



## **AIAA HONORS AND AWARDS PROGRAM**

**Updated: May 2026**

The AIAA Honors and Awards Program honors significant achievements in numerous areas of aerospace. These include awards recognizing technical and management/leadership excellence, notable publications and papers, standards and public policy development, international cooperation, and volunteer service at local, national and international levels. The most significant contributions are recognized through Premier Awards and Lectureships, as well as elevation of membership grades to Associate Fellow, Fellow, Honorary Fellow or Emeritus.

### **Acronyms:**

AIAA = American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics

HAC = Honors and Awards Committee

IOD = Integration and Outreach Division

TAD = Technical Activities Division

### **Awards Policies, Procedures and Requirements**

This document outlines the policies, procedures and requirements for all AIAA (National) Awards, as approved by AIAA Honors and Awards Committee. Committees that sponsor awards must have processes in place that meet and follow these requirements. It is required that the sponsoring committee archive their award processes and charter as well as on file at the AIAA Headquarters by submitting to the AIAA Honors and Awards Committee and AIAA Awards Staff. For those awards not part of the AIAA National Awards Program, many of these policies do not apply, however, they should be followed by awards being piloted for future consideration as national awards.

## **1. Administration**

a. The administration of the awards resides at AIAA Headquarters, under the auspices of HAC.

## **2. Award Responsibility**

a. Responsibility for awards resides with one or more specific AIAA committees as defined in the award description. Committees are charged with actively maintaining the award in terms of nominations, currency of award scope, award process, award selection process, etc. as documented in their archived processes and award charter.

b. Only the Premier Awards and Lectures are managed directly by HAC.

c. Any significant revisions or changes are subject to approval by their Group Director, AIAA TAD or IOD Chief and with final approval by HAC. This includes but is not limited to changing the name of the award, frequency of the award, award presentation venue, award scope, nomination requirements, selection process.

1. Minor changes to the award charter, such as below, do not require HAC approval, though it is recommended to seek Director's approval and then send an updated charter to AIAA:

- Candidate eligibility (AIAA member or non-member)
- Description/roles of the awards subcommittee
- Evaluation criteria
- Cash prize

d. All award charters must reside with the committee and on file with HAC at AIAA Headquarters. For an award to be bestowed, award charters must be on file with HAC at AIAA Headquarters. Outdated charters or award charters not on file may result in no award selections.

e. See Appendix A Changes to Existing Awards and Appendix B How to Establish a New Award or Lecture for detailed summaries on changing or establishing awards or lectures.

## **3. Nominator and Reference Eligibility**

a. Any AIAA member in good standing may nominate candidates for any of the awards.

b. For AIAA Publications Awards and certain Premier and Partnered Awards, AIAA membership is not a requirement for a nominator.

c. Current Chief, Director or Deputy Director is not eligible to serve as a candidate nominator, for awards that are under the purview of the TAD/IOD Group. Chiefs and Directors may not serve as references for awards under their purview. Deputy Directors may serve as a reference for candidates nominated for awards that are under the purview of the TAD/IOD Group of which they are a Deputy.

#### 4. Nominee Eligibility

a. AIAA is committed to providing engagement opportunities and access to products and services in a manner that is free from discrimination based on any personal factor unrelated to qualifications or performance. Such personal factors include, without limitation, race or color, citizenship, national origin or ethnicity, ancestry, religion or creed, political affiliation or belief, age, sex or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

b. AIAA reserves the right to review candidates and nominations for possible AIAA code of ethics violations and non-compliance.

i. Any AIAA Awards and Member Upgrade candidates found to have violated any of the AIAA Code of Ethics or AIAA Publications Code of Ethics are not eligible for review nor selection as AIAA Associate Fellow, Fellow or Honorary Fellow, AIAA Premier Awards, National Technical/Management/Education/Service Awards or National Lectures.

ii. Those under review and later found not in any such violation may be resubmitted back into the review queue.

c. Self-nominations are not permitted.

d. AIAA wishes to recognize its members and the most renowned individuals worldwide through the honors and awards program. AIAA membership is not required to be nominated for an award, except for the AIAA Distinguished Service Award, AIAA Engineer of the Year Award, and AIAA Sustained Service Award. Contributions to the aerospace community are important criteria in the selection of award recipients, and AIAA service or participation may be a discriminator between otherwise equal candidates.

