

SSR Awards Committee: Standard Operating Procedures

SSR Bylaws, Article XI: section 4 (d): An Awards Committee composed of eleven or more Regular Members of the Society shall encourage nominations of worthy persons for Society Awards, annually select a recipient for each award, and recognize the recipient at an appropriate event during the annual meeting of the Society. Any active Member may make nominations for the awards according to the guidelines published annually. The awards are made solely to recognize outstanding contributions to the reproductive sciences and bear no obligation to the recipient or to the donor. The Awards Committee shall also be responsible for selecting and recognizing recipients of the Trainee Research Awards and Trainee Travel Awards that are presented at the annual meeting.

Duties of the Awards Committee

The awards committee is responsible for both the SSR Major Awards **and** the SSR Trainee Research and Merit Travel Awards. The Awards Chair prepares an Awards Committee report for the Winter (February) and Summer (July/August) Board Meetings. At the SSR annual summer meeting, the Awards Chair also organizes and chairs the Major and Trainee Awards Ceremonies, chairs the Trainee Award Finalist Platform presentations, and conducts the annual Award Committee meeting where new members are welcomed and the timeline of committee activities is reviewed.

YEARLY TIMELINE OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES:

MAJOR AWARDS

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER – With assistance from the SSR Business Office, the Awards Chair reviews the criteria for the Major SSR Awards (Hartman, Distinguished Service, Research, New Investigator, and Trainee-Mentoring Award) that are published on the SSR website. The Awards Chair finalizes the call for Major Award Nominations for the October SSR Newsletter and SSREPRO.

OCTOBER – The first call for SSR Major Awards is sent by SSREPRO in late September/early October. The Awards Chair contacts nominators of the previous year's unsuccessful candidates to update nomination packages as needed. For re-nominations, ensure that the nominator has notified the people who have provided supporting letters (if existing letters are reused) to let them know that the nomination will be resubmitted.

NOVEMBER – The Awards Chair notifies the SSR Business Office to send the final SSREPRO reminder for SSR members to nominate candidates for Major Awards.

DECEMBER/JANUARY – December 1 is the usual deadline for receiving new nominations and updates of previous nominations. When nominations are received, the Awards Chair should quickly check to ensure that nominators are active SSR members as stipulated by the SSR Bylaws. The Awards Chair then proceeds as follows:

- 1) Nomination materials are assembled into packets (one PDF file for each candidate).
- 2) The nomination packets are sent to the SSR Business Office to be placed on a secure space on

the SSR website where the Awards Committee members will have password-protected access to retrieve the individual packets.

3) Awards committee members are contacted and given instructions how to access the nomination packets; a score sheet/ballot is provided for the committee members to rank order the candidates based on criteria for each award that are available on the SSR website. The ballots must be returned in sufficient time to prepare a report for the Mid-Winter Board meeting (early February). Time should be allotted for more than one round of balloting, if required.

4) Copies of all original ballots should be kept on file; a confidential summary of the results of the balloting along with the list of recommended winners is then submitted to the SSR Business Office.

5) If for any reason there is a low number of nominees for a particular award, it is recommended that the Chair contact the Board Liaison for the committee and SSR President to obtain assistance.

FEBRUARY – Following Board approval of the Awards Committee report and recommended Awardees:

1) The SSR President first telephones and congratulates the awardees. Awardees are asked not to make a formal announcement until the Awards Chair has contacted nominators of other candidates for the award.

2) When the SSR President has informed the Awards Chair that all Awardees have been notified, the Awards Chair also congratulates the Awardees and informs their nominators. The request that no formal announcement be made until the nominators of the other candidates have been contacted is repeated to the nominators.

3) The Awards Chair contacts nominators of unsuccessful candidates and requests that they inform their nominees that they did not receive the award. The Awards Chair encourages nominators that they should provide an updated nomination if the candidate is to be considered again next year.

4) The Awards Chair informs the SSR Executive Director when notification of Awardees and nominators of other candidates has been completed at which time the Major Awards are officially announced to the SSR membership by SSREPRO.

APRIL/MAY – The Awards Chair contacts the nominators of each Major Award recipient to request an Awardee Citation (a short biography of the Awardee) of approximately 500-700 words for the SSR annual meeting Program Book and Final Supplement. The nominators are instructed to seek the assistance of the Awardee to prepare the citation and obtain a photo; nominators are also directed to the Awards page of the SSR website to obtain examples of past citations. Citation texts are forwarded to the SSR Business Office. The Awards Chair prepares the announcement of the SSR Major Award recipients for the June SSR Newsletter.

JUNE/JULY – The Awards Chair prepares a master PowerPoint file to be used at the Major Awards Ceremony. It should include the Award Ceremony introduction, slides for introducing nominators, the Awardee, and the Sponsor for the award. Awardees and their nominators are contacted by the Awards Chair to confirm that they will be able to attend the Awards Ceremony and to obtain PowerPoint files for the introductory and acceptance presentations. The Awards Chair should instruct the nominators and Awardees to limit their presentations in order to fit within the allotted timeframe of the Awards Ceremony. The SSR Business Office determines if a representative of the sponsor for an award will participate in presenting the award.

