

National Association of the Deaf

Contestant Application Packet

Summer 2022



YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



Note: We will announce a new name for this competition in 2022!

• Visibility • Innovation • Sustainability

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WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THIS COMPETITION?

This revamped competition, to be renamed but currently called Youth Ambassador Program, gives an opportunity to aspiring deaf and hard of hearing leaders to bring their vision to life and possibly win prize money!

During the competition, the contestants will:

- Attend a retreat prior to the NAD Conference
- Participate at the NAD Conference
- Enhance presentation skills
- Engage in networking opportunities
- Develop teamwork and collaboration skills
- Transform into effective advocates
- Translate innovation into action
- Commit to making an impact on behalf of the deaf and hard of hearing community

The prize money opportunities are:

1st place - \$5,000

2nd place - \$2,000

3rd place - \$1,000

These opportunities await you and we look forward to having you at our competition!

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

For application considerations, the following eligibility requirements must be met by each contestant in order to proceed with the application process:

- I. **U.S. Citizenship**—you must be a legal citizen and resident of the United States. You must submit two (2) of the following documents:
 - a. A copy of your current U.S. passport;
 - b. A copy of your current U.S. driver’s license; or
 - c. A copy of your birth certificate
- II. **Age**—you must be between the ages of eighteen (18) years and thirty (30) by the due date of the application. Anyone who is younger than 18 or over 30 by the due date of the application will not be considered in this competition.
- III. **Academic Status** - you must be a high school graduate or have a GED certificate by the time of the competition.
- IV. **Deaf or hard of hearing status**—you must be deaf or hard-of-hearing to be considered in this competition. You can provide evidence of having attended a school or program for the deaf or hard of hearing, or in the alternative, you can show educational or audiological records proving you are deaf or hard of hearing.
- V. **Communication skills**—the preferred method of communication is American Sign Language (ASL).
- VI. **Background check**—you must never have been convicted of any felony crime or any other criminal conduct that demonstrates moral turpitude. The NAD will conduct background checks to investigate.
- VII. **Availability**—you must be willing to travel to the location of the Biennial NAD Conference for up to 10 days. The 10 days (more or less) includes the retreat a few days prior to the conference and then the conference itself. Usually, these ten days are from the end of June through the beginning of July. Please visit NAD.org for more details of the next Biennial NAD Conference.
- VIII. **Expenses**— All travel and accommodation expenses for the competition will be the sole responsibility of the contestant. We encourage you to seek financial support or sponsorship from local organizations, state associations, and/or corporations.

- IX. **Membership**—You are required to be a member of the NAD when registering for the conference. Please visit <https://www.nad.org/join/> and sign up to become a member.
- X. **Contestant Agreement Packet**—You must complete and sign all the agreement forms and waivers [online](#).
- XI. **Visibility – Innovation – Sustainability**— You must be eager, passionate and proactive about addressing a **social issue, business idea or a startup concept** in the deaf and hard of hearing community in the United States. Be original. Be creative. Be unique.

When submitting your idea, please write in this format:

- **VISIBILITY**—What have you noticed in our community that needs to be addressed? What kind of issues do you see? What kind of new ideas can you bring to our community to make a change?
- **INNOVATION**—Bring your new ideas of addressing the issues you see and present it to the community. Bring a creative way to address those issues.
- **SUSTAINABILITY**—Your idea will not just be presented, but you will make it happen! How can you make it happen and make it last? How can you ensure that your idea has stability to continue to impact our community?

COMPETITION TIMELINE

This is the anticipated competition timeline for 2022 competition.

- March 1, 2022: Preliminary application deadline. *Additional points will be rewarded.*
- April 1, 2022: Final application deadline
- Few days prior NAD Conference: Retreat at Orlando, Florida
- July 1-5, 2022: NAD Conference
 - Round 1 - VISION (Private Interview & Observation)
 - Round 2 - INNOVATION (Pitch & Network)
 - Round 3 - SUSTAINABILITY (The VISION)

PRE-COMPETITION PROCESS

Applicants are encouraged to check the eligibility requirements (see above) to make sure that they are eligible to be in the competition.

