



MATERIALS RESEARCH SOCIETY

Advancing materials. Improving the quality of life.

4.2. Awards Committee

Purpose: This policy articulates the purpose, structure, and responsibilities of the MRS Awards Committee and Chair.

Applies to: Volunteers, Members, Staff

Purpose/Scope

The Awards Committee shall oversee all Society awards according to policies approved by the Board of Directors, arrange for the preparation and presentation of awards, recommend new awards and changes to existing awards, and oversee publicity for all awards. Awards or forms of recognition not listed here are not Society awards, and are not regulated by MRS awards policies. Society awards include: the Von Hippel Award, the David Turnbull Lectureship, the Outstanding Early-Career Investigator Award, the MRS Medal, the Innovation in Materials Characterization Award, MRS Fellow, Materials Theory Award, Mid-Career Researcher Award, MRS Postdoctoral Award, MRS Impact Award, MRS Woody White Service Award, the MRS Graduate Student Awards, the Arthur Nowick Graduate Student Award, the Kavli Foundation Early Career Lectureship in Materials Science, MRS Nelson Buck Robinson Science and Technology Award For Renewable Energy.

Committee Structure

The Awards Committee shall be comprised of a chair, the chairs of the subcommittees, and a HQ Director. The Chair may appoint up to two additional members in consultation with the Vice President; the purpose of such additions is for special assignments such as assisting with new awards, soliciting nominations, etc. The Chair of the Awards Committee shall be responsible for determining the structure of the various subcommittees and appointing the chairs. Each subcommittee shall be comprised of a Chair, who shall report to the Awards Committee Chair, and the subcommittee's appointed members, appointed by the subcommittee chair. The subcommittee chairs shall determine the assignment of responsibilities within each subcommittee.

Each award subcommittee will normally have between five and seven members, each of whom has one vote. An exception is the GSA Subcommittee, which will normally have three to five members. The Awards Committee Chair may be a voting member of one subcommittee or may be a member of no subcommittee. In addition, all subcommittees shall include the Awards Committee Chair as an ex officio, non-voting member who may contribute the Chair's perspective to the deliberations.

The current subcommittees are:

- Von Hippel Award Subcommittee, chaired by the former Immediate Past President.
- David Turnbull Lectureship Subcommittee
- Outstanding Early-Career Subcommittee
- MRS Medal Subcommittee
- Innovation in Materials Characterization Award Subcommittee
- Materials Theory Award Subcommittee
- Mid-Career Researcher Award Subcommittee
- MRS Fellows Subcommittee
- MRS Postdoctoral Award Subcommittee
- MRS Impact Award Subcommittee
- Kavli Foundation Early Career Lectureship in Materials Science Subcommittee
- Graduate Student Award Subcommittee
- MRS Nelson Buck Robinson Science and Technology Award For Renewable Energy

Subcommittees' Purposes

Each subcommittee, with the exception of the Graduate Student Award Subcommittee and the Kavli Foundation Early Career Lectureship in Materials Science Subcommittee, shall receive, review, and evaluate nominations for its specific award, select a recipient, and submit its recommendation to the Board of Directors for ratification.

The Graduate Student Award Subcommittee shall coordinate and oversee a process whereby the symposium organizers review applications and rank accordingly. The subcommittee shall review applications on an as-needed basis if symposium organizers fail to complete the duties in the required time period. The subcommittee will also solicit for and select the judges for each meeting's finalists' special talk sessions. These judges oversee the subsequent designation of Gold and Silver Awards and the single Arthur Nowick Graduate Student Award. The Chair of the GSA Committee will ensure that the subcommittee and the judges understand the rules governing special GSA Awards such as the Arthur Nowick Graduate Student Award. The Graduate Student Awards shall include a monetary award no smaller than the student registration fee for the Meeting at which the award is presented.

The Kavli Foundation Early Career Lectureship in Materials Science Subcommittee shall solicit, receive, and evaluate the nominations and determine the recipient.

Award Timelines and Ratification Process

Nominations for all MRS awards, with the exception of the Graduate Student and the Kavli Foundation Early Career Lectureship in Materials Science, shall be active for a period of three years.

