



Applications are evaluated by the independent prize committee, which is comprised of the National Journalism Center's Board of Governors, along with guest judge Vince Coglianese. After deliberation, the board's selection committee will choose a group of finalists, then each member of the board will cast votes by secret ballot for the story most worthy of the annual Dao Prize from the list of finalists.

Please complete this form as a PDF and submit either a scanned or digital copy of the file.

Eligibility

Submissions must have been published between Sept. 1, 2024, through Aug. 18, 2025. Applications are limited to one story or pre-defined series, but there is no limit to the number of applications an outlet or journalist can submit. All U.S.-based news publications and independent reporters are welcome to participate. This includes Substack pages, YouTube channels, and podcasts.

For 2025 awards, applicants do not need to select categories. Judges will decide all winners, runners-up, and category selections.

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Selection

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Submissions will be evaluated on five main criteria: investigative depth, public interest, fairness and accuracy, style, and impact. Judges will grade submissions on a 10-point scale in each category and tally the average for a final score. The judge must cast their vote for the submission with the highest score. Two runners-up to be awarded \$10,000 each will be determined based on the judge's second and third-place stories. In the case of a tie, the board will enter another round of voting.

Judges cannot vote for a story from their own news outlet or for a story they worked on personally. NJC's board operates on an advisory basis, meaning members serve in their capacity as governors without financial compensation from Young America's Foundation. Ballots are counted and preserved by a Foundation executive team representative. NJC's independent board will exercise sole control over the selection of the Dao Prize, runners-up, and special category winners.





Winners

The annual winner will receive a \$100,000 prize, divided among team members per the terms to which they agreed upon submitting their application. Two submissions will win \$10,000 each as runners-up, one will win \$10,000 in the local category, and one will win \$10,000 in the multimedia category, which includes podcasts, video, radio, and formats up to the applicant's discretion. The 2025 Special Dao Prize for DOGE reporting is \$30,000. Winners agree to participate in occasional publicity highlighting their award.

Every newsroom that submits an application may request up to ten seats free of charge at the Nov. 19 award ceremony in Washington, D.C. These seats will be allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis at the discretion of the National Journalism Center.

About

Founded in 1977, the National Journalism Center became a project of Young America's Foundation in 2001. NJC hosts prestigious 12-week training sessions every spring and summer for aspiring journalists dedicated to seeking truth. Our network of alumni includes more than 2,250 graduates. Together, they've authored thousands of pieces of original journalism in print, radio, and television and published more than 100 books.

NJC awarded its inaugural prize for excellence in investigative journalism to alumnus Gabe Kaminsky in 2022. After attending the ceremony, representatives from the Dao Feng and Angela Foundation approached NJC about expanding the award as a primary co-sponsor. In 2023, celebrated journalists Matt Taibbi, Bari Weiss, and Michael Shellenberger won the inaugural Dao Prize for their groundbreaking series on the Twitter Files at a ceremony hosted by Kimberley Strassel of the *Wall Street Journal*. In 2024, Miranda Devine emceed the ceremony, and the Dao Prize was awarded to Susan Crabtree of *RealClearPolitics* for her investigation into the Secret Service following the assassination attempt of President Trump in Butler, Pennsylvania.

Young America's Foundation is the principal outreach arm of the conservative movement. Our financial disclosures can be located [here](#).





APPLICATION

Full Name(s) of Applicant(s):

Outlet:

Story or Series:

Please list team members who made instrumental contributions to the reporting of this story, with brief explanations of their role:

Please describe the process behind the reporting, writing, and publishing of this story. Were there any hurdles the team overcame?

As an exceptional achievement in truth-seeking journalism, how did this story benefit the public?

Should you win either the honorable mentions or top prize, how will you divide the award between your team? Please list each team member and the percentage share of the prize they will receive below.





Please attach scanned or digital copies of each story you're submitting as PDF documents. If your work is audio or video, please provide links or full files in the case of a paywall.

Signature of applicant(s):

Signature of editor-in-chief:

