

Selection Committee Best Practices

The integrity and quality of all awardee selections should reflect the premier status of the ACS national awards for recognizing excellence in contributions to the chemical sciences and society.

1. **Apply consistent criteria:** Nomination materials are to be evaluated using consistent criteria.
2. **Agree upon the selection criteria:** Prior to discussing the candidates, the committee members should identify, discuss, and agree upon the selection criteria that will be used in the evaluation process. A rubric template is available for your committee's use with recommended criteria and the option for your committee to add criteria. Your committee determines the weighting factor for the criteria used. Committee members should discuss and identify the specific major contributions they will use to evaluate the nominees before individual nominations are considered. Once agreed upon, the selection criteria should be forwarded to the National Awards Office at awards@acs.org.
3. **Discuss the role personal awareness of the individual might play in the discussion of nominees:** Discussions of individual nominees often raise the issue of whether the ranking of candidates for an award should reflect the quality of the nominations that were submitted or include familiarity with the nominee among one or more members of the selection committee. This issue might best be discussed before the nomination documents are considered.
4. **Carefully consider each nominee's materials:** Prior to the selection committee conference call, each committee member has an obligation to consider each nominee in the pool. The committee itself should set aside sufficient time during the conference call to discuss each nominee in the pool. Because nominees come from a variety of employment sectors, the unique characteristics and opportunities these sectors have for displaying achievements should be discussed.
5. **Discuss implicit association and the potential for bias issues:** In order to minimize any potential of bias in evaluation, the chair of the selection committee should engage the committee in a discussion about implicit associations, which are attitudes or biases an individual brings toward particular words or ideas. Studies¹⁻⁵ have shown that implicit associations and/or non-conscious hypotheses/stereotypes — often about competence — include words and processes that unintentionally discourage diversity in nomination and selection processes.
6. **Disclose any conflicts of interest:** Any perceived or real conflicts of interest should be reported and discussed with the selection committee chair. This includes, but is not limited to: whether a selection committee member is a relative, business partner, scientific collaborator, co-author, former student, or former advisor of the nominee. Additionally, if a selection committee member is currently employed by the same employer or institution of one of the nominees, the committee chair should be made aware of the situation. The committee chair will inform committee members of these relationships.

References

1. Greenwald, A. G.; Nosek, B. A.; Banaji, M. R. Understanding and Using the Implicit Association Test: I. An improved scoring algorithm. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 2003, 85, 197–216. [not open access, fee charged]
2. Moss-Racusin, C. A.; Dovidio, J. F.; Brescoll, V. L.; Graham, M. J.; Handelsman, J. Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 2012, 109 (41), 16,474–16,479. [not open access, fee charged]

3. Project Implicit, <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>.
4. Establishing a Fair Process for Selecting ACS Award Winners, <http://www.acs.org/content/dam/acsorg/funding/awards/national/establishing-a-fair-process.pdf>
5. Workshop on Building Strong Academic Chemistry Departments Through Gender Equity, <http://www.acs.org/content/dam/acsorg/funding/awards/national/gender-equity-report-cover.pdf>