Von Hippel, David Turnbull Lectureship, MRS Medal, Materials Theory-- Each subcommittee shall submit the name of the selected recipient to the Board for ratification in July of each year, or recommend that no award be made.

Outstanding Early-Career Investigator Award, Innovation in Materials Characterization Award, Mid-Career Researcher Award, MRS Postdoctoral Award—Each subcommittee shall submit the name of the selected recipients to the Board for ratification no later than November of each year, or recommend that no award be made. With regard to MRS Fellows, the subcommittee shall submit a list of selected Fellow recipients, with citations, to the Board for ratification.

The recipient of the Kavli Foundation Early Career Lectureship in Materials Science does not require Board ratification.

The recipient of the MRS Woody White Service Award shall be selected by the Board's Governance Committee in the August/September timeframe.

Board ratification: A favorable vote by a majority of the members of the Board is necessary for ratification. If ratification fails, the subcommittee may submit another name (or, in the case of Fellows, a revised list) for ratification, or may recommend that no award be made

The Awards Committee and subcommittees will make every effort to ensure that an individual is not recognized with more than one MRS award for the same or very similar body of work. This does not prevent an individual from receiving multiple MRS Awards, especially "late career" awards such as the Von Hippel and MRS Fellow Awards.

Before the evaluation process begins, HQ shall inform each subcommittee of any of its nominees who have received previous MRS awards, providing the citation to help guard against duplicate awards for the same work.

- If the work is deemed to be different than that previously recognized (e.g., building upon in a significant manner or a significant enhancement of it) the nomination shall be evaluated along with all nominations. If the nominee is ultimately recommended to the Board, the subcommittee will include a brief summary of their rationale.
- If it's not clear that the achievement is different from one previously recognized, the subcommittee shall notify the nominator and remove the nomination from consideration.

Number of awards presented annually

At most, the following awards shall be a single presentation annually: Von Hippel, David Turnbull Lectureship, Innovation in Materials Characterization, Materials Theory, Mid-Career Researcher, MRS Impact Award, MRS Woody White Service Award, Outstanding Early-Career Investigator, Postdoctoral, and MRS Nelson Buck Robinson Science and Technology Award For Renewable Energy.

MRS Medals shall normally be awarded to an individual for a cited achievement. However, a Medal may be awarded for a cited achievement attributable to two or three individuals. In that case, each recipient shall receive a personal medal trophy, registration, and travel, and the cash award shall be divided equally. Up to two Medal citations may be awarded, but the total number of citations granted during a given calendar year shall also not exceed two. Multiple individuals cited for the same achievement count as one citation.

The number of new Fellows admitted each year will be capped at up to a maximum of 0.2% of the current professional MRS membership on or after January 1 of the new selection year, although less than 0.2% may be selected in order to preserve the prestige of the award.

The number of Graduate Student Awards (Gold and Silver) is left to the discretion of the GSA Subcommittee and Judges. Special GSA awards, outside of the Gold and Silver, shall be a single award presented at the Spring and Fall Meetings, unless otherwise stipulated in the Awards Program Policy.

The Kavli Foundation Early Career Lectureship in Materials Science shall be presented at the Fall Meetings.

Chair/Member Appointments

The Chair of the Awards Committee shall be appointed by the Vice President of MRS. The Awards Committee Chair shall appoint chairs of subcommittees. The subcommittee chairs shall nominate new members to their respective subcommittees in consultation with the Awards Committee Chair, keeping in mind the values stated in the MRS Diversity Statement in order to reflect the MRS membership, as well as seeking the expertise and credentials required to diligently judge nominations. The Awards Committee Chair shall also identify a delegate or back-up, approved by the Vice President, to assist or serve as acting Chair in the event that the Chair cannot perform his/her duties in an effective and timely manner.

In order to generate new committee members to replace the old ones, the Awards Committee Chair should develop recommendations for chairing the committee during final year of their term and be given the list of current members and the expiration dates of their terms immediately upon being named. The new Awards Committee Chair should work with the outgoing chair, the present and incoming subcommittee chairs, and HQ Director to develop and recruit replacement committee members. Attention should be paid to all the standard measures of diversity, e.g., gender, technical, geographical, etc.

