



Tips for Submitting Gold Crown Awards

ASDA surveyed leaders from many of the Gold Crown award-winning chapters and asked them to share best practices for organizing and submitting superior applications. Their feedback was compiled into the tips below. We strongly encourage that chapters review these tips before applying. Good luck!

1. Start early

As soon as the calendar year turns over, start thinking about next year's application. The prior year's application may be in the works, but your chapter is probably already having events and you don't want those slipping by without documentation. You also don't want to wait until the last minute, struggling with what happened almost 11 months prior. The January deadline is difficult because of winter break. November is the right time of year to start putting together the application.

2. Designate a committee/team dedicated to the award

Designate at least one or two people to be in charge of Chapter Achievements and another one to two people for the Media awards. Form a committee and divide up tasks.

3. Document events as they occur

Document your events throughout the year so you know all of the events and activities you need to include in your application. Have your committee chairs (or whoever planned the event) create a Word document or complete a Google survey that describes the event and includes pictures. Use Dropbox or Google Drive to share the document so everyone has access to them. The event organizers know the details of the event much better than those putting together the application, who may have only attended or been peripherally involved with the events. A previous year's Word doc also serves as a good template/reminder for committees. Keep organized financial records throughout the year so it's easy to note how much money was raised or spent on each activity.

4. Look at previous winners for examples

Look at applications from previous winners. Who better to learn from than those who have won a Gold Crown Award in the past? For example, a recent applicant realized from previous winners that they needed to show specific and accurate numbers and statistics for everything they did, especially in relation to their finances.

5. Read the instructions thoroughly

Read the rules/guidelines ASAP! This is one area where many chapters fall short. Be clear on what should be included in the application and how it needs to be submitted. Note that the applications for Chapter Achievements and Media awards are separate and require different information.

6. Emphasize organization in your application

The clearer your application is, the easier it is for the judges to see all the amazing things your chapter has done over the year. Use the headings provided in the Gold Crown application criteria to organize your application. Include specific improvements from past years. For example: attendance increased 15% from previous years. Use a chart to clearly display fundraising efforts. Find examples in the past Gold Crown winner's applications.

7. Allow time to proof the award

Even if you have someone dedicated to organizing stats, events, etc., invariably they will miss things. Make sure that the rest of your cabinet is able to review the entire application with enough time to make any necessary additions or changes.

8. Maximize use of photos and content

Take photos of every event. It's an uphill battle if you don't have them. Achieve a balance of pictures and writing. Pictures need context to make sense, but too much text loses people's interest and attention.

9. Set a deadline before the actual due date

Set your own due date one month prior to the published deadline. Then, set another deadline two weeks before the actual due date. When the first due date passes by (because you probably have procrastinated a little bit), your next due date will make sure you have all your final edits completed. That way you have time to mail your application so it arrives on time.

10. Celebrate your success

Relive the year and enjoy the process. View the Gold Crown Awards as an exposé of your chapter's accomplishments—not a competition. You have created a yearbook for your ASDA chapter—be proud of this huge accomplishment. No matter what your chapter wins, we all want to see how you're thriving.