



# YOUNG WOMEN IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS AWARD

## GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS AND DISTRICTS/REGION

Zonta International offers 37 international awards of US\$5,000. Each district/region may submit one applicant for consideration for an international award.

**NOTE:** Applications may be submitted to a Zonta club or district in the language(s) accepted by the club or district; however, the district is responsible for submitting the successful district application and all accompanying materials in English to Zonta International.

The five largest districts may submit a second applicant for a total of two applicants. For the 2024 award cycle, the five largest districts are Districts 17, 27, 28, 29 and 30. These districts may submit a second award applicant.

<b>Timetable</b>	
<b>Clubs determine their own timeline for receipt of applications</b>	
<b>Club recipient is selected and application is received by governor/region representative</b>	<b>.....1 April</b>
<b>or deadline determined by the district/region</b>	
<b>District/region recipient selected and application received by Zonta International Headquarters</b>	<b>.....1 May</b>
<b>Official announcement of international recipients</b>	<b>.....1 July</b>

## Program information

The goal of the Zonta International Young Women in Public Affairs (YWPA) Award Program is to encourage young women to participate in public affairs by recognizing the candidate's commitment to the volunteer sector, evidence of volunteer leadership achievements and a dedication to building a better world for women and girls through service and advocacy.

'Public affairs' refers to all aspects of community life where decisions are made about issues that relate to and affect communities in which people work and live.

In order for more women to be represented in key decision-making positions worldwide, we must encourage young women to pursue careers or seek leadership positions in public policy making, government and volunteer organizations and further their education with these aims in view.

The program operates at the Zonta club, district/region and international levels of Zonta. Clubs and districts/region are advised to appoint committees to manage these program responsibilities.

Zonta clubs publicize the YWPA Award Program in their communities and distribute, receive and evaluate applications. Zonta clubs select one application to send to the district/region evaluation committee. Please note that an e-Club is eligible to participate in the program in the same manner as a traditional, face-to-face Zonta club.

The district/region evaluating committee reviews the applications and selects a district/region applicant from among the applications received from the clubs within the district/region to submit to Zonta International Headquarters. The five largest Zonta districts in terms of membership numbers may submit two applicants to Zonta International.

The Young Women in Public Affairs Awards are awarded to young women who demonstrate leadership skills and commitment to public service and civic causes.

## How do zonta clubs/districts/region benefit?

The YWPA Award Program offers opportunities to generate publicity for projects and programs of clubs/districts/regions and Zonta International that work to build a better world for women and girls. Clubs should follow their local recipient through to the district/region and international levels to generate additional publicity. Clubs should stay in contact with their participants, offer them mentoring, and keep them interested in Zonta International to encourage future membership. Clubs/districts may wish to form an alumnae group for their past scholarship recipients, and districts may wish to include or engage past award recipients in a dialogue with Zontians, or to network with each other.

## Who is eligible?

Women aged 16-19 on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year, studying at a secondary school, college or university in a Zonta district/region, or who are studying elsewhere but are citizens of a Zonta country, who demonstrate evidence of the following, are eligible to apply.

- Active commitment to volunteerism.
- Experience in local government, student government, or workplace leadership (paid or unpaid).
- Volunteer leadership achievements.
- Knowledge of Zonta International and its programs.
- Support for Zonta International's mission of building a better world for women and girls.

Note that applicants from geographic areas within a Zonta district/region where no clubs are located may apply via a Zonta e-Club or directly to the district to be eligible for the international awards. Z and Golden Z club members are also eligible to apply.

Club members and individuals with direct membership with Zonta International and employees of Zonta International and Zonta Foundation for Women, and their family members (ancestors, descendants, adoptees, siblings, nieces or cousins, and those of their spouse or co-habiting partner), are not eligible to apply for the Awards.

## Applications

Applications may be submitted to a Zonta club or district in the language(s) accepted by the club or district; however, the district is responsible for submitting the successful district application and all accompanying materials in English to Zonta International.

Prior to distributing application forms, Zonta clubs should insert their club name, the return address and the deadlines on all pages, as indicated. Applications are accepted by mail; however, email submissions are preferred. **Please ensure that applications are typed.** Applications submitted by email must be signed and sent as a PDF.

**Clubs must provide Zonta International Headquarters with a club email and/or website address to include on the Zonta International website *Club Locator*.** The Club Locator enables potential applicants to find their local Zonta club and to contact a club representative to request application forms.

Clubs may request additional information not required on the official application; however, this information should not be sent to the district/region or Zonta International. Clubs and districts/regions are discouraged from altering the questions in the application; international recipients will be selected based only on responses to the questions on the official application.

Applicants must complete an official application (may be downloaded from the Zonta International website at [www.zonta.org](http://www.zonta.org)). **Handwritten applications will not be accepted and should not be submitted.** Applicants should adhere strictly to the number of words requested in brackets for each question and the word count should be provided at the end of each answer. Additional words will not be considered in the application evaluation.

## How may recipients use the award funds?

1. There are no restrictions on the use of funds.
2. Please note: If the applicant is studying at a secondary school, university or college, Zonta International is offering a "scholarship" type of payment to be used for tuition and/or living expenses. Please see below under Tax Considerations.
3. Recipients are not permitted to defer the YWPA Award.
4. Recipients may accept additional grants and awards from other sources.

