



What are the Torch and Spark Awards?

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 businesses 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	(or) Business owner must be under the age of 35

Can I apply for both a Torch and Spark Award?

If your organization meets the criteria for a Torch Award, and you have a business owner that meets the criteria for a Spark Award, you may apply for both awards. You will need to fill out both individual applications to apply for both awards.



About the Torch Awards

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 2026 entry period is March 30 – May 11.**

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

Visit our [Torch Awards page](#) to learn how to apply, see former winners, and help us celebrate the outstanding recipients.



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).



Is my business eligible to win a Torch Award?

Your business qualifies to win if it:

- Is headquartered within the 105 counties served by BBB Heart of Texas.
- Has a "B" rating or higher with BBB (BBB Accreditation is not required).
- Has not received a Torch Award in the past three years (2023, 2024, or 2025).
- The applicant must have at least a "B" rating and hold a satisfactory record with BBB.
- Businesses are not eligible if they have any current government actions or are the subject of a BBB investigation.

How do I apply?

All businesses must complete the Torch Awards online application to be considered. Visit our [Torch Awards page](#) to find the application and get started.

How long is the Torch Awards application open?

The Torch Awards application is open from **Monday, March 30 at 8 a.m. through Monday, May 11 at 5 p.m.**

How many businesses can win a Torch Award?

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.

How will I know if I win a Torch Award?

Torch Awards winners will be notified via email in August 2026 to the contact indicated in the online application form and subsequently announced on various BBB platforms, including the competition website.



What is the judging criteria for an application?

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

These criteria are explained in more detail below:

- **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.

Additional information:

- 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.
- All applicants agree to adhering to the Torch Awards advertising policy if selected as a winner.

Who selects the Torch Award 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.