THE HEALTH PROJECT
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR
THE 2025 HEALTH PROJECT INNOVATION AWARD
Recognizing Employers for Significant Innovations in Health and Well-Being Programs

The mission of The Health Project is to define, promote and increase the adoption of organizational health and well-being practices that translate into measurable operational impact.

In 2025, we are inaugurating a new award program: **The Health Project Innovation Award**. This award recognizes _employers_ who have introduced significant innovation into their organization's health and well-being programs that show great potential to improve the overall health and well-being of their workforce. The Innovation Award requires the submission of provisional data (at least one year) documenting positive health improvements and business outcomes. To win the Innovation Award, applicants must present evidence showing their innovations have achieved their intended results for their entire workforce or on a pilot basis.

Examples of innovations include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging hard-to-reach populations (e.g., remote, low-wage, older individuals, underserved population, highly dispersed, non-traditional worksites);

- Organizational culture change initiatives (e.g., creative leadership engagement, employee empowerment, community involvement, restructuring the built environment to optimize health and wellbeing);

- Addressing difficult challenges such as pandemics, natural disasters, or major crises affecting the workforce;

- Developing new approaches and models to change health-related behavior;

- Disease specific programs (e.g., chronic health conditions);

- Addressing health equity (e.g., addressing social determinants of health, health disparities, health literacy, diversity/inclusion);

- Effective use of technology (e.g., medical and diagnostic, digital artificial intelligence, virtual reality, consumer experience, operations);

- Extending beyond the four walls of the organization (e.g., focusing on broader environmental, social, and economic factors); and

- Cross-functional organizational integration to promote a seamless employee experience to support health, well-being, and a psychologically safe/environmentally supportive work environment.

The Innovation application requires a clear description of the innovation, the population served, and (where available) initial data collected to gauge the innovation's value to employees, employers, community, and the larger scientific community. If you are working with a vendor or have implemented a resource/initiative that is commonly used by other organizations, it must have been implemented in an innovative way.

Reviewers will rate the Innovation Award application using the following criteria: 1) Evidence-Based, 2) Novelty, 3) Sustainability, 4) Scalability, 5) Impact on Participation/Engagement, 6) Physical, Mental, and Other Health-Related and Well-Being Outcomes, 7) Business Outcomes, 8) Impact on Policy or Practices, and 9) Impact on Outside Community.

ELIGIBILITY FOR THE HEALTH PROJECT INNOVATION AWARD

To be eligible for Innovation Award recognition, an innovation must:

- Have been implemented for a minimum of one year;

- Be well integrated into the organization's broader health and well-being initiative;

- Incorporate evidence-based elements of sufficient intensity to yield a population-based response (sometimes referred to as a *therapeutic dose*); and

- Be supported by initial evidence of improvement in population health and noteworthy business results. These include medical cost savings, reduced absenteeism, fewer accidents, reduced health risks, increased worker productivity, or improvements in other value indicators important to the organization like attraction/retention of talent, job satisfaction, engagement, and morale.

Innovations may include components addressing the physical and emotional dimensions of employee health and well-being. They may also include additional dimensions of health including social, occupational, environmental, intellectual, financial, and spiritual well-being. It is recommended that program components be integrated into an organizational culture that promotes the workforce's health and well-being.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

The application submission deadline for this year's Koop/Innovation Award is 5:00 PM EST, June 30, 2025.

HELPING YOU PREPARE A STRONG APPLICATION

We recognize that preparing an application for the Innovation Award can be a daunting task. We are committed to helping with the process from beginning to end. This commitment includes access to previous applications and webinars posted on our website www.thehealthproject.com. You may also write to us at info@thehealthproject.com to be placed on the Potential Applicant list which will insure you receive notices from The Health Project.

Webinar Specific to the 2025 Innovation Award Application

We will present a live webinar focusing on the annual award application in early Spring of each year. This webinar will review the elements of the current year's application, factors considered by reviewers, and forms the reviewers complete during their review process. The webinar, open to all, will be recorded and available on our website.

Quality Control Check

Organizations that submit applications by June 15, 2025 (two weeks before the deadline) can request a quality check. This quality control check will examine the core elements of the draft to ensure that all required parts are included, that word count and page limits are not exceeded, and that no major issue is uncovered that can be corrected by the deadline. It will not include a review of the clarity or quality of the application content. Health Project staff will review these draft applications and return them to you with comments within seven days of receipt.

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Please create a PDF copy of your application and e-mail to: **info@thehealthproject.com**. *We will not accept paper applications.*

Include the following information on the cover page of your application:

- Name of Program:

- Company/Organization:

- Number of Employees (in the company eligible for the program – please specify whether only U.S. employees are eligible or whether the program is available outside the U.S.)

