

Young Women in Public Affairs

GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS AND DISTRICTS

2012



Zonta International

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

Young Women in Public Affairs

A Zonta International Program, Funded by the Zonta International Foundation

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The goal of the Zonta International Young Women in Public Affairs (YWPA) Program is to encourage more young women to participate in public affairs by recognizing a commitment to the volunteer sector, evidence of volunteer leadership achievements and a dedication to the advancement of the status of women.

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.

Public Affairs refer to all aspects of community life where decisions have to be made about issues which relate to and affect communities in which they work and live.

The program operates at the Zonta Club, District and International levels. Clubs and Districts 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 Zonta District Governor.

The District Evaluation Committee reviews the applications and selects one applicant per District to submit to Zonta International Headquarters.

The International YWPA Committee recommends five International recipients from the District applications to the Zonta International Board. After approval by the Zonta International Board, the Zonta International Foundation provides a US\$1,000 award for each District recipient and a US\$3,000 award for each of the five International recipients. Funding for the District and International awards is provided by voluntary contributions to the Zonta International Foundation YWPA Fund.

HOW DO ZONTA CLUBS / DISTRICTS BENEFIT?

At the Club and District levels, the YWPA program offers opportunities to generate publicity that projects the Club/District and Zonta International as an organization committed to programs that work to advance the status of women. Clubs should follow their local recipient through to the District 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.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Women of age 16-19 and living or studying in a Zonta district/region at the time the application is submitted to the district and demonstrate evidence of the following, are eligible to apply.

- Active commitment to volunteerism.
- Experience in local or student government.
- Volunteer leadership achievements.
- Knowledge of Zonta International and its programs.
- Advocating in Zonta International's mission of advancing the status of women worldwide.

WHAT ARE THE DEADLINES FOR APPLICATIONS?

Application is posted on the Zonta International website (www.zonta.org).....	by 1 August
Applications received by Zonta Clubs.....	(Club determines deadline)
Club recipients selected and applications received by District Governor.....	by 1 April
District recipients selected and applications received by Zonta International Headquarters.....	by 1 May
Announcement of District and International Recipients.....	1 July

APPLICATIONS

Prior to distributing application forms, Zonta Clubs should insert their name, the return address and the deadlines on all pages, as indicated. Applications are accepted by fax or mail; however, email submissions are preferred. Applications submitted by email must be signed and sent as a PDF.

Clubs must provide Zonta International Headquarters with a Club E-mail 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 applications.

Clubs may request additional information not required on the official application, however, this information should not be sent to the District and International level. Clubs and Districts 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.

Students must complete an official application (may be downloaded from the Zonta International website, www.zonta.org). Handwritten applications will not be accepted and should not be submitted. Students 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.

Clubs and Districts may translate the official application and accept applications in languages other than English, but applications submitted to Zonta International Headquarters from Districts must be translated into English and written on the original forms. In Districts with numerous languages, it may be necessary to ask for the English translation before sending the application to the District Governor.

CLUB GUIDELINES

Schools: Zonta Clubs should appoint a YWPA Club Committee, whose members should approach school officials directly, in their own community or in nearby areas where there are no Zonta 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, and to inform others about the mission of Zonta International. It has also been helpful to use a YWPA 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 (i.e. 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 YWPA 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 District Governor. 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.

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 YWPA 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 Awards 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 Awards Ceremony*, preferably in one of the schools, with teachers, co-students, parents and members of the media, to publicize the YWPA Award.
- 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 GUIDELINES

Applications: Districts must receive Club applications by 1 April. District Governors should appoint a District YWPA Committee, whose members will also be the District Evaluation Committee. Additionally, the District Governor may invite non-Zontians to this Committee. The District Evaluation Committee reviews the applications, using the YWPA Selection Criteria* and Scoring Sheet*, and selects one recipient per District. The Committee Chairman or the District Governor checks the completeness of her application, fills in the Cover Sheet for Governors* and submits both to Zonta International Headquarters by 1 May. **Applications are accepted by fax or mail; however, email submissions are preferred. Applications submitted by email must be signed and sent as a PDF.** The Executive Committee of the Zonta International Board must approve the District recipients. Applications that are incomplete or do not meet the requirements will not be approved.

District Award:

The Zonta International Foundation will issue a check in the amount of US\$1,000, payable to the District recipient, as her name appears on the application. Checks will be mailed to District Governors with a certificate. Districts are encouraged to:

- Add to the value of the award, perhaps by matching the money, by sponsoring a “second” and “third” award, seeking a grant, arranging for the recipient to meet high-level government or community leaders.
- Present the award at a District Award Ceremony or at the District Conference. This will help the District to attract publicity for the YWPA Program, Zonta Clubs and Zonta International. **District ceremonies should not be planned before notification of an award from Headquarters. It is recommended to plan ceremonies after the month of July.**

INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

The International YWPA Committee selects and recommends five International YWPA recipients from the approved District recipients. The Executive Committee of the Zonta International Board must approve the International recipients. For each International recipient, the Zonta International Foundation will issue a check in the amount of US\$3,000, payable to the recipient. The check will be mailed with a certificate to the District Governor. 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.

* Program materials are available at www.zonta.org. See Member Resources/Tools/Awards, Scholarship and Fellowship Tools.