







What is the difference between a Torch Award and a Spark Award?

BBB Torch Awards are presented to established for-profit businesses. Winners demonstrate an outstanding commitment to integrity through their leadership character, work culture, customer relationships, and community involvement.

BBB Spark Awards are presented to eligible entrepreneurs, startup founders and new business owners. Winners embody and cultivate the future of a trusted marketplace.

The two awards have quite a few similarities, such as location requirements and award benefits. The three main eligibility differences are represented below:

TORCH AWARDS		SPARK AWARDS
Recognizes business that uphold ethics in the marketplace		Recognizes the up-and-coming leaders of our marketplace
For businesses in operation 3 or more years		For businesses in operation less than 3 years
Business owner's age not factored in		Business owner must be 35 years of age or less

Can I apply for both a Torch Award and Spark Award?

If your organization meets the criteria for Torch Awards, and you have a business owner that meets the criteria for Spark Awards, you may apply for both awards.

Please direct questions to
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ABOUT

The BBB Torch Awards for Ethics is an annual celebration to honor exceptional businesses in the community. The Torch Awards recognizes local organizations' outstanding ethical practices and commitment to character, culture, customers, and community.

The 2024 entry period is April 3 - May 29. If you apply on or before May 4, your business will be entered into a Dell Technologies raffle giveaway!

Entry is free and open to all eligible for-profit businesses, regardless of accreditation status. The Torch Awards is funded by BBB serving the Heart of Texas' 501(c)(3) nonprofit Education Foundation.

Benefits of winning a Torch Award

- In-person Torch Award trophy presentation by BBB
- Professional quality photos and promotional video for use by the winner
- Recognition on BBB.org for your commitment to an ethical marketplace
- Inclusion in a press release to local media markets announcing winners
- Announcements on BBB's social media channels totaling over 60,000 followers
- Inclusion in a variety of digital and print BBB promotional materials
- Lifetime use of the BBB Torch Award Winner Seal (as long as the winner maintains a "B" rating with BBB)





FAQs

What are the eligibility requirements?

- Your business must be headquartered within the 105 counties served by BBB Serving the Heart of Texas. The regions covering these counties include Austin, Bryan/College-Station, Coastal Bend, Fort Worth, Permian Basin, Coastal Bend, and Waco.
- Your business cannot have received a Torch Award in the past three years in a specific service area (2021, 2022, or 2023). For example, if your business won a Torch Award in 2022 for San Antonio region, you are eligible to apply in 2024 in a different service area if you have a location in a separate region.
- Your business must have at least a “B” rating in the BBB database. The BBB reviews both accredited and non-accredited businesses. BBB ratings range from A+ to F. No less than a “B” rating is required for acceptance into the Torch Awards.
- Your business must be in operation for at least three years as of May 29, 2024.

Who selects the winners?

An independent, voluntary panel of judges located will take on the responsibility of reviewing, evaluating, and selecting winners of the Torch Awards. The judges are comprised of business and community leaders across our service areas dedicated to marketplace ethics.

How will I be notified if I win?

Torch Awards winners will be notified via email in August 2024 to the contact indicated in the online application form and subsequently announced on various BBB platforms, including the competition website. An in-person event in each region is TBD.

How do I apply?

Applications must be submitted online at BBB.org.

What are the criteria used to judge applications?

Submissions are evaluated based on the eligibility of the applicant and their commitment to character, culture, customers, and community.

- Eligibility of the application: The submission has been submitted online before the deadline with the required documentation and complies with the Terms and Conditions.
- Response criteria | Character, culture, customers, and community: Applicants should respond to the question in each category, clearly illustrating real-life examples that address each prompt. Applications will be scored based on how well the applicant exemplifies and demonstrates commitment to each criterion.

Additionally...

- Entrants must address all questions in a concise narrative that explains how their business exemplifies the given criteria in daily operations. Submissions should provide a robust and accurate description of general business operations and culture. Providing examples and quantifying impact when possible is always a good idea!
- The judges will be asked to score finalist submissions that best meet the scope of the application requirements.

How many winners will there be?

The Torch Awards for Ethics will have six winners, one in each size category based on the number of employees. Additionally, there may be two finalists in each category dependant on the pool of applicants.