TRAINEE RESEARCH AND MERIT TRAVEL AWARDS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER – With assistance from the SSR Business Office, the Awards Chair reviews the final copy of instructions and application forms for the Trainee Research and Merit Travel Awards.

JANUARY – The Chair reminds the Awards Committee members that they will receive abstracts to review for the Trainee Awards competition, shortly after the SSR abstract deadline.

FEBRUARY/MARCH/APRIL – February 15 is the usual deadline for submission of Abstracts and applications for Trainee Awards.

The Awards Chair receives a list of eligible trainee abstracts to consider from the SSR Business Office. If the abstracts have undergone a first round of evaluation by the Program Committee, the Awards Chair can consider using a narrowed list for the second round of evaluation by the Awards Committee. The Awards Chair then assigns abstracts to each committee member for review; abstracts are assigned by area of expertise as much as possible. Each abstract is reviewed by three committee members according to criteria published on the SSR website. Abstract scoring is done online. When reviewing is complete, the SSR Business Office forwards the Awards Chair a spreadsheet containing a summary of all scoring and final rankings of the abstracts.

Based on abstract rankings and eligibility criteria that are revised annually and posted on the SSR website, the Awards Chair then identifies:

1) Twelve (12) finalists for the SSR Trainee Research Awards: 6 finalists for the Trainee Poster Competition and 6 finalists for the Trainee Platform Competition. A minimum of three alternates for each category (poster and platform) is also selected in the event of withdrawal or ineligibility. Platform and poster finalists will be judged and ranked by Awards Committee members in attendance at the SSR annual meeting. Rankings will determine first/second/third place winners. Previous winners (first, second, or third place) from any given year are not eligible to receive an award. The list of Trainee Research finalists and alternates is forwarded to the SSR Business Office. The SSR Business office is responsible for verifying the final eligibility of all trainee award recipients before awards are presented.

2) Abstract rankings are also used to identify recipients of different merit travel awards. In any given year, the SSR office will inform the Awards Chair of the type and number of Trainee Merit Awards available. The Awards Chair will then identify a list of recommended recipients and alternates depending on the number of awards that are available. The criteria for eligibility of the different Merit Travel Awards are reviewed annually (in November/December) with assistance from the SSR Business Office and posted on the SSR website. The list of Merit Award recipients and alternates is forwarded to the SSR Business Office.

Trainees are eligible to receive both a Trainee Research Award and a Merit Travel Award. However, they may not receive more than one Merit Travel Award.

APRIL/MAY/JUNE -All applicants for Trainee Research Award and Merit Travel Awards are

notified by email informing them of their status by the SSR Business Office. Award recipients and finalists will be provided with specific information and instructions pertaining to their award, including details regarding to: their presentation, the awards ceremony, etc. The Awards Chair receives the finalized list of Trainee Research and Merit Travel Awards from the SSR Business Office.

JULY – The Awards Chair queries members of the Awards Committee to determine who will attend the Annual meeting and inform those attending of their responsibilities (attend the Trainee finalist Platform talks and view the posters of Trainee Research Poster finalists, meet to select the Trainee Research Awardees, attend the Awards Committee meeting, and attend the Trainee Awards Ceremony for the presentation of the Trainee Awards). The SSR Business Office will provide score sheets to the Awards Chair for both the Trainee Finalist Poster and Platform presentations. Score sheets will indicate the date and time of the presentations to be attended. Score sheets along with instructions for ranking the Trainee Research finalist presentations will be sent to the Awards Committee members by the Awards Chair prior to the meeting.

The Awards Chair should also query all new incoming members of the Awards Committee to determine if they will be attending the SSR annual meeting and whether they will be present at the Awards Committee meeting to be held during the SSR meeting.

The Awards Chair will coordinate with the SSR Business Office to provide final rankings for both Platform and Poster Trainee Research awards onsite at the meeting as early as possible so that sufficient time is left available to prepare the Trainee Research Awards and checks. The Awards Chair will prepare a PowerPoint presentation to present and recognize the Trainee Research and Merit Travel Awards at the Trainee Awards Ceremony.

Travel Awards for Underrepresented Minority Trainees and Junior Faculty are administered by the Minority Affairs Committee (sponsored by the Burroughs Welcome Fund). Larry Ewing Memorial Trainee Travel Fund Awards (LEMTTF) are administered by the Trainee Affairs Committee.

Upon completing the term of office, the Awards Chair is responsible for transferring in an organized fashion, the committee activities to the next Chair. Sample documents (e.g., instructions letters for evaluating Major Awards and Trainee abstracts, board reports, etc.) are also transferred to the incoming Chair at this time.

Directors can serve as ex officio members on committees, but should not be members of committees. While they are members of the Board of Directors, they cannot be chairs of committees. Ex officio members and Board Liaisons can participate in all committee communications and discussions, but they cannot vote on committees. Trainee members can serve on committees when invited and participate in all committee communications and discussions. The trainees on the committee can vote.

Modifications to this SOP require Board approval before they are applicable.

SSR: 11-28-2012

RSV (updated): 01-21-2013