1. Based on the awards charter, nominees can either be an individual or a team.

a. Nominations involving a team of individuals may be submitted if permitted by the scope of the award. In this case, a summary of the team's accomplishments and/or achievements that supports and justifies the nomination should be considered as the basis of award, and a roster of team members/contact information should be submitted in lieu of the resume. Public contributions may be included if appropriate. The team leader must be identified on the nomination form as the point of contact.

e. With the exception of Premier Awards and Lectureships, nominees cannot receive more than one AIAA National or AIAA Partner award for the same accomplishment or body of work. Any nominations viewed as a duplicate will be disqualified. This review and decision will be conducted by the Group Director, TAD or IOD Chief and the HAC Chair.

1. Careful consideration should be given when nominating to ensure that the relevant accomplishments of the nominee are presented clearly and precisely, so that overlap between prior and future awards does not exist.
2. Some AIAA awards recognize specific and recent accomplishments, while others recognize lifetime achievement. Nominators should be careful to distinguish new nominations from those of previous AIAA Award winners in either of these two categories.
3. Nominees for AIAA Premier Awards and Lectureships may be previous AIAA Award winners. The topic of the lecture may cover similar or adjacent work, but the recognition topic and citation should not be identical to that of the previous AIAA Award winners.

f. Nominating the same person for multiple AIAA awards during the same nomination cycle (year) is prohibited. This guideline applies to all National, Premier and Lecture awards, including awards where AIAA is a partner. Nominations in the same year are permitted for an award and recognition as Associate Fellow, Fellow or Honorary Fellow.

g. It is the nominator's responsibility to verify the nominee's eligibility. The online award system will also validate certain membership criteria, if needed or required.

h. The nominee is not eligible for one or more of the following reasons:

1. An active or rostered member of the AIAA committee (s) responsible for that award. A rostered/active member of a committee is a Full, Associate, International, or Alumni/Emeritus Member who is listed on the committee roster on file at AIAA Headquarters. All committee member terms expire on April 30. They are eligible for all member advancements.
  - a. Current members of the AIAA Honors and Awards Committee are not eligible for Premier Awards or Premier Lectures. They are eligible for all other awards and member advancements.
2. Current members (elected) of the AIAA Board of Trustees and the AIAA Council of Directors are not eligible to be nominated for any award until their term of service ends. They are eligible for all member advancements.
3. Current Chief, Director or Deputy Director is not eligible to be nominated, or serve as a candidate nominator, for awards that are under the purview of the TAD/IOD Group. Chiefs and Directors may not serve as references for awards under their purview.

Deputy Directors may serve as a reference for candidates nominated for awards that are under the purview of the TAD/IOD Group of which they are a Deputy. Chiefs, Directors and Deputy Directors are eligible for all member advancements.

- 4) AIAA paid staff members are not eligible for AIAA awards or elevation of their member status for the tenure of their employment with the Institute. Upon separation from AIAA they are immediately eligible to be nominated for awards or elevation of their member status.
  - a. Paid Consultants to AIAA are eligible to be candidates for awards and for any member advancement.

i. All nominees must be living at the time of the nomination deadline. Posthumous awards will only be made if the awardee passes after AIAA Headquarters formally notified the person of their selection for the award but prior to presentation of the award. If a nominee passes during any carryover period, the nomination will be withdrawn, and AIAA will notify the nominator. If a nominee passes while the selection process is ongoing, the nomination will be withdrawn and will not be considered. This policy applies to all awards and member advancements.

## **5. Call for Nominations**

- a. A Call for Nominations will announce AIAA awards for which nominations are being solicited and will be posted in *Aerospace America*, AIAA web site, social media, and other member outreach, as appropriate.
- b. Committees are strongly encouraged to actively solicit nominations for their awards. The size of an award nomination pool is one measure of the health of the award.

