



NEXT Awards & Entrepreneurs' Hall of Fame FAQ

Q: What is the NEXT Awards & Entrepreneurs' Hall of Fame?

Nashville Entrepreneur Center's **NEXT Awards & Entrepreneurs' Hall of Fame, Presented by Amazon**, is one spectacular night devoted to the exceptional entrepreneurs transforming their industries, creating opportunities, growing economies, and improving lives in the greater Nashville area and beyond.

Q: What industries are recognized?

There are six industry categories:

1. **Products and Services**
2. **Financial Services**
3. **Healthcare**
4. **Hospitality and Retail**
5. **Music, Sports, Gaming and Entertainment**
6. **Real Estate and Construction**

Q: What are the awards given in each category?

There are two awards given within each category based on stage:

- **Startup:** Businesses that have been operating for 5 years or less*
- **Growth:** Businesses that have been operating for more than 5 years*

*The business's public launch date is considered to be its first date of operation

Q: How many NEXT Awards will be given out, and what are the hours of the show?

A few local legends will be inducted into the Entrepreneurs' Hall of Fame. The program also honors a **Startup Entrepreneur of 2025** and a **Growth Entrepreneur of 2025**, as well as the winners of six industry categories, ultimately awarding 14 founders and their companies with trophies on stage.

NEXT Awards Show Times:

5:30 pm - Doors open, and red carpet photos begin.

6:30 pm - Dinner is served.

7:15 pm - Program begins and ends at 8:45 pm.

9:00 -10:00 pm - To continue the celebration, enjoy "Cocktails in the Courtyard", our NEXT Awards afterparty.

Q: What are the qualifications to win?

To qualify for a NEXT Award, a company must be a for-profit business headquartered in Middle Tennessee, with its founder still actively involved. The company should demonstrate proven growth, success, and scalability while having made a significant impact within the past 12 months.

Q: What is the application process like?

Applications are submitted and passed to an independent accounting firm to be ranked based on quantitative data. The top-ranked applications are then sent to a panel of independent judges, who are experts in their respective industries, to be ranked based on quantitative and qualitative data. Rankings from each judge are averaged and the top three finalists in each category are notified in early August before tickets go on sale to the general public. Selected companies must meet the qualifications listed on our [application](#).

Q: What is the dress code for NEXT attendees?

Attendees are encouraged to wear "Nashville Black-Tie." Tuxes, suits, evening gowns, and cocktail attire set the tone, but don't be afraid to add a little Nashville flair—statement boots, bling, or a touch of Music City glam! Let your personality shine.

For any additional questions, please contact Chloe Cook at chloe.cook@ec.co. For sponsorship opportunities, please visit www.ec.co/next-awards.

We can't wait to see you at the 2025 NEXT Awards and Entrepreneurs' Hall of Fame!

**Schermerhorn Symphony Center
October 20, 2025 | 5:30 pm**