Applicants must submit a completed application as follows:

- A headshot photo (for use on website and social media)
- Essay Application
 - Applicants must submit essays that answer three (3) questions on the application.
- Two-Minute Video Clip
 - Applicants must submit a two-minute video clip signed in ASL with English captions on your Visibility - Innovation - Sustainable (VIS) idea that they are passionately proposing during the competition.
 - The video must include: (1) a brief autobiography, (2) an explanation about how the chosen VIS topic/idea impacts the deaf and hard of hearing community; and (3) an example of how the applicant would address the issue/idea.
 - The video must be uploaded in a YouTube link – make sure it is unlisted so we have access to the video while screening.
- Signed Agreement Form (in the Application)

Screening Process: The Committee and NAD Youth Program Director will review the eligibility forms and conduct a background check to ensure that each applicant is eligible before viewing submitted audition videos. **The Committee will inform you if we officially approve your application.**

Final Due Date: April 1, 2022

ROUND

1

THE HOT SEAT

Timeline: During the NAD Conference Week

There are two parts in this round – 1) Hot Seat Interview and 2) Observation. Contestants are expected to use various skills in areas such as advocacy, marketing, leadership, and conflict resolution. In addition, the judges will observe how the contestants present and interact with others. This round will occur during the NAD conference.

PART ONE: HOT SEAT INTERVIEW—this part requires contestants to have private interviews with the judges. This private interview gives contestants an opportunity to explain about their VIS idea/concept and how it will address an identified social issues/business idea. In addition, judges will evaluate the contestants’ presentation of the idea/concept.

PART TWO: OBSERVATION—the judges will observe contestants’ interpersonal communication, nonverbal communication, presence, and social etiquette. The observation will take note of how the contestants present themselves in general as well as how they present their VIS idea/concept. Contestants will be expected to present various skills including advocacy, leadership, marketing, presenting, and conflict resolution. This Observation will be conducted throughout the NAD conference week. The contestants will NOT know who the judges are until at the final night of the competition.

Score: For Part 1 (Interview), there will be two (2) judges interviewing the contestants. For Part 2 (observation), one secret judge will be interacting with the contestants throughout the week. The point system of this round will be shared with the contestants during the retreat week.

ROUND

2

PITCH AND NETWORK

Timeline: During the Competition Event

Round 2 focuses on the contestants’ persuasive and public presentation skills. Contestants must create an “elevator pitch” (30 seconds) video that shares their VIS idea/concept quickly and effectively. During the competition event, the contestants will have an opportunity to mingle with the audience and share their ideas.

Score: Three judges will score on a set of qualities based on the program’s objectives. The point system for this round will be shared with the contestants during the retreat week.

ROUND 3

THE VISION PLATFORM Timeline: During the Competition

The judges will choose a small group of contestants based on their performance in Round 2 to continue in Round 3. Top contestants will participate in this round. This round allows the contestants to show their passion towards their VIS in a presentation performance for the audience. During this round, the contestants will be expected to use visual media or theatrical-visual performance to express their VIS idea/concept and explain how it will impact the community for the better. Each contestant will have up to 5 minutes to share their idea. Then the audience will have the opportunity to vote for the contestant that delivers the best presentation.

Score: The audience will have the opportunity to vote for the winner. The score from the audience will contribute 25% to the score along with the judges' scores. The point system for this round will be shared with the contestants during the retreat week. The winner will be announced on the stage, in front of a live audience! Prizes: \$5,000 will be given to the top winner; \$2,000 will be given to the Runner-Up; and \$1,000 to the second Runner-Up.

FORMS

Please fill out the Professional Code of Conduct, Applicant Form, and Agreement Form [online](#). Join this competition by filling out this [application](#)!

Below is a copy of the Professional Code of Conduct.

PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Why does this competition have a Professional Code of Conduct?

Many organizations have their own professional code of conduct that outlines the proper, professional, and ethical practices within and outside the organization. The NAD expects that the contestants abide by and respect the Professional Code of Conduct as they are demonstrating the vision, mission, and goals of this youth competition.

As a contestant, you are representing deaf and hard-of-hearing people of your community and competing for a high-profile role at the national level. The NAD emphasizes that the rules are NOT made to be broken, but are laid out to serve as guidelines and to ensure fairness to all contestants from the beginning of the application process to the end of the competition.

Every individual has a unique perspective, including yours. Your personal perspectives and opinions reflect on how you behave. You, as one of the contestants, will be a public figure and you need to know what is appropriate and inappropriate in public and in private.