## **6. Award Description**

- a. A description of each award, including scope, nomination deadline date (deadline date), frequency (annual, biennial, etc.), presentation venue and past recipients, is maintained at [www.aiaa.org](http://www.aiaa.org).

## **7. Nomination Deadlines**

- a. There are three primary award nomination deadline cycles:
  - For the Award Presentations between September through December:
    - Accepting new nominations: November 10
    - Nominations due January 15
    - References' endorsements due February 1

- For the Award Presentations between January through March, Plus AIAA Premier Awards
  - Accepting new nominations: February 10
  - Nominations due June 1
  - References' endorsements due July 1
- For the Award Presentations April through August:
  - Accepting new nominations: July 10
  - Nominations due October 1
  - References' endorsements due Nov 1

By exception, those awards with alternate presentation dates will have set nomination deadline negotiated between the sponsoring committee, TAD/IOD and HAC.

b. All awards in the AIAA Honors and Awards Program are assigned to an appropriate cycle that allows the necessary time for the selection process, recipient notification and award presentation. Any changes to the nomination deadlines must be approved by their Director, TAD/IOD and at HAC for final approval.

c. A complete nomination package must be submitted into the online award system on or prior to the deadline. Nomination packages will be accepted on a daily basis, within the “open submission/acceptance period,” and considered for that appropriate award year. Extensions to the nomination deadline will not be permitted.

## **8. Nomination and Reference Submissions**

a. All nominations and references must be submitted to the online awards system, by the deadline. Extensions to the nomination deadline will not be permitted.

b. Reference Submission requirements:

- For all Awards nominations, at least three but no more than five references must be submitted to support the nomination. At least three of those submitted must be from AIAA members in good standing.
- For Premier Lecture nominations, two endorsement letters are required. They may be submitted by either AIAA members or non-members. Three additional references are optional.
- For Publication Award nominations, references are to be listed on the nomination, but references are not required to submit their endorsement.

c. It is the nominator's responsibility to contact potential references prior to submitting the nomination to AIAA. The nominator may not serve as a reference.

## **9. Submission of Nominations to the Selection Committee**

a. There must be at least three valid nomination packages on file at AIAA Headquarters on or prior to the nomination deadline to be considered for presentation that award year. Failure to have three validated nomination packages on file by the submission deadline will result in the award not being presented for that award cycle. Exceptions to the minimum will not be granted. It is therefore incumbent on the sponsoring committee(s) to ensure an adequate nomination pool. Committees are strongly encouraged to solicit at least one or two new nominations a year to ensure an adequate pool and guard against potential withdrawals of nominations (either by the nominee or nominator) or via the death of a nominee during the award's carryover period.

1. If the award is not to be considered for presentation due to a lack of adequate number of nominations, AIAA shall notify the committee and the responsible Director. Exceptions to the minimum will not be granted.

b. After the nomination deadline, the award subcommittee chair will log into the online award system to download valid nominations and distribute among their awards subcommittee and initiate the evaluation process of their charter.

c. Incomplete nomination packages shall not be reviewed by the selection committee.

## **10. Evaluation and Selection Process**

a. Awards Subcommittee

1. The evaluation of the award must be performed by a selection subcommittee of a minimum of five members representing an appropriate cross section of the community.
2. Neither the nominator, nominee, nor any reference may be involved in evaluation of the nominees or selection of the award recipient. Nominators and references who are current committee members will be eligible to vote in the final committee vote to confirm the recipient.
3. For awards in which multiple committees are responsible, the selection committee must include a plan to share responsibility from cycle to cycle.

