

## **2027 AHA Quest for Quality Prize Application Directions**

The American Hospital Association and Laerdal Medical invite you to submit an application for the 2027 AHA Quest for Quality Prize. The Prize is presented annually to recognize health care leadership and innovation in improving quality and advancing the health of individuals and communities. The AHA and its members are committed to improving quality and safety by establishing an organizational culture that promotes engagement from staff and patients; protects staff and patients from harm; uses data and evidence-based tools; supports fair and consistent treatment for all patients; and promotes innovation to achieve higher quality, safer care.

The goals of the Prize are to:

- Promote awareness of the value of a hospital-wide/system-wide commitment to advancing health in America by providing access to high quality care grounded in the Institute of Medicine’s STEEP framework across settings of care.
- Highlight innovative, sustainable, replicable models of care, services and collaboration.
- Inspire hospitals to lead and partner with community organizations to improve health and address disparities.
- Recognize hospital and system leadership in improving safety and care effectiveness.

One winner and up to three finalists will be honored at the AHA Leadership Summit, July 18-20, 2027, in San Diego. One representative from each honored organization will receive complimentary registration, airfare, and two hotel nights to attend the AHA Leadership Summit.

### **Eligibility**

All U.S. hospitals and health systems may apply. A hospital that is part of a system may apply separately as a hospital even if the system as a whole is applying as a system. However, if the system is selected for a site visit, the hospital would not be eligible for a separate site visit and would be considered only as part of the system.

**Only one hospital per health care system may apply for this award.** Before beginning an application, verify with your system-level leadership that your hospital is submitting the

only application from your system. Multiple applications from the same system will not be reviewed.

## **Evaluation and Judging**

The applications are reviewed by members of the AHA Quest for Quality Prize Committee. The Committee selects organizations to be site visited, participates in site visits and selects which honors will be presented. AHA is grateful for the extensive volunteer contributions made by Committee members.

## **Site Visits**

Up to four organizations will receive site visits between Jan. 13 to Feb. 5. Visits last six hours, usually 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A site visit team can only see one hospital on a visit. If applying for the Prize as a health system, the hospital where the site visit will be hosted must be identified at the time of submission. Site visits must be held in a clinical environment. Selected organizations must provide additional information in advance of the visit. All materials submitted for the site visit will be kept confidential.

During visits, Committee members assess:

- Trends in care improvement and patient and community impact.
- Sustainability of improvements.
- Commitment to quality, safety and innovation
- Collaboration with community organizations.
- Replicability of successful practices.

The Prize asks that organizations receiving a site visit provide a light breakfast and lunch for the committee, and if possible, transportation from the team's hotel to the site and from the site to the airport.

Organizations selected for site visits also will be invited to participate in a one-day no-cost Laerdal Accelerate Simulation engagement as part of the finalist stage learning and review process.

## **New! Laerdal Accelerate Simulation Engagement**

As part of the Quest for Quality Prize, organizations receiving site visits will be invited to participate in a one-day Laerdal Accelerate simulation engagement.

Through the generous sponsorship of Laerdal Medical, each site visited organization will be offered this engagement at no cost. The experience is designed to explore

clinical team performance, systems reliability and safety culture under real-world conditions.

Participation gives organizations a meaningful opportunity to highlight excellent practices, surface shared learning and contribute to a national conversation on safety, reliability and clinical quality.

To ensure timely integration into the Quest for Quality review process, Laerdal Accelerate simulation engagements will be scheduled Nov. 11 through Dec. 9. Organizations should anticipate availability during this timeframe. Specific dates will be coordinated directly with Laerdal and AHA staff upon site visit notification.

Organizations unable to participate within the designated window must notify AHA promptly upon site visit selection to determine alternative arrangements or data submission options.

## **Requirements**

Honored programs must:

- Identify key leaders to work with AHA and move the field forward.
- Participate in outreach and education.
- Provide multiple digital assets, including logos, photos and videos for AHA use.
- Designate representatives for the award ceremony and panel discussion at the AHA Leadership Summit.

Applications become AHA property and may be used for best practices and case studies. In these cases, AHA will contact the organization to explore its interest in participating.

## **Deadline**

Applications are due **noon Central Time, Aug. 18, 2026**. No extensions will be granted.

## **Sponsor**

The AHA Quest for Quality Prize is generously sponsored by Laerdal Medical. Laerdal Medical is a global leader in immersive education, training, and simulation solutions with a mission of helping save lives. Improving the quality of care is part of the company's vision and its goal of helping save one million lives, every year, by 2030. For more information, visit [www.laerdal.com](http://www.laerdal.com).

## **Additional Guidance:**

- A team approach to completing this application is recommended and may include patients/family members. In general, applications that are written by staff with primary responsibility for quality improvement (rather than public relations, marketing or grant writers) in close collaboration with senior leadership are more likely to include the type of information the committee is seeking.
- If a system or mechanism that you have already described as a response to one question is also relevant to another answer, please feel free to refer to the original description and explanation rather than repeat it.
- Part 3 of the application seeks a better understanding of how your hospital/health system is approaching and progressing in providing access to exceptional quality STEEEP care that promotes individual and community well-being and adds value to lives. To the extent possible, please emphasize integration of this commitment and systemic approaches across and throughout the hospital/health system.
- Please note that the word limits in Part 3 are maximums. The prize committee appreciates concise and direct responses. Bulleted responses rather than narrative text are welcome but please be sure that a context for understanding the bullets is provided. Concrete examples with pertinent details to substantiate broad statements provide greater clarity and credibility for your application.
- Some domains in Part 3 include the option to upload data relevant to the questions asked. Be sure to relate data to specific care improvement efforts and processes. Data on progress should be as recent as possible and include relevant benchmarking data.
- The committee also will be examining publicly available indicators such as hospital performance on the [Care Compare website](#) and reliable sources of comparative data.

**Please note:**

- The application must be submitted through this online platform. Applications and/or supporting documents sent via email will not be accepted.
- Answer all questions marked with an asterisk. If a question doesn't apply, enter "NA" or 0.
- Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.
- Please upload only the document(s) specified in each section. Extra documents or a single file containing all supporting documents for the application will not be reviewed.
- Submitted applications cannot be modified or edited.
- Each uploaded page should be single-sided with one table, graph or chart per page. Applications that exceed the maximum allowed pages will not be reviewed.

- The application portal closes at **noon Central Time, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2026**. No extensions will be granted.
- After submission, you will receive a confirmation email. If you don't see it in your inbox, check your clutter, spam or junk folder. This email will include a survey on your experience submitting an application. All responses are anonymous, and they will help us to improve the application process.

### **Begin an Application**

To begin an application, close this tab. If you have not submitted an application for an AHA award in the past 12 months, you will need to create an account before beginning the application.