The NAD is an equal opportunity organization that embraces diversity and inclusiveness as core values in achieving its mission. It is the philosophy of the NAD that diversity encompasses a wide range of human abilities, perspectives, languages, cultures, races, genders, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, national origin, disabilities, and socioeconomic status (www.nad.org). The NAD does not tolerate any form of disrespectful or discriminatory behavior or statement.

Professional Code of Conduct

The NAD Professional Code of Conduct serves four purposes:

- identifies the mission and vision of the youth competition that contestants are expected to follow.
- describes the professional behaviors and expectations that contestants are to follow.
- refers as a guideline that contestants are responsible to consult when professional conflicts arise.
- serves as a guideline that the NAD can use for disciplinary procedures and consequences for any violations.

PURPOSE ONE—Mission and Vision

Mission—Transform aspiring young deaf and hard-of-hearing leaders into innovative advocates through a collaborative community-based competition.

Vision—Develop civic engagement and social responsibility among young deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals through challenges that emphasizes visibility, innovation, and sustainability, referred to as VIS.

PURPOSE TWO—Professional Behaviors and Expectations

I. **Illegal Activities**—you must not be engaged in any illegal activities such as illegal drug usage; drug trafficking; human trafficking; driving under the influence; underage drinking or drug usage; unlawful gambling; or any other activities that violate the law. An act committed in violation of a law will result in the disqualification of your participation in the NAD youth competition.

II. **Insubordination**—you must not be insubordinate or otherwise uncooperative from the beginning of your application to the end of the competition. Examples of such insubordination include but are not limited to: turning in paperwork or videos late; showing up late for the activities; not actively participating in activities; using phones/pagers without permission during activities; not showing up in activities; engaging in inappropriate affections like fondling and overt kissing; and, any other insubordination that disrupt the program. An act of insubordination will result in going through the mandated disciplinary procedures with the NAD Youth Programs Director.

III. **Disrespectful behaviors**—you must not be disrespectful to any person including but not limited to actions such as: expressing any form of disrespect; engaging in discrimination; making any offensive or racial slurs; swearing or cussing to others; causing abuse or harm to others; engaging in or encouraging bullying and cyber-bullying; posting inappropriate pictures or comments in social media; and any other behaviors that demonstrate disrespect to others. Any form of disrespectful behaviors will result in going through the mandated disciplinary procedures with the NAD Youth Programs Director.

IV. **Misrepresentation of the NAD Youth Competition**—you must not misinform about the NAD youth competition; share confidential or false information about the program in general; or engage in any other activities that can harm the image of the program. Any form of misrepresentation will result in going through the mandated disciplinary procedures with the NAD Youth Programs Director.

PURPOSE THREE—Guidelines for Contestants

As one of the contestants, you are responsible:

- to review and understand that you will adhere to all professional behaviors and expectations as stated in the Professional Code of Conduct;
- to familiarize yourself with the standards, rules, and laws;
- to consult with the NAD Youth Programs Director if you experience a behavioral dilemma;

- to report and communicate with the NAD Youth Programs Director when you may think that you might have violated any rules or laws; and
- to conduct yourself as a great role model with integrity and professionalism.

Contestants are required to sign a contract to confirm that they understand and will adhere to the expectations of the Professional Code of Conduct.

PURPOSE FOUR—Guidelines for the NAD

- The NAD will consider all factors involved when a contestant violates the rules.
- To ensure that standard disciplinary measures are followed, a system has been developed to guide through the various disciplinary procedures. This system rates different violations at varying levels of severity and outlines the disciplinary action for each violation. Varying levels include:
 - *Illegal activities*—immediate disqualification of your participation in the NAD youth competition.
 - *Insubordination, disrespectful behaviors, and misrepresentation*—immediate disciplinary meeting with the NAD Youth Programs Director that may result in three different levels of discipline: (a) verbal warning—an opportunity for you to review the Code of Conduct and understand that you cannot repeat the violation; (b) a written warning—depending on circumstances, the NAD Youth Programs Director will give you a written warning; (c) immediate disqualification of your participation in the NAD youth competition, especially after repeated instances of misconduct or violations.
- For each rule infraction, the NAD Youth Programs Director will meet with you to address the violation. You will get a written incident report which both of you will sign at the end of your discussion on the nature of the violation.