4. All the committees responsible for the award must conduct a separate vote (either at a committee meeting or via email) to accept the award recipient as recommended by the selection committee. A majority of affirmative votes from those voting from each committee must confirm the recommendation.

b. Evaluation Criteria

1. The selection subcommittee shall select an appropriate recipient using the established and archived evaluation criteria specified for the award.
2. The evaluation criteria and/or quantitative grading scale for each award should be documented and posted on the responsible committee website and formally registered in the awards charter, where it is to reside with on the committee website and at AIAA Headquarters.
3. The grading criteria for awards may include as many factors as deemed appropriate for the award, provided they include elements that address the following general subject areas at a minimum:
  - For technical excellence awards, the scientific merit and/or the magnitude/significance of innovation represented by the discovery or design
  - Relevance of the contribution to the scope of the award
  - Voluntary service, and especially service on behalf of AIAA
4. There must be a minimum quantitative score associated with the award criteria to establish a merit-worthy threshold to ensure and maintain award technical and “audit trail” integrity. It is left to the committee to determine the weightings for each of the grading criteria used in the evaluation.
5. If the minimum score is not obtained by any nominee, then the award should NOT be awarded during that particular cycle, nor should any nominations that did not achieve the minimum score be considered in future selection cycles, unless a new or updated nomination is submitted for the candidate. The AIAA Awards Manager and HAC should be notified of any nominations that have been disqualified for not achieving the minimum score.

c. Approval and Notification Process

1. Once the minimum of three nominations has been validated, AIAA shall provide access to the online system for the Awards Subcommittee Chair to download the nominations and process evaluations per their archived charter.

2. The Awards Subcommittee Chair shall distribute the nominations, evaluation criteria, awards charter, and timeline for the review process to the awards subcommittee.
3. The awards subcommittee shall get together to review and discuss the nominations and select the winner.
4. **NOTE:** *One winner per award (except where teams are specified), no ties.*
5. The Awards Subcommittee Chair shall request approval for their recommendation from the Committee Chair. The Awards Subcommittee Chair shall also communicate their recommendation to the entire Committee when requesting approval from the Committee chair.
6. Once the Committee Chair has approved the recommendation, either the Committee Chair or the Awards Subcommittee Chair shall send an email to the Group Director (with a copy to AIAA). This email shall include the following:
  - a. Winning nomination package
  - b. Justification for the selection of the winner (can include highlights from the awards subcommittee discussions)
  - c. Listing of the awards subcommittee team members
  - d. Final voting results from the awards subcommittee members
  - e. Awards Charter
7. The Group Director shall review the documents and provide any feedback/comments, and either approval or disapproval of the recommendation.
8. Upon approval by the Group Director, the Committee Chair shall send a congratulatory email to the winner, along with copies of the email to the Group Director, Chief, AIAA Awards Staff, Nominator, and the entire Committee. AIAA will provide a template for this award letter.
9. AIAA Awards Staff shall then follow up from that email with another congratulatory email, and a request for items needed to prepare for the official awards ceremony.

d. Allowing for a non-recipient demonstrates the intended significance and persistent quality of the award such that it is not given out to just the best of the non-qualified nominees. The committee and/or the award's health shall not be penalized if no nominees are judged to be deserving. However, for the next award cycle, the committee is required to solicit new nominations or ask AIAA to contact nominator/s of existing nominations to request enhancement to the package. If an existing nomination package is not enhanced, the nomination cannot be considered in the next award cycle.

e. Committees must keep a history of the results of their evaluation and selections from year to year. This “corporate knowledge” must be available to future members involved in the process to ensure consistency from year to year, and must be archived electronically (nominations, grading criteria, evaluations, and recommendations) within the committee as well as AIAA Headquarters.

f. If the AIAA Honors and Awards Committee is made aware of a violation of AIAA policy or any policy by the committee pertaining to awards nominations, evaluations, or selection, that award will not be awarded.

### **11. Nomination Carry-Over and Expiration**

a. Should a nominee not be selected in the initial year of submission, any nomination that meets the minimum threshold score will be carried over and considered active for another two calendar years from the date of initial consideration, or for two award cycles, whichever is greater. Thus, a nomination will be considered a total of three times for annual awards, and twice for other than annual awards (i.e., biennial); the award need not be made to count as an award cycle.

b. If the nominee is not selected during this period and has gone through its maximum number of reviews, the nomination will be withdrawn. In order for that candidate to be considered again, a new nomination package must be submitted into the online award system.

c. In all cases, the nominator will be notified of their candidate’s nomination status.