## Tax considerations

**The following considerations will help define which type of payment will fit the applicant's purposes best.**

- ❑ "Award": with no restrictions for use. As an award, it is taxable income under U.S. tax regulations. To comply with the law, all awardees will receive tax forms. Also, according to U.S. tax regulations, 30% of the award must be withheld from awards made to non-U.S. residents. If Zonta International is notified that there is a U.S. tax treaty with the resident's country, the withholding will be appropriately adjusted.
- ❑ "Scholarship": to be used for tuition, fees and materials (books, supplies and equipment) required for courses at a secondary school, college or university only. As a scholarship to be used for tuition, fees and materials, the income is tax free.
- ❑ "Scholarship": to be used for living expenses while attending a secondary school, college or university. Although tuition and related expenses are tax free, income used for living expenses is considered taxable income. Tax forms will be provided to all awardees, as required. Withholdings range from \$ 0 (tax treaty), 14% (appropriate student VISA) to 30% for non-U.S. residents.
- ❑ Supplemental awards and scholarships that are paid directly paid by a club or district will follow the tax regulations of their taxing authority.

## Club guidelines

Zonta clubs should appoint a club YWPA Award committee, whose members should directly approach school officials and organizations in their own community or in nearby areas where there are no clubs. Although it is desirable to work through schools, clubs may also reach worthy candidates through public interest groups or other groups with youth participation. Clubs should be active in speaking with community leaders and public officials to find qualified candidates, promote the YWPA Award Program, and inform others about the mission of Zonta International. It has also been helpful to use a YWPA Award poster; an example is available on the Zonta International website. (Insert your club name, contact information and deadline on the poster.)

**Evaluation Committee:** Zonta clubs are encouraged to invite non-Zontians (e.g., community leaders) to join their evaluation committee. Many clubs find that including non-Zontians in a club program is helpful in getting local press coverage. The Young Women in Public Affairs Award Selection Criteria\* and Scoring Sheet\* are available on the Zonta International website for the evaluation committee. Recommendations are to be reviewed only as additional information about the applicant, or in case of a tie. At club option, applicants or finalists may be interviewed as part of the evaluation process. It is the responsibility of the club to ensure that all information requested in the application is obtained from the applicant and that the Application Cover Sheet for Clubs\* is filled in before forwarding the application to the governor/region representative. All club applicants should be informed, possibly personally (e.g., by telephone), whether they did or did not receive the YWPA club award. Clubs are encouraged to invite all applicants to an awards ceremony, where they will receive the club award or a participation certificate. Sample letters\* are available for clubs.

**Publicity:** Press releases\* to encourage applicants and to publicize recipients should be sent to all local media. The media should receive information about applications at least one month before the application deadline. Clubs may also distribute the Young Women in Public Affairs Award poster in order to reach a wider range of applicants. Information and photographs of the recipient should be provided to the local media within a day or two after the selection. Local media should be invited to the club award ceremony.

**Club Award:** Zonta clubs are encouraged to offer a club award for the club recipient and offer certificates\* for all participants. Recommended awards include cash scholarships, gift certificates or a meeting with local government or community leaders. Ideally, the award should help the young woman advance in public service. Clubs are encouraged to develop a program related to the award. For example:

- A club award ceremony, preferably in one of the schools/institutes, organizations or local government offices, with teachers, fellow students, parents, government officials and members of the media, to publicize the Young Women in Public Affairs Award Program.
- A panel session among the finalists. This would be interesting for Zontians and would allow the young women to gain experience in public speaking.
- An internship with a Zontian who is working in government or public affairs. This would be beneficial for the recipient and another way for the club to generate media attention for this program.

## District/region guidelines

**Applications:** Districts/region should receive the selected application from each club by 1 April or the deadline determined by the district/region. The governor/region representative should appoint a district/region Young Women in Public Affairs Award committee, whose members will also be the district/region evaluation committee. Additionally, the governor/region representative may invite non-Zontians to this committee. The district/region evaluation committee reviews the applications, using the Young Women in Public Affairs Selection Criteria\* and Scoring Sheet\*, and selects one recipient per district/region. The five largest districts in terms of membership may select two recipients. The Young Women in Public Affairs district/region committee chair or the governor/region representative checks the completeness of her application, fills in the Cover Sheet for governors/region representative\* and submits both to Zonta International Headquarters by 1 May. Application and Cover Sheets must be signed and sent as a PDF to [programs@zonta.org](mailto:programs@zonta.org).

## International award

The Zonta International Headquarters team confirms the eligibility of the applicants put forth by the districts/region and submits a recommendation to the Zonta International Board (or the Executive Committee acting on its behalf) for final approval. For each international recipient, the Zonta Foundation for Women will issue payment in the amount of US\$5,000 directly to the recipient. The award certificate will be mailed to the governor/region representative. Excerpts from the recipients' essays may be printed in *The Zontian* magazine and/or on the Zonta International website or used for other Zonta International promotional purposes.

\* Additional program materials are available at

[https://www.zonta.org/Web/My\\_Zonta/Tools/Award%20Scholarship%20Fellowship%20Tools#YWPA](https://www.zonta.org/Web/My_Zonta/Tools/Award%20Scholarship%20Fellowship%20Tools#YWPA) (need to login).