

# Excellence in Leadership Award

**Please read these rules carefully, as many changes have been made to facilitate the competition during a pandemic. These may be different procedures than recent years.**

## **Purpose:**

The IFT Student Association (IFTSA) is a global professional society with members from around the world. Its core purpose is to foster the development of future professionals and leaders who are dedicated to the science and technology of food.

The purpose of the IFTSA Excellence in Leadership Award is to recognize two student members of IFT, one undergraduate and one graduate student, whose exemplary leadership embodies IFTSA's Strategic Promises and, ultimately, empowers fellow students to reach their full potential.

## **Eligibility:**

Any student member of IFT, as of March 1, 2021 or who has not graduated prior to July 1, 2021, is eligible to compete. Students serving in the office of the IFTSA President (Elect, Current, and Past) are not eligible for this award, during or after their service. The recently elected Incoming President-Elect is still eligible for this award before their terms of service. The current Excellence in Leadership Award Chair is ineligible for this award during their year of service.

There is no limit on the number of applications per school for this award.

## **Awards:**

Each awardee will be presented with an award and \$1,000 during the IFT Annual Meeting or virtually. Each awardee will also be eligible to receive a \$500 travel stipend to attend the IFT Annual Meeting & Food Expo but must be present and recognized on stage at the awards celebration in order to receive the travel grant. If the IFT Annual Meeting is virtual, awardees will receive free registration.

## **Evaluation Criteria:**

**Procedures for preliminary round:** Applicants will submit their application, resume, letters of recommendation, and essay question response. Judges will evaluate all application materials and select 3 undergraduate students and 3 graduate students for a total of 6 student finalist.

- **Essay:**

In a maximum of 600 words, reflect upon your leadership experience and detail how you have empowered students interested in the science of food to reach their full potential. Elaborate on how you have enriched their education in the science of food through at least one (or more, if appropriate) of IFTSA's Strategic Promises.

For reference, IFTSA's Strategic Promises are:

**Connect:** Bring people, ideas, and opportunities together to support students' professional goals

**Develop:** Provide opportunities for skill development beyond the classroom and lab

**Support:** Cultivating an inclusive environment where all individuals pursuing an education in the science of food can thrive.

- **2 Letters of Reference:**

Please include 1 letter of support from each of the following:

1. 1 Mentor letter = authored by a faculty member, advisor, or person in a managerial/mentor role who has personal experience with applicant's leadership abilities
2. 1 Peer Letter = authored by a fellow student, co-worker, or colleague who has personal experience working with applicant as a leader of their peer group

- **Resume:**

Limit resumes to 2 pages.

Your resume should highlight your leadership, mentorship, and professional development with an emphasis on the food science community. Please include dates of relevant IFT/IFTSA involvement.

**Procedure for final round:** (Finalist Interviews) Student finalists will each be interviewed by the team of judges. Each interview will be roughly 15 minutes in length and students will be asked 3-4 leadership-focused questions (as pre-determined by the judges).

**Applications and Judgments:**

Completed application forms and all attachments should be submitted via the submission portal on IFT.org no later than **March 15th, 2021**. A panel of IFTSA appointed judges, which will include at least 2 IFT leaders and 1 leader from the sponsoring organization (if applicable), will evaluate the submissions and select 3 undergraduate and 3 graduate student finalists. The finalists will be notified in writing by the IFTSA on or before **April 15th, 2021**.

The finalists will each complete a 15-minute virtual interview with questions from a panel of IFTSA appointed judges, who will select the two student winners. Awardees will be notified in writing by the IFTSA on or before **May 1st, 2021**.

**Preliminary Rubric (Written application):**

1. Resume

To what extent does the student's resume demonstrate participation in impactful leadership roles and experiences that promote the science of food? This can include IFTSA, IFT, and non-IFT/IFTSA experiences.

0 Unacceptable

1 Poor

2 Marginal

3 Adequate

4 Strong

5 Superior

2. Essay Score

To what extent does the student's essay demonstrate a consistent initiative to support students in the science of food? To what extent has the student's leadership furthered one or more IFTSA's Strategic Promises?

Essays will be graded based on the overall degree of commitment and impact demonstrated, not necessarily the number of Strategic Promises covered or the perceived quality of the grammar or writing style.

0 Unacceptable

1

2 Poor

3

4 Marginal

5

6 Adequate

7

8 Strong

9

10 Superior

3. Letter of Recommendation: Mentor Letter

To what degree does this letter recommend the student's leadership involvement and accomplishments? Does it demonstrate exemplary leadership?

0 Unacceptable

1 Marginal

2 Adequate

3 Superior

4. Letter of Recommendation: Peer Letter

To what degree does this letter recommend the student's impact on their student community? Does it demonstrate exemplary leadership?

0 Unacceptable

1 Marginal

2 Adequate

3 Superior

Each judge's scores will be converted to ranks. The 3 students from the graduate and 3 students from the undergraduate groups with the lowest sum of ranks will be chosen as finalists and continue on to the interview portion.

**Interview Rubric:**

Note that these questions are provided as examples from past years' interviews.

Question Category	Question	Score from 1-5 (5 being highest)	Response Notes
Leadership	What has been your most successful or impactful leadership experience, and what did it teach you?		
Peer leadership	In terms of peer leadership, could you give an example of how you empowered a fellow peer and what was the lasting impact on the individual?		
IFTSA Strategic Promise - Connect	Can you describe a time you brought different groups of people together? What did you do to successfully facilitate that connection?		
IFTSA Strategic Promise - Support	How will the communities you have served be different because of your leadership?		

**COVID-19 Contingency:**

The Excellence in Leadership competition is judged entirely remotely and prior to the annual meeting, so only the award announcement plans are particularly affected. Regardless of the event status, awardees will still receive the award, prize money, and complimentary registration to the conference. The awarding of travel grant funds is contingent upon a conference format where traveling is necessary.

A phone interview or other non-internet alternative will be allowed for students with unstable internet connections. Most videoconferencing platforms (like Zoom) offer the ability for participants to call in with a phone connection.

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The enforcement, review, and changes of these Rules and Guidelines will be the responsibility of the Chair of the competition and designated IFT Staff member. Failure to comply with any of the rules of the competition may result in disqualification.

**Questions:**

Please contact the IFTSA Excellence in Leadership Award Chair via email at [iftsa.ela@gmail.com](mailto:iftsa.ela@gmail.com).