

## [About the Excellence Award](#)

### **About the New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning Award and the Founder's Award**

The New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning Award and the Founder's Award recognize outstanding summer programs, models, digital applications, and systems that demonstrate excellence in accelerating academic achievement and promoting healthy development for young people.

The awards are given annually based on an application process that elicits information on a program's history, mission, goals, operations, management, staff development, partnerships, outcomes/results, and sustainability.

The New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning Award is defined by its rigorous application and selection process. Until 2015, programs applied for a single designation and eligibility was limited to enrollment-based programs employing staff who work directly with youth. This approach yielded strong results, but limited NSLA's ability to recognize informal programs that are critical to the diverse needs of schools, families and children. Additionally, it limited NSLA's ability to recognize summer learning innovators in high-interest areas. In response, the "Founder's Award" was created to recognize other forms of summer learning innovation.

**Round 1 applications are due December 21, 2017 @ 6pm ET/3pm PT.**

#### *Application review process*

#### **About The National Summer Learning Association:**

The National Summer Learning Association is the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on closing the achievement gap through high quality summer learning for all children and youth. Our work centers on three strategic priorities:

- Recognizing and disseminating what works in summer learning.
- Offering expertise and support for programs and communities to strengthen and expand summer learning opportunities.
- Convening leaders and advocating for summer learning as a solution for equity and excellence in education.

Our vision is that all children and youth have access to high-quality summer learning experiences to help them succeed in college, career, and life.

[Click here for more information about NSLA.](#)

## 2018 New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning Award

### Application Process, Recognition and Benefits, Eligibility Requirements

#### **Application Process:**

Programs are measured against the Summer Learning Program Quality Assessment (SLPQA), developed in partnership between NSLA and the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality.

- Round One: Complete the Round 1 online application
- Round Two: Complete the Round 2 online application and phone interview (semi-finalists)
- Round Three: Site Visit (finalists)

Written applications are completed online and reviewed by NSLA staff, partners, and previous winners. Phone interviews are also conducted by a mixed group of NSLA staff and external experts. Finally, NSLA staff conduct site visits to a select group of finalists to observe program activities before selecting award winners. The New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning Award seeks to find and draw national attention to exemplary summer programs, models, and systems which provide and expand access to high-quality summer learning experiences for all young people. The award does not give preference to applicants based on program location or size. However, NSLA strongly encourages applications from programs in the following categories:

1. STEM or STEAM (includes digital media)
2. Early Literacy
3. College & Career Readiness
4. Serving boys or young men of color
5. Targeting key transition period (elementary to middle, middle to high, high to college)
6. Health & Wellness
7. English Language Learners (ELL)
8. Leadership & Teamwork
9. Inclusion
10. Anytime, Anywhere Learning

In November, NSLA will host an interactive webinar featuring tips for your application and best practices from our 2017 winners. Please sign up for the Summer Times to stay up to date:  
[www.summerlearning.org/newsletter-sign-up](http://www.summerlearning.org/newsletter-sign-up)

#### **Why Apply for an Excellence in Summer Learning Award?**

Just by submitting an application for one of the New York Life Summer Learning Awards, your program will receive a feedback summary outlining strengths and areas for improvement.

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All finalists that do not win the award receive a detailed feedback report similar to having a full quality assessment and phone call with two members of the NSLA Program Quality Team. A quality assessment for one single program site is valued at up to \$4,000.

### **As an award winner your program will receive...**

- A monetary award of up to \$10,000 generously provided by the New York Life Foundation
- Visibility at the Summer Changes Everything™ national conference and in a NSLA Summer Times e-newsletter.
- Invitations to participate in panel discussions, funder summits, webinars, or conference presentations with or on behalf of NSLA.
- National exposure through a NSLA press release during the busy summer learning media season, along with a template press release and talking points to promote your program.
- Professional development opportunities with peer organizations through NSLA's new affinity group structure.
- Possible future case studies or features in NSLA presentations, publications, or reports widely distributed throughout the education field and staged on [summerlearning.org](http://summerlearning.org).

### Eligibility Questions

Please answer the following questions to determine your eligibility for New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning Award and Founder's Award.

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Your program or organization is a past Excellence Awards or Founder's Award winner (2010-2017).  | Yes | No |
| 2. Your program or organization has been in operation for at least <b>three</b> summers.  | Yes | No |
| 3. Your program or organization operated during summer 2017.  | Yes | No |
| 4. Your program or organization serves young people between pre-kindergarten and twelfth grade over the summer months.  | Yes | No |
| 5. You are a public or private organization or agency (schools, community-based organizations, libraries, universities, faith-based organizations, etc.) OR a collaboration of the aforementioned organizations or agencies.* | Yes | No |
| 6. Your program or organization has paid staff who are responsible for administration, implementation, and finances.  | Yes | No |
| 7. Your program or organization strives to accelerate academic achievement and/or promote healthy development as a central goal of the program.   | Yes | No |

Additional consideration will be given to programs serving disadvantaged communities or populations. If you have any questions about your eligibility to apply for this award, please contact Leslie Gabay-Swanston at [leslie@summerlearning.org](mailto:leslie@summerlearning.org).