- Address:

- City/State/Zip:

- Contact Person:

- Telephone:

- Email address:

- Program URL, if applicable:

- Vendor(s), if applicable: Please report all individuals and organizations that assisted you in the completion of your application -- specifically, report vendors, consultants, or other third parties that helped prepare the application and their role (e.g., designed programs, managed programs, provided services such as health screenings, skill building programs, web portals, or program evaluation).

- Word count:

Please adhere to the highlighted word counts. We require a font size of 12 for the narrative. This font size is not required for graphs and tables, but all content should be legible.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

As noted above, key award criteria include the following: 1) Evidence-Based, 2) Novelty, 3) Sustainability, 4) Scalability, 5) Participation/Engagement, 6) Physical, Mental, and Other Health-Related and Well-Being Outcomes, 7) Business Outcomes, 8) Impact on Policy or Practices, and 9) Impact on Community.

In describing the innovation introduced, please address the following important elements of the initiative:

- Leadership commitment and organizational culture;
- Strategic planning;
- Communications, marketing, and promotion;
- Intervention components;
- Integration into benefit design;
- Program coordination; and
- Data management and evaluation.

The table below summarizes the application requirement categories and their respective weights.

Application Category	Weight (% of total score)
PROGRAM METRICS	
1. Evidence-Based	20%
2. Novelty	30%
3. Sustainability/Scalability	20%
OUTCOMES	
4. Participation/Engagement	10%
5. Health and Well-Being Outcomes	10%
6. Business Outcomes	10%
BONUS POINTS	
7. Impact on Organizational Policy or Practice	5 points
8. Community Impact	5 points
9. Employer size (< 2,000, < 1,000 employees)	3-5 points

APPLICATION CONTENT

Your application should include the content described in Sections I-V below.

Section I: Executive Summary (500 words max)

Provide a succinct overview of the health and organizational goals for the program, the target population, and the organizational, team/unit, and individual-level strategies used to pursue goals. Summarize the innovation you introduced and its impact on health and well-being efforts, participation, health outcomes, and organizational outcomes. Briefly mention any unusual challenges the organization faced and describe creative solutions you developed to address them.

Section II: Narrative Description of the Innovative Program (2,000 words max)

Organization Description (500 words max)

Briefly describe your organization. Your application may include such items as the organization's culture, business strategy, location, number of employees, and any major benefit design changes that occurred during the period covered by the evaluation and how these changes may have affected results. If applicable, please include information regarding the unique characteristics of your employee population, which may include the number and percentage of employees who are members of racial/ethnic minorities, are low-wage workers, have a work disability, are field-based, work from home, or are members of union groups.

Innovation Description (500 words max)

Describe the innovation introduced as well as its start date, aims, and population affected.

Health Improvement Efforts and Strategy Related to the Innovation (1,000 words max)

1. **What are the organization's health and well-being goals addressed by the Innovation?**

   What specific elements of individual health/well-being and organizational/ business outcomes (e.g., medical spending, productivity, engagement) are prioritized?

2. **How did the organization develop these goals**?

   Were goals the result of challenging trends in employee health status and related costs or productivity reductions, expressions of employee interest, a shift in organizational purpose or values, a champion or advocate in leadership, or some other factor? To what extent were goals informed by data or best practice scorecards? Which stakeholders were involved? Who were the target populations (e.g., employees and their families, customers, community)? How have goals evolved over time?

3. **Scientific Principles Applicable to the Innovation Introduced**

   What, if any, underlying scientific principles of health behavior change, culture change, and organizational development have been important to you or your vendors in designing the innovation?

Section III. Innovation Details (3,000 words max)

Please provide a description of the Innovation using the following categories:

1) **What is the evidence-base supporting the innovation?**

2) **How is the intervention novel?**

3) How will the innovation be sustained?

4) To what extent is the innovation scalable?

Section IV. Results (3,000 words max)

Applicants should note the number of years of data available for supporting each outcome of interest and present their results accordingly.

Please list the methods used in gathering participation, health, and organizational outcomes data with an emphasis on the innovations themselves within the context of broader organizational outcomes. In your description, please include as many of the following data points as are available. Ideally, the description should include: (1) evaluation design (including variables of interest and structure of the evaluation); (2) population/sample size and composition; (3) measures used and measurement instruments; and (4) any statistical analyses performed.

Please provide data on the following outcomes related to the innovation:

1) Participation/engagement rates in the innovative program;

2) Physical, mental, and other health and well-being outcomes related to the innovation;

3) Business outcomes related to the innovation;

4) Impact on organizational policies and practices; and

5) Impact on community.

If information is unavailable, please note "not available" or N/A.

Section V. Supplemental Documentation (5-page limit)

You may optionally provide non-duplicative documentation supporting the application. This might include senior management letters of support, abstracts of articles published in peer- reviewed journals, consultant summary reports, insights from best practice scorecards, survey results, internal memoranda, or other helpful material.