All members of the committee/subcommittees shall be members of the Society, unless approved by the Vice President, including the specific term of appointment. Over time, committee members should include a diversity of members as appropriate to achieve the mission of the committee.

Term of Service

The Awards Committee Chair and the subcommittee chairs shall generally serve three-year-terms, extendable to six years with mutual consent of the Chair and the Vice President, not including time previously served on the committee or any of its subcommittees, with exception of the Von Hippel Subcommittee Chair (former MRS Immediate Past-President), who serves a one-year term. Exceptions will be granted on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Committee. After six years on any particular subcommittee, at least a one year hiatus is required before re-appointment to the same subcommittee.

The committee chair, with the assistance of the HQ Director, shall assure that all persons appointed to the committee and its subcommittees are informed in writing as to the term of their appointment. The committee chair and the subcommittee chairs, with the assistance of the HQ Director, shall maintain rosters of committee/subcommittee members, normally with staggered three-year terms. Any changes to the rosters shall be forwarded to the committee's HQ Director as soon as possible.

Appointments to a subcommittee shall generally be for a single term of three years, with the strong expectation that the appointment will not be renewed. Under unusual circumstances, the committee chair may extend the appointment of a member for up to three additional years. After six years on any particular subcommittee, at least a one-year hiatus is required before re-appointment on the same subcommittee. An exception to these term limits is made for the GSA Subcommittee members, who do not have such a direct influence on the outcomes of the deliberations as do the members of other subcommittees. GSA Subcommittee members are appointed for a three-year term, and the Awards Committee Chair may routinely extend their appointment for up to three years. It is expected that under normal circumstances GSA Subcommittee members will serve a maximum of six consecutive years.

Meetings and Process

The committee and subcommittee chairs shall convene meetings or teleconferences as deemed necessary, at the request of two or more committee members, or as requested by the President. The chair shall give all committee members advance notice of meetings or calls. Decisions reached during the committee meetings shall be on the basis of a majority vote of a quorum, which consists of at least half of the members of the committee/subcommittee, including the chair or acting chair designated by the committee chair with the concurrence of the President.

The Awards Committee Chair shall prepare a brief written report for the Board of Directors upon request, but at least on an annual basis, usually prior to the Fall Meeting. This report shall outline the principal achievements, directions, and recommendations of the committee. This report and other notes describing the activities of the committee shall be maintained at MRS Headquarters by the committee chair via the HQ Director and made available to the succeeding committee chair at the end of the term.

Committee Responsibilities

- Each subcommittee chair will be responsible for performing a preliminary review of each nomination citation to ensure that the citation is consistent with the award for which the candidate is being nominated. Action will be taken to correct the citation through discussion with the nominator or the candidate will be declared ineligible for the award and removed from further consideration.
- In addition to evaluating nominations each subcommittee chair, in consultation with the Awards Committee Chair, is responsible for reviewing and updating the Awards announcement, advising HQ on improvements to the process of advertising awards, and suggesting new committee members.
- Determine award nominations deadlines and processing schedule, in consultation with the Board's Operational and Strategic Oversight Committee, Headquarters, and the Meeting Chairs of meetings at which awards are presented.
- Determine and maintain award recipient selection processes.

- Update Awards Program Policy, as required.
- Review all new award proposals and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors.
- Make recommendations to the Board regarding changes to existing awards.
- Awards Committee members shall not make nominations or write letters of support for the award of their subcommittee.
- Accomplish annual charges from the Board of Directors

Deliverables: N/A; Review every three years or as needed

Who: Secretary/Awards Committee Chair

When: At least 8 weeks before the Board meeting at which amendments should be considered.

To: President

Policy first adopted: May 23, 1973 – Constitution/Bylaw

Last modified: April 2018; January 2020; April 2020; April 2021; August 2022; April 2023

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Enacting Legislation: B:2003:42; B:2003:56;B:2005:7;B:2006:34;B:2007:44; B:2012:64; B:2014:42; B:2018:11; B:2019:38; B:2020:09; B:2021:08 (S21 Consent Agenda); B:2022:12 (Consent Agenda); B2023:08 (S23 Consent Agenda)

Policy revised by: Awards Cte

Party responsible for this policy: Awards Committee Chair