\* If your program represents a collaboration between two or more organizations or is a part of a national organization, please submit only one application prepared collaboratively rather than separate applications for the same program or model prepared by the different representatives.

By clicking the SAVE AND ADVANCE button, you acknowledge that you have read and understand all the information above (application process, benefits and recognition you will receive, and eligibility requirements) and certify that you meet the eligibility requirements for the award.

### **Application Selection**

Each organization can complete only one application per award year, for either the Excellence Award or the Founder's Award. Please select from the following categories to determine which application is appropriate for you.

I would like to apply as a:

- A. **Traditional Summer Program or Camp**--enrollment-based, multiple weeks
- B. **Drop-In Programs**--any program or offering that is site-based, but does not officially enroll young people
- C. **Wrap-Around Program**--a program that provides services for young people to fill the gap of multiple programs, but does not specifically operate in partnership with one specific program
- D. **Digital platform or application**--digital badging or any program not based at any one specific site that summer programs may use or any child may log-in to use independently
- E. **State or National Models**--a curriculum or model that many sites use across a network, state, or nationally, but that the applicant does not implement directly
- F. **Library or museum-based program**
- G. **Summer Learning Systems**--Communities that have developed a system-level collaborative efforts to coordinate summer learning opportunities for youth
- H. **Other** non-enrollment based programs

## 2018 New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning Award

### Contact Information

Please fill in the contact information for the summer program and lead organization/agency:

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Name of the Lead            |  |
| Organization or Agency:     |  |
| Name of the Summer Program: |  |
| Organization website:       |  |
| Organization Facebook:      |  |
| Organization twitter:       |  |

Please fill in the contact information for the applicant:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Name:          |  |
| Title:         |  |
| Address:       |  |
| Address 2:     |  |
| City/Town:     |  |
| State:         |  |
| ZIP:           |  |
| Email Address: |  |
| Phone Number:  |  |

## 2018 New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning Award

### Application Instructions

- Each question should be answered in 100 words or less, unless otherwise noted.
- If a question does not apply, please type or select “Not Applicable.” The groups that should respond to each question is indicated below the question.
- If you have any questions about the application, please contact Leslie Gabay-Swanston, Director of Program and Systems Quality at [leslie@summerlearning.org](mailto:leslie@summerlearning.org).

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1. Please describe your summer program, model, application, or system, including its history, mission, and vision. (300 words)  
  
{ALL groups}
2. What year did your program or organization begin serving students during the summer (please enter a whole number only)  
  
{ALL groups}
3. Total number of youth served during summer 2017 (please enter a whole number only):  
  
{ALL groups}
4. Total number of sites you operated during summer 2017 (please enter a whole number only):  
  
{ALL groups except D}
5. Grade levels served: (choose all that apply)  

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ages 0-4                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle school Transition to high school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PreK/Kindergarten           | <input type="checkbox"/> High school                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transition to college                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transition to middle school | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____            |

  
{ALL groups}
6. Geographic location of the summer program: (choose all that apply)  

|   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urban          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rural          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable |

  
{ALL groups}

7. Average Daily Attendance (ADA) rate. To determine your ADA rate divide the total days of student attendance by the total days of programming. Please write as a whole number. For example a rate of 76% should be written as 76:

{ALL groups except D}

8. Adult/staff to youth ratio (Please write in the format adult:youth)

{ALL groups except D}

9. Percent of students who receive free or reduced meals as determined by income eligibility guidelines from the [National School Lunch program](#) (please write as a whole number. For example, a rate of 74% should be written as 74):

{ALL groups except D}

10. Total program hours (please enter a whole number. For example, if your program operates for 150 hours each summer please enter 150):

{ALL groups except D}

11. Can youth attend or participate in the program for multiple summers without repeating content?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

{ALL groups}

12. Does the program use materials and lessons that are different from the school year?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

{ALL groups}

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13. Is this program connected to or a continuation of a school year or afterschool program?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

