



Dr. Harry Edwards Follow Your Bliss Award Frequently Asked Questions

Who can apply?

All educators within the 14 Bay Area counties are welcome to apply for our Follow Your Bliss Award. We honor educators within public and charter school systems in 5 different categories: Elementary School (K-5), Middle School (6-8), High School (9-12), Community/Informal Educator, & School Administrator. Educators teaching outside of the 14 Bay Area counties will not be considered for the Follow Your Bliss Award.

Can we submit multiple applications for a single nominee?

Nominees are welcome to have multiple applications submitted on their behalf; however, judges will review only (1) nomination per educator.

Is it better to self nominate or nominate an educator?

Either is acceptable; however, keep in mind that tangible examples will provide judges with a better understanding of the educator's work.

If my application is determined to be incomplete, may I add the missing item(s) and resubmit the application?

If an application is marked as incomplete, we will reach out for the missing items. If we do not receive the missing items prior to the review process beginning, the application will be disqualified.

I have submitted an application - when can I expect to receive an update on its status?

Once applications close, the review process will begin immediately. Applicants selected to move forward to the final round will be notified, and winners will be announced in May.

Who reviews the Follow Your Bliss applications?

The review committee will consist of 49ers Foundation and EDU staff members, the 49ers Employee Resource Groups, and our award sponsors.

How will we know if our nominee was selected as a Follow Your Bliss recipient?

Applications close on March 17th at 6:00 PM PST. All qualifying applications will be reviewed by our first-round judges. The top five nominees in each category will advance and be notified as finalists. Our final-round judges will select two winners for each category to be recognized as our 2025 Follow Your Bliss cohort.

What do Follow Your Bliss Award winners receive?

A \$2,000 grant will be awarded to each winner's school/organization, to be used by the winner to enhance their classroom with materials and resources. Each winner will also receive recognition on 49ers Foundation media platforms and will be invited to an in-person celebration.

If my nominee is selected as a winner, what are the next steps?

Once winners are notified, each winner will need to complete a questionnaire to provide us with a better understanding of how the winner will utilize the funds and to ensure the winner understands the criteria for receipt of funds. Questionnaires will be reviewed and approved before issuing funds to the winners.

What are the criteria for using the grant funds?

Funds can be used to purchase materials that enhance the winner's classroom or for a school/organization-wide initiative, in accordance with the criteria set forth herein. Funds can also be used for experiences benefiting the classroom or the entire school/organization. However, funds cannot be used for personal professional development but may be used for professional development opportunities for all educators at the school or organization.

Will funds be issued to the winner or the school?

Funds will be issued to the school/organization for the winners to use according to the criteria set forth herein.

What happens if I move to a new school?

If a winner transfers to a new school after winning the award, the winner is still obligated to use the funds at the school/organization listed on the application (i.e., the school/organization the winner worked at when they applied for the award).

What if I move schools after purchasing materials for my classroom?

The school/organization shall determine, at its discretion, if the winner will be permitted to take the classroom materials to the winner's new school.