on the information provided.

Please note that each examiner working on your application:

1. *signs an affidavit stating he/she has no conflict of interest with your application or organization, and*
2. *agrees in writing to maintain the confidentiality of all information provided in your application.*

As set forth by the Baldrige Program, IMEC follows the highest ethical standards regarding an application's confidentiality, removing any direct or implied conflicts of interest.

- Within approximately 45 days of receipt of your Interest in Excellence Application by IMEC, you will receive the examiner team's Feedback Report that will summarize:
 - Organizational Profile questions that were not addressed, were missing expected information, or that provided excess detail and/or unrelated information.
 - Answers to Organizational Profile questions that need additional clarity, or may require a better understanding of key terms or concepts and where they connect to the Criteria as appropriate.
 - A sample list of possible metrics that an examiner would expect the applicant tracks and regularly reviews based on the information provided in the Organizational Profile,
- After receiving the Feedback Report, you may request a one hour phone call to verify and clarify any points within the report.
- IMEC coordinates public recognition for all award recipients, including notification of local media, state and federal legislators. Interest in Excellence applicants also receive a certificate to recognize a commitment to excellence.

Application Fee and Timetable for Submission

The application fee for the Interest in Excellence application is **\$2,000** and is due when you submit the **Interest in Excellence Application Overview and Release Form**, along with the five-page **Organizational Profile**. Please make checks payable to **IMEC**.

Interest in Excellence applications are accepted at any time throughout the year. All applicants will receive the Feedback Report and optional one hour phone debriefing. All applicants submitting Interest in Excellence Applications will be recognized in a public ceremony.

Process

Application Overview and Release Form Instructions

1. Complete the **IMEC Interest in Excellence Application Overview and Release Form** on page 6.
2. Develop your organization's responses to the **Organizational profile** questions. A pre-formatted template is provided on page 8 and should be used to document and submit your Organizational Profile responses. When complete, **your Organizational Profile responses may not exceed five pages.**
 - The Organizational Profile template is set up in a two-column format, with 10 point font. Please do NOT change the two-column format or font size.
 - You may add charts or tables within the template as needed to summarize key information.
 - In addition to the five-pages allotted for your responses to the Organizational Profile questions, you may also include an organization chart and a summary of terms, acronyms and abbreviations that are used within your Organizational Profile. Neither of these counts against the five-page maximum. The organization chart may help the examiners understand the structure of the applicant organization. The terms, acronyms and abbreviations are provided to clarify information included in your Organizational Profile that would otherwise be unfamiliar to the examiners.

Organizational Profile Instructions

The following color-coding is used to identify three different types of information within the Organizational Profile template that begins on page 8.

- **Bolded Black text** is used for all section headers [e.g., **P.1a(2) Vision and Mission**]. Black text is also used after each set of **blue text questions**, indicating the applicant should "<Insert your response here>." Please replace the prompts labeled <Insert your response here>. All of your answers should be in black text.
- **Blue text** is used for all questions that you will respond to in developing your Organizational Profile. For example:
 What are your main product offerings? What is the relative importance of each to your success? What mechanisms do you use to deliver your products?
- **Red text** is used for **NOTES** that help further explain the questions in the Organizational Profile. Once you have read the information in the **NOTES**, please delete all red text before submitting your application to IMEC. For example:
[NOTE P.1a(1): Read and delete - Product offerings and products are the goods and services you offer in the marketplace. Mechanisms for delivering products to your end-use customers might be direct or might be indirect, through dealers, distributors, collaborators, or channel partners. Nonprofit organizations might refer to their product offerings as programs, projects, or services.]

In addition to the **NOTES** in the template, applicants are encouraged to consult the **Glossary of Key Terms** in the Baldrige Excellence Framework (<https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/publications/baldrige-excellence-framework>).



Additional Suggestions regarding how you might organize yourselves to complete the Interest in Excellence Application

How you proceed depends upon the level of involvement and time an organization wants to expend on the application.

For smaller organizations with less than 50 employees, the senior executive or their designee may write the initial application with one or two helpers over a period of two to four weeks, and then present the application to the entire management team for review and updates.

For larger organizations, the senior executive may want to gather his/her senior managers to first discuss the Organizational Profile questions, and then assign a team(s) to write the Organizational Profile.

Consider using project management tools to assist in meeting your application preparation deadlines. Prior to starting, spend time to define and agree on the scope, timetable and budget. Each team may choose to meet regularly until it has completed its assignment and responded thoroughly to each of the Organizational Profile questions.

Questions or Comments

Please contact the IMEC office for all questions or comments about this program or this application process at 309-235-5204 or hbender@IMEC.org.

Please mail all materials to:

IMEC Recognition Program
1501 W. Bradley Ave, 428 Jobst Hall
Peoria, IL 61625
Attn: Holly Bender

Please make checks payable to IMEC



IMEC Interest in Excellence Application Overview and Release Form

1. Applicant

<i>Organization Name</i>	<Insert here>
<i>City, State Zip</i>	<Insert here>
<i>Total # of employees (full-time equivalent)</i>	<Insert here>
<i>Total # of sites</i>	<Insert here>

2. Industry Sector

Place an "X" to identify the sector that best describes your organization

	Manufacturing
	Service
	Health Care
	Education
	Government
	Nonprofit

3. Official Contact

<i>Name</i>	<Insert here>
<i>Title</i>	<Insert here>
<i>Address (no PO Box)</i>	<Insert here>
<i>City, State Zip</i>	<Insert here>
<i>Phone</i>	<Insert here>
<i>E-mail</i>	<Insert here>

4. Application Fee

Application Fee of \$2,000 is due when application is submitted.

Contact IMEC to clarify payment options.
(309-235-5204 or hbender@IMEC.org)

5. Enter a one-sentence description of your organization:

<Insert here>

6. Release Statement and Signature of Highest Ranking Official

<i>Name</i>	<Insert here>
<i>Title</i>	<Insert here>
<i>Address</i>	<Insert here>
<i>City, State Zip</i>	<Insert here>
<i>Phone</i>	<Insert here>
<i>E-mail</i>	<Insert here>

Please read and sign:

I state and attest that:

I have reviewed the information supplied in this Application and related Organizational Profile. To the best of my knowledge, no untrue statement or omission of a material fact has been made in this application package. Based on the information herein and the current eligibility requirements, my organization is eligible to apply.

<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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Organizational Profile – <Insert Name of Applicant Organization>

P.1 Organizational Description

<Insert a brief one paragraph description of your organization>

P.1a. Organizational Environment

P.1a(1) Product Offerings

What are your main product offerings? What is the relative importance of each to your success? What mechanisms do you use to deliver your products?

[NOTE P.1a(1): Read and delete - Product offerings are the goods and services you offer in the marketplace. Mechanisms for delivering products to your customers might be direct or might be indirect, through dealers, distributors, collaborators, or channel partners. Nonprofit (including government) organizations might refer to their product offerings as programs, projects, or services.]

<Insert your response here>

P.1a(2) Mission, Vision, Values, and Culture What are your mission, vision, and values? Other than values, what are the characteristics of your organizational culture, if any? What are your organization's core competencies, and what is their relationship to your mission?

[NOTE P.1a(2): Read and delete - If your organization has a stated purpose as well as a mission, you should include it in your response. Some organizations define a mission and a purpose, and some use the terms interchangeably. In some organizations, purpose refers to the fundamental reason that the organization exists. Its role is to inspire the organization and guide its setting of values.

Your values are part of your organization's culture. Other characteristics of your organizational culture might include shared beliefs and norms that contribute to the uniqueness of the environment within your organization.]

<Insert your response here>

P.1a(3) Workforce Profile What is your workforce profile? What recent changes have you experienced in workforce composition or in your needs with regard to your workforce?

[NOTE 5.1 Read and delete – Workforce includes all people actively supervised by your organization and involved in accomplishing your organization's work, including paid employees (e.g., permanent, part-time, temporary, on-site, and remote employees, as well as contract employees supervised by your organization) and volunteers, as appropriate. Your workforce includes team leaders, supervisors, and managers at all levels.]

[NOTE P.1a(3): Read and delete - Workforce or employee groups and segments (including organized bargaining units) might be based on type of employment or contract-reporting relationship, location (including telework), tour of duty, work environment, use of certain family-friendly policies, or other factors. Organizations that also rely on volunteers and interns to accomplish their work should include these groups as part of their workforce.]

<Insert your response here>

What are your workforce or employee groups and segments? What are the educational requirements for different employee groups and segments and the key drivers that engage them?

<Insert your response here>

What are your organized bargaining units (union representation), if any? What are your special health and safety requirements, if any?

<Insert your response here>

P.1a(4) Assets What are your major facilities, equipment, technologies, and intellectual property?

<Insert your response here>

P.1a(5) Regulatory Requirements What are your key applicable occupational health and safety regulations; accreditation, certification, or registration requirements; industry standards; and environmental, financial, and product regulations?