{ALL groups}

14. Does the program employ at least one certified teacher?

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

{ALL groups}

15. Total summer budget (do not include any symbols. For example \$25,000 should be entered as 25000):

{ALL groups}

16. What is the makeup of the program's budget? (Please write as a whole number. For example, 5% should be written as 5. Total must not exceed 100%)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Title I   |  |
| Title III   |  |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers |  |
| USDA Summer Food Service Reimbursement              |  |
| Other Federal funds                                 |  |
| State Education Agency Budget                       |  |
| Migrant Education                                   |  |
| ASES (After School Education & Safety Program)      |  |
| Other state funds                                   |  |
| School District                                     |  |
| Mayor's Office                                      |  |
| Municipal Funding                                   |  |
| Other Local/City/Municipal Funds                    |  |
| Program Fees  |  |
| Private Foundations                                 |  |
| Individual Giving                                   |  |
| Subsidized Child Care                               |  |
| Vouchers  |  |
| Other (specify)                                     |  |
| Not Applicable                                      |  |

{ALL groups}

17. Describe the population served by the program and why it is needed in the community.

{ALL groups}

18. List your youth outcome goals. (For example, 15% of all 3rd grade students who participate will improve their reading score based on the reading assessment)

{ALL groups}

19. Please list the strategies used to communicate your program values and ideals to the summer program's participants and/or staff.

{ALL groups}

20. Please describe an activity or ritual that shows the principles listed above in action. How are the values and ideals of the program integrated into the activity and/or ritual?

{ALL groups except D}

21. Describe what you do that is different from what youth experience during the school year.

{ALL groups except D}

22. Are youth asked to provide input on curriculum, program, or lesson plan design or content this year? If so, what types of input did they provide and how? If not, please type "N/A."

{ALL groups except D}

23. How do you encourage youth to use their creativity, curiosity, or imagination?

{ALL groups}

24. Describe an activity that took place during summer 2017 that involved youth engaging with (creating, combining, reforming) materials or ideas or improving a skill through guided practice.

{ALL groups except G}

25. Does the program require any training for staff before the summer session starts? If so, does the training include time for staff to practice or plan lessons together? Do staff have the opportunity to facilitate any part of the training?

{ALL groups except D & G}

26. Does the program have a set process for staff observations and feedback during the summer? If so, are all staff observed? How frequently do observations occur? Is there a planned process for the observer to provide feedback to the staff who were observed?

{ALL groups except D & G}

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27. Describe the ways the program communicate with families. How often is information shared before the summer, during the summer program, and throughout the year? Does the program bring participants and their families together during the school year at any time?

{ALL G}

28. If you are applying as a summer learning system, please describe the ways in which you use a collective impact approach to coordinated summer learning opportunities in your community.

{G only}

29. If you are applying as a summer learning system, please describe any processes you have for data sharing, collection and analysis across summer learning stakeholders in your community. This can include summer learning data on scope, scale, access, quality, and outcomes.

{G only}

30. If you are applying as a summer learning system, please describe the structure and membership of your steering body, coalition, or planning committee.

{G only}

31. What do you do to add a “spark” to children’s summers? What do you do best? Use this space to give an example of a specific practice, activity, approach, or program element that makes summer special or unique for young people. (200 words)

{ALL groups}

32. Please enter a web link (YouTube, Vimeo, etc.) link to a video about your program or model, or upload a picture that helps show your program’s summer spark:

{ALL groups}

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33. How did you hear about the Excellence Award?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email from NSLA                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email from colleague/friend         | <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NSLA website                        | <input type="checkbox"/> I am a previous applicant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other organization calendar/website | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At a training hosted by NSLA        |  |

{ALL groups}

Consent

**34. Please type your name below to agree with the following statement, which allows NSLA to use the contents of your application for purposes promoting our mission:**

*I hereby grant the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) permission to use our organization's name and contents of this application and any information or photos collected as part of the subsequent steps of the process, including video and photo submissions, to promote the mission and programs of the organization. Content may be used in brochures, program profiles, letters, websites, presentations, publications and other promotional materials determined by NSLA.*

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Name          |  |
| Email Address |  |
| Date          |  |

{ALL groups}

## 2018 New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning Award

### Thank You!

Thank you for applying for the 2018 New York Life Foundation Excellence in Summer Learning Award. Your application is NOT complete yet until you hit the "Submit" button below.

Please click the Submit button (below) to submit your application.

If you are not ready to submit your application, please click the SAVE & LOGOUT button above. You can log back in at [app.reviewr.com](http://app.reviewr.com) with your username and password you created to edit or change your application until the submission deadline.

If you have any questions, you can reach Leslie Gabay-Swanston, Director of Program and Systems Quality by email: [leslie@summerlearning.org](mailto:leslie@summerlearning.org)

Visit NSLA's website here: [www.summerlearning.org](http://www.summerlearning.org)

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Like NSLA on Facebook: National Summer Learning Association