

Policies and Guide to Establishing an ACM Award

Definitions

1. ACM **awards** fit into one of the following categories:
 - o **Merit** (contribution, achievement, or innovation): for single or cumulative technical contributions to a discipline.
 - o **Service**: for service to the award's sponsor and/or to a community.
 - o **Paper**: for an outstanding paper, possibly with author restrictions (e.g., students or teams), given at a technical meeting or suite of meetings or published in a journal or other form, possibly over some period of time. For information on the "Publications Board Guidelines for Establishing a Best Paper Award for ACM Periodicals" see: <http://www.acm.org/publications/guidelines-best-paper-award>.
2. A **prize (contest or competition)** is a form of award which allows self-nomination and for which the selection criteria imply a contest of some form with selection criteria that may go beyond merit.
3. A **grant** is a form of award which provides for the reimbursement of expenses to conduct research, attend technical meetings, etc. and for which the selection criteria may include factors other than merit or service (e.g., financial need or gender).
4. An award is **jointly sponsored** if it involves a sponsor organization other than ACM or its sub-units.
5. An award is **named** if its title includes the name of a real person, living or deceased.
6. An award is **endowed** if there is a designated fund balance whose earnings are used to fund the ongoing expenses of the award (e.g., honorarium and administrative costs).
7. The **ACM Awards Committee** consists of the ACM President and CEO/Executive Director (ex-officio positions), the ACM Awards Chair, the chairs of the individual ACM award selection committees, and a liaison appointed by the ACM SIG Chairs.

Process for Proposing a New Award

1. Each proposal for a new ACM award must have a sponsoring ACM unit (typically SIGs or ACM Council for Association-wide awards). An ad hoc group from within ACM may initiate the proposal. Proposals should be sent to acm-awards@acm.org .
2. This section describes the general process for proposing an award. Most categories of award impose additional requirements; see the pertinent sections later in this document for details.
3. Proposals are typically 2-4 pages in length, and must include the following elements:
 - o Proposed name of the award
 - o Sponsoring ACM unit(s)
 - o Rationale explaining the intent of the award and why it is appropriate for ACM
 - If the intent has potential overlap with other ACM awards, address why the new award is desirable
 - o Description of the award process:
 - How nominations will be solicited
 - Eligibility criteria; the proposers should be sensitive to language that could be interpreted as overly rigid (e.g., we recommend avoiding physical age restrictions and referring to time-in-career or time-since-last-degree instead)
 - Type of nomination and endorsements to be requested
 - Suggested size and makeup of committee (must be a dedicated award committee, not a governing committee from the sponsoring subunit)
 - How committee members will be selected and how the committee will be overseen (e.g., an Association-wide award normally has a selection committees overseen by the ACM Awards Committee, a SIG award's selection committees is normally overseen by the SGB, and paper awards are normally selected by the applicable conference program committee)
 - Evaluation criteria to be used in selecting award winners

- Timing and presentation
 - Indicate how often the award will be given (typical frequency is annual, but biennial is also acceptable)
 - Where and by whom the award will be presented
 - If an award lecture is to be included, what the venue will be or how the selection of a venue will be made
 - Form of the award
 - What the awardee will receive (e.g., framed certificate, plaque, gift) and how the associated cost will be covered
 - If the award includes a cash prize, include a plan for securing the award's financial viability (this is normally done through an endowment; see the section on Endowing an Award)
 - If the award includes travel reimbursement or a special ceremony, describe how the endowment and/or sponsoring unit will budget for the expense
4. All ACM awards must be approved by the ACM Awards Committee.
 5. ACM-wide awards, named awards, and jointly sponsored awards must also be approved by ACM Council.

Service Awards

The ACM Recognition of Service certificate program is available to all ACM subunits for their use in recognizing contributions to professional service in their areas (e.g., conference leadership, subunit leadership, or newsletter editorship).

