

# **American Meteorological Society Scientific and Technological Activities Commission**

## **Terms of Reference for Reviewing Nominations**

### **The Charles L. Mitchell Award**

This Terms of Reference (TOR) describes the process to be used by the American Meteorological Society (AMS) Scientific and Technological Activities Commission (STAC) to review nominations for the Award for The Charles L. Mitchell Award. This award is given to individuals who, through performance of exceptional forecast service, have distinguished themselves and brought credit to their profession. The Society presents the awards in recognition of the great importance of weather forecasting to the public safety and well-being, and the valuable professional services provided by persons who are engaged in forecasting activities. The winner is recognized for long-term service by individuals engaged in weather forecasting activities. The STAC Commissioner is responsible for overseeing the award process and forming the selection committee. The selection committee is composed of a chair and as many as ten members of the Weather Analysis and Forecasting (WAF) Committee. Additionally, the WAF Committee Chair may augment the selection committee with as many as three additional members from other STAC committees or AMS commissions when it is deemed to be beneficial for the proper judging of the nominations.<sup>1</sup>

In early March, the STAC Commissioner will solicit selection names from the WAF Committee. The individuals selected should be at least mid-career AMS members with research and/or operational forecasting experience that represent all three AMS sectors (academia, private, and government). These names will be provided to the AMS Office of the Director of Executive Programs<sup>2</sup> by mid-March to allow selection committee members access to the nomination website by April 1. Selection committee members will be asked to review hold over nomination packages from previous years and new nominations as they become available leading up to the deadline of May 1.

By May 1, the WAF Committee Chair, serving as chair of the selection committee, will provide members of the selection committee a schedule for completing the reviews the nomination packages. The WAF Committee Chair will also provide the date that the nomination recommendations are due to the STAC Commissioner for review (normally on or about May 20). The STAC Commissioner will then forward the recommendations to the Awards Oversight Committee (AOC), normally on or about June 1. In order to ensure an objective award selection process, selection committee members must review the AMS conflict of interest policy (shown below). Any members who feel they have a relationship with one or more of the nominees must recuse themselves from voting.

Each member of the selection committee shall review the nomination packages ( $#n$ ), rank them on a scale of 1 to  $n$  with 1 being the best, and provide them to the chair of the committee with a

---

<sup>1</sup> *Policy, Guidelines, and Procedures for Society and Commission Awards (AMS 2000).*

<sup>2</sup> Ms. Melissa Weston is the current contact; [mweston@ametsoc.org](mailto:mweston@ametsoc.org)

brief statement or reason for their top two ranking nominations. In the case of only one nomination, selection committee members will indicate their support or non-support for the nomination. Selection committee members can also recommend that any nomination package is inappropriate for this award or recommend the nomination be transferred to another award.

The chair will compile the rankings for scoring purposes and determine if there is a significant separation in scores for the top nominee. The chair will share with the selection committee the compiled scores and the statements of support for the top two or three nominees and either recommend an awardee (based on the separation of the scores), OR propose a second round of scoring for just the top two or three nominees. The chair will share the scores with the selection committee and the supporting statements for the top two or three nominees *without* attribution. This process will be conducted by e-mail but at any time the chair or any member of the selection committee can request a conference call to discuss the nominees, the rankings, and/or the proposed award selection.

When agreement on the selection is reached, the chair will complete the award report (see below) and forward through the STAC Commissioner to the AOC. For item 5 of the report, the chair will indicate that the STAC TOR for the The Charles L. Mitchell Award was followed.

**AMS CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY:** It is recognized that award committee members will often have had relationships of one form or another with at least some of those nominated for awards over the course of their career. It is important for the entire committee to be aware of the nature of those relationships so that it can address any real or perceived conflicts of interest or biases with respect to committee members and award nominees. On the first conference call or meeting at which the award committee reviews nominations, each member of the committee will describe for fellow committee members their current or past relationship to any award nominee. This should include any financial, personal, or professional relationship that might be perceived as representing a conflict of interest or bias on the part of the committee member. The committee as a whole will decide if any of these relationships are strong enough to warrant the committee member recusing him or herself from discussions on a particular nominee. In most cases, the open discussion of relationships will allow the entire committee to move forward with the review and discussion of nominations without anyone needing to recuse themselves.

#### **POLICY REGARDING INVOLVEMENT IN THE NOMINATION PROCESS**

- o Committee members will not be involved in the nomination process (refer to <http://www.ametsoc.org/awards/awardsnominationprocedure.html>), BUT
- o Committee members can urge colleagues to make nominations for specific prizes (but not specific individuals)
- o Committee Chairs can formally notify the Nominations Committee about the need for nominations for a given prize.

- o In the past, specific names have been forwarded to the Awards Nomination Committee to see if they could secure nominations. Though this seems inconsistent with the stated policy if the committee is also judging that nomination, the Nominating Committee can filter these.
- o Committee members can make nominations for awards they are not involved in. Thus, a member of the Atmospheric Research Awards Committee could nominate for the Simpson Award, but the Chair of that committee could not.

## Commissioner Report to the Awards Oversight Committee

To:  
From:  
CC: Melissa Weston  
Date:  
Award: (title of award)

---

1. Number of nominations for this award: \_\_\_\_\_
2. There was a clear justification for this award: \_\_\_\_\_ yes, \_\_\_\_\_no  
  
If no, provide any comments the committee feels are warranted (optional):
3. Review committee's recommendation (name of individual):
4. Proposed award citation (25 words or less):
5. How did the committee select the nominees (by e-mail, by conference call - brief description):
6. Did the committee have any difficulties, concerns about the process?  
Recommendations for improvement
7. Names of members of the review team (name and Board/Committee affiliation):
8. Did any of the review team members have conflicts of interest with the nominees?
9. Should any of the nomination packages be move to another award for consideration next year? (Provide the name of the individual and the appropriate award.)