### **12. Award Announcement**

a. Recognition of awardees after the fact will appear in the appropriate issue of *Aerospace America*, posted on the AIAA web site, or other member outreach.

### **13. Award Presentation**

a. The intent of the Honors and Awards Program is to recognize deserving individuals by the AIAA community as a whole and before their peers.

b. Presentation of an award will occur during an appropriate Forum or event pre-defined in the description of the award or recommended by the Honors and Awards Committee. Because of the number of awards in the AIAA Honors and Awards Program, it is not possible to re-schedule or postpone the presentation of an award.

c. It is the responsibility of AIAA Headquarters to ensure that suitable provisions are made for the dignified presentation of the award.

#### **14. Waivers**

a. A committee may seek a waiver of any policy above upon the written request by the committee with explicit reasoning to their Group Director. Upon that approval, the TAD or IOD Chief as well as the HAC Chair must approve, prior to the nomination deadline. If the waiver is requested after the award nomination deadline, the nomination will then be included in the next award cycle. This approval statement must be included in the nomination.

#### **15. Review of Awards**

- a. HAC regularly monitors the level of activity for all awards.
- A sustainable, healthy award is defined as one that consistently meets the above criteria. Ideally, at least three nominations must be on file and considered each award year for any award, thereby enabling deserving individuals to be recognized.
  - An award will be suspended if it fails to generate the sufficient minimum number of nominations over three consecutive award cycles.
  - An award may be suspended if the responsible committee becomes inactive or is eliminated. The award can continue as the responsibility of another relevant committee, assuming a valid evaluation and selection process is maintained.
  - The process of reinstating a suspended award or approving a significant change in the award will be the same as the process for requesting a new award. All the same guidelines and criteria must be met, including approval by the Group Director, TAD or IOD Chief, and subsequently by HAC, as a final approval.

## **Appendix A**

### **Changes to Existing Awards**

Any significant revisions or changes are subject to approval by their Group Director, AIAA TAD or IOD Chief and with final approval by HAC. This includes but not limited to

- Changing the name of the award
- Frequency of the award
- Award presentation venue
- Award scope
- Nomination requirements
- Selection process

Minor changes do not require HAC approval, though it is recommended to seek Director's approval and then send an updated charter to AIAA to the award charter, Such change include:

- Candidate eligibility (AIAA member or non-member)
- Description/roles of the awards subcommittee
- Evaluation criteria
- Cash prize

All award charters must reside with the committee and on file at AIAA Headquarters. For an award to be bestowed, award charters must be on file at AIAA Headquarters. Outdated charters or award charters not on file will result in no award selections.

## **Appendix B**

### **How To Establish A New Award or Lecture**

When warranted by significant representation of a credible specialty in the AIAA membership and other timely circumstances, a new award may be proposed by the appropriate committee.

The proposed new award or lecture must meet certain criteria and must be submitted as appropriate for successive approval to the Group Director, TAD or IOD, and finally to HAC for final approval.

The Committee should complete the charter. (Contact AIAA for New Award/Lecture Form)

Prior to submitting this charter for approval, the committee must organize and present this award on the committee level (AIAA National will not be involved).

This award must have at least 3 successful consecutive award cycles to bring forth to the Group Director for review and approval. This “successful” award cycle includes, but not limited to, at least 3 complete nominations per award cycle, selecting a recipient based on the defined criteria, and awards subcommittee involvement.

The committee will be responsible for promotion, collecting and validating nominations, selection, announcements and presentations. All submissions and evaluations are to follow the AIAA Honors and Awards Policies and Requirements.

If the Group Director is satisfied with the success of this award, s/he will present it to the Chief. The TAD/IOD Liaison to the Honors and Award Committee will formally present this to HAC for final review of the information and approval.

**Please include the following information, along with the Charter for consideration.**

- When was this award first announced?
- When was the awardee first recognized?
- How many years has this award been offered?
- How many nominations have the committee received each award cycle
- Listing of all past recipients, organizations and their citations

