



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

DEADLINE TO APPLY: FEBRUARY 16, 2021

Student councils applying for the National Council of Excellence (NCOE) Award will be using a new online application beginning this year.

What's New?

- The application automatically checks for active NatStuCo membership status and will alert the user of inactive or nonmember status.
- The continuation version of the application is no longer available. Elements of it and the full applications have been incorporated into the new form.
- Completing the online application is now the final step in the process.
- Advisers will be asked to validate the application and respond to two reflection questions.
- When principals validate the application, they will be given three questions to reflect on council performance and one additional question that is optional. They may also choose to upload a letter of recommendation.

Advisers: Advisers can log in to the application using their existing **NatStuCo website credentials**.

Students: Students can log in to the application using an **adviser-verified student account**.

Questions? Contact us at:
✉ NatStuCo@NatStuCo.org
☎ 703-860-0200
www.NatStuCo.org/NCOE

How to Apply: 3 Steps to Becoming a National Council of Excellence

Step 1.

Review the award criteria:

Download a PDF copy of the middle level or high school application criteria and build your NCOE portfolio. Use the list of required and additional award criteria to help you identify the evidence you need to collect and organize in your NCOE portfolio.

Step 2.

Collect evidence for the NCOE portfolio and enter projects:

- Councils have full control over how they create their portfolio for the NCOE award. Many choose to collect and organize their evidence of meeting the NCOE criteria into a notebook, while others have built electronic portfolios.
- Schedule a meeting with your principal to present the finished portfolio that shows the criteria met and highlights of your council activities. If the principal finds that the portfolio is complete and the criteria to be recognized has been met, you are ready to proceed to the final step of the process.
- At any time during the year, councils can enter projects into the National Student Project Database to meet the required three to four projects for the award. Before entering projects for the NCOE award, please read carefully:
 - Do not wait until the award deadline to enter projects! All projects entered into the database are reviewed and approved by NASSP Student Leadership staff. The approval process can take up to three to four business days during heavy submission times. Only projects that have been entered and approved for publishing prior to the NCOE deadline will count toward the application.
 - Designate projects as “NCOE entrant” and indicate the award year as 2021 on the project entry form.
 - Each project entered must be identified in a different database category. Choices include: *Appreciation, Ceremonies, Character Building, Citizenship Development, Civic Based Activities/Events, Fundraising for School/Group, Fundraising for Charity, Green Projects, Holiday Activities, Homecoming, Leadership Development, Recognition, School Spirit/Student Engagement, Service to the Community, Service to the School/School Improvement, and Student Voice.*



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- Project summaries must be 200 words or longer. Include detailed descriptions that identify the roles of the student council in the project, the goals of the project, and other aspects such as highlights, outcomes, and totals. Project summaries that have been copied and pasted (plagiarized) from a previously entered project will disqualify the entry.
- After entering each project and clicking the submit button, a pop-up window should appear on the user's screen to confirm the project submission. Do not leave the submission page until you see the success message that your entry has been received.
- When a project is reviewed and approved by staff, the **National Student Project Database** will automatically assign a six-digit ID number and send a confirmation to the email listed on the application. If no email is received within several days, search the database for your school name to see if your projects are listed. If they are, they have been approved.
- The project ID, title, category, and entry date must be entered on the NCOE application.
- The following types of activities *will not* be approved as "student council projects" for the NCOE awards:
 - Elections, committees, and related activities that are facets of council governance or required operational activities per the council constitution.
 - Conferences, workshops, and other events where council members are delegates or attendees. To be considered as a project, the council should serve as the host or have significant roles in planning, managing, or working at the event.
 - School-sponsored events, assemblies, etc., in which the student council members were general participants (had no leadership roles or responsibilities).
 - Student councils submitting projects similar to ones that have been entered in a previous year must enter new content, and the project title should appropriately identify the year in which the project took place. For example, title the project "Spirit Week 2017," not simply "Spirit Week."

Step 3.

Complete and submit the online application:

- The application is accessible from the NatStuCo website. One adviser or designated student with a [verified NatStuCo account](#) can complete the application for their council.
- Once started, the application can only be accessed by the user who started it.
- The applicant will be asked to provide the name and e-mail address for the adviser and principal. Both will receive an e-mail with a unique link to provide a recommendation. The applicant cannot submit the application until the recommendations are complete.
- The application may be accessed for review and editing at any time prior to submission.
- Once the applicant, adviser, and principal have completed their sections of the application, the applicant must log back in to the application portal to submit. The application is locked and uneditable upon submission.