[NOTE P.1a(5): Read and delete - In the Criteria, industry refers to the sector in which you operate. Industry standards might include industrywide codes of conduct and policy guidance. For nonprofit (including government) organizations, this sector might be charitable organizations, professional associations and societies, religious organizations, or government entities—or a subsector of one of these. Depending on the regions in which you operate, environmental regulations might cover greenhouse gas emissions, carbon regulations and trading, and energy efficiency.]

<Insert your response here>

P.1b Organizational Relationships

P.1b(1) Organizational Structure What are your organizational leadership structure and governance structure? What structures and mechanisms make up your organization's leadership system? What are the reporting relationships among your governance board, senior leaders, and parent organization, as appropriate?

[NOTE P.1b(1): Read and delete - The governance or oversight structure for privately held businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies may comprise an advisory board, a family council, or local/regional leaders who are assembled to provide guidance. For some nonprofit (including government) organizations, governance and reporting relationships might include relationships with major funding sources, such as granting agencies, legislatures, or foundations.]

<Insert your response here>

P.1b(2) Customers and Stakeholders What are your key market segments, customer groups, and stakeholder groups, as appropriate? What are their key requirements and expectations for your products, customer support services, and operations, including any differences among the groups?

[NOTE P.1b(2): Read and delete – A customer is an actual or potential user of your organization's products, programs, or services.]



For some nonprofit (including government) organizations, customers might include members, taxpayers, citizens, recipients, clients, and beneficiaries, and market segments might be referred to as constituencies. For government agencies, the legislature (as a source of funds) may be a key stakeholder.

Customer groups might be based on common expectations, behaviors, preferences, or profiles. Within a group, there may be customer segments based on differences, commonalities, or both. You might subdivide your market into market segments based on product lines or features, distribution channels, business volume, geography, or other factors that you use to define a market segment.

Customer, stakeholder, and operational requirements and expectations will drive your organization's sensitivity to the risk of product, service, support, and supply-network interruptions, including those due to natural disasters and other emergencies.]
<Insert your response here>

P.1b(3) Suppliers, Partners and Collaborators What are your key types of suppliers, partners, and collaborators? What role do they play in producing and delivering your key products and customer support services, and in enhancing your competitiveness? What role do they play in contributing and implementing innovations in your organization? What are your key supply-network requirements?

[NOTE P.1b(3): Read and delete - Your supply network consists of the entities involved in producing your products and services and delivering them to your customers. For some organizations, these entities form a chain, in which one entity directly supplies another. Increasingly, however, these entities are interlinked and exist in interdependent rather than linear relationships. The Criteria use the term supply network, rather than supply chain, to emphasize the interdependencies among organizations and their suppliers..]
<Insert your response here>

P.2 Organizational Situation
P.2a Competitive Environment

P.2a(1) Competitive Position What are your relative size and growth in your industry or the markets you serve? How many and what types of competitors do you have?

[NOTE P.2a(1): Read and delete - Nonprofit organizations must often compete with other organizations and alternative sources of similar services to secure financial and volunteer resources, membership, visibility in appropriate communities, and media attention.]
<Insert your response here>

P.2a(2) Competitiveness Changes What key changes, if any, are affecting your competitive situation, including changes that create opportunities for innovation and collaboration, as appropriate?
<Insert your response here>

P.2a(3) Comparative Data What key sources of comparative and competitive data are available from within your industry? What key sources of comparative data are available from outside your industry? What limitations, if any, affect your ability to obtain or use these data?
<Insert your response here>

P.2b Strategic Context What are your key strategic challenges and advantages?
[NOTE P.2b: Read and delete - Strategic challenges and advantages might be in the areas of business, operations, societal contributions, and workforce. They might relate to products, finances, organizational structure and culture, emerging technology, digital integration, data and information security, brand recognition and reputation, your supply network, globalization, and the environment and climate. Throughout the Criteria, "business" refers to a nonprofit (or government) organization's main mission area or enterprise activity.]
<Insert your response here>

P.2c Performance Improvement System What is your performance improvement system, including your processes for evaluation and improvement of key organizational projects and processes?
[NOTE P.2c: Read and delete - The Baldrige Scoring System (pages 29-34) uses performance improvement through learning and integration as a dimension in assessing the maturity of organizational approaches and their deployment. This question is intended to set an overall context for your approach to performance improvement. The approach you use should be related to your organization's needs. Approaches that are compatible with the overarching systems approach provided by the Baldrige framework might include implementing a Lean Enterprise System, applying Six Sigma methodology, using PDCA methodology, using standards from ISO (e.g., the 9000 or 14000 series, or sector-specific standards), using decision science, or employing other improvement tools.]
<Insert your response here>



SUMMARY OF TERMS, ACRONYMS and ABBREVIATIONS

A

<Insert terms here>

B

<Insert terms here>

C

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