1. ACM subunits are encouraged to develop and to maintain award programs to recognize significant and long-term contributions to professional volunteerism within the area of their subunits.
2. The ACM Awards Committee will give pro forma approval to subunit service awards, provided they:
 - have a written nomination and selection process
 - are given at regular intervals to moderate numbers of volunteers
 - limit honoraria to no more than \$1,000
3. In addition to their own service awards, subunits are encouraged to nominate candidates to the Association-wide service awards (e.g., Outstanding Contribution to ACM and Distinguished Service).

Paper Awards

For general information on the "Publications Board Guidelines for Establishing a Best Paper Award for ACM Periodicals" see: <http://www.acm.org/publications/guidelines-best-paper-award>.

1. ACM subunits that publish technical papers (e.g., SIG conferences) are encouraged to develop and maintain "best paper" awards.
2. The ACM Awards Committee will give pro forma approval to best paper awards, provided they:
 - have a written selection process,
 - are administered by the appropriate technical committee (typically the conference's program committee), and
 - include honoraria not exceeding US\$1,000.
3. In addition to their subunit paper awards, subunits are encouraged to submit their best technical papers for publications in other Association venues, where appropriate.

Jointly Sponsored Awards

ACM awards may be jointly sponsored with appropriate non-ACM organizations. In this case, the proposal must also specify how fiscal and other responsibilities will be shared by the sponsors.

1. The nomination and selection process, as well as the administrative terms, of jointly sponsored awards must carefully delineate the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of each sponsor.
2. In particular, arrangements for financing, committee appointments, venue of presentation, and staff responsibility must be specified.
3. Joint sponsorship with for-profit organizations requires additional justification for approval.
4. All jointly sponsored awards must be approved by the ACM Council.

Endowed Awards

A proposal for a new endowed award must include a plan to fully endow the award within five years of the award's establishment.

1. To be fully endowed, an award's fund balance normally should be at least 15 times, and preferably 20 times, the annual ongoing expense of the award.
2. The costs of travel reimbursement, memorabilia, and/or administration normally should be included in the endowment calculation.
3. There should be no expectation that individual donors will become members of the award's selection committee.
4. Donors should be advised that their contributions will be applied toward the designated award on a "best efforts" basis. If an award is under-endowed after it has been given five times, the ACM Awards Committee may remove the "endowed" designation from the award and/or discontinue the award:
 - o Should an award become under-endowed, the originally sponsoring ACM subunit is responsible for developing and initiating a plan to fully endow the award.
 - o If the award continues to be under-endowed, contributions to an endowment may be applied to the ongoing expenses of the award.
 - o When an award is discontinued, the endowment may be redirected to another award's endowment. Donors should not expect that their contributions will be returned if the award is under-endowed and/or discontinued
5. Subunit endowment contributions may include explicit instructions for disposition of the contribution upon under-endowment and/or discontinuation of the award (e.g., return of the remaining fund balance to the subunit or redirection of the balance to another award's endowment). These instructions will be honored in good faith where possible.

Named Awards

ACM named awards/prizes/grants convey special distinction and require additional justification for approval. Both the merit of the award in the ACM context and the appropriateness of the proposed name will be scrutinized carefully.

1. It is desirable that the person for whom the award is named be widely recognized in the area in which the award is given. In this context, Association-wide awards imply a wider scope of recognition than sub-unit awards. The burden of persuasion for names of less-recognized persons will be on the nominators.

2. The proposal for a named award should include the elements described earlier (see Proposing a New Award), with the following additional requirements:
 - The rationale should be a 500 word statement from the nominator describing the purpose and value of the award and the appropriateness of the name
 - Letters must be provided from at least 5 professional ACM members endorsing the award and commenting on its value to ACM and the appropriateness of the name
 - A statement of permission for the use of the name from the person named (if living) or the person's estate must be included
3. Named awards normally are endowed, but the merit of the award must stand independently of the proposed funding.
4. The name should pose no adverse legal or ethical problems.
5. Persons who are active as volunteers or staff may not be considered as names for awards while they are still active.
6. To provide an opportunity for full discussion of each proposal for a named award, the decision is normally restricted to face-to-face meetings of the ACM Award Committee, and subsequently the ACM Council. This can add significantly to the timeline for approval. Discussions and voting